

The M.S. in Physical Sciences has three concentrations: Chemistry, Earth Science, Physics, and Physical Science Education but no required courses. Each degree program is tailored to the needs of the individual graduate student in terms of development of research skills, remediation of deficiencies, and their particular area of research focus. The only common requirements are:

- 1) 30 credit hours of graduate course work for the thesis option with 60% being 700 level or above with no more than 6 hours being thesis or research problem credits.
- 2) 32 credit hours of graduate course work for the non-thesis (research problem option) with 60% being 700 level or above with no more than 6 hours of research problem credits.
- 3) A defense of the students research is conducted by their research professor and two other professors selected by the student in consultation with their research professors. One must be from outside their area of expertise.

A typical plan of study for a graduate student starting in the Fall would be approximately the following:

**1<sup>st</sup> Year Fall**

9-12 hours of graduate credit or

9-12 Total hours >50% graduate credit and any remedial courses needed

**1<sup>st</sup> Year Spring**

9-12 hours of graduate credit.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Year Fall**

9 Hours of graduate credit including some Research Problem or Thesis Hours

**2<sup>nd</sup> Year Spring**

6-9 Hours of Graduate credit including some Research Problem or Thesis Hours

It is possible for students with a well-defined research project developed by the end of their second semester to finish in 2 years but it is more common for them to take 3 years to complete the M.S. program.

Distance education students may take longer because often they are working full-time and are limited to 3-6 credit hours per semester.