Master of Science in Space Studies

Admission Requirements

The applicant must meet the School of Graduate Studies' current minimum general admission requirements as published in the graduate catalog. The deadlines for applying for admission for each semester are as follows: April 30 for the Fall semester; October 31 for the Spring semester; and February 28 for the Summer semester. Students who apply after these dates for a given semester are encouraged to do so under non-degree status. The requirements for admission to the Space Studies degree program are as follows:

1. Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 or better.
2. Three credits of coursework in statistics or algebra or calculus or computer science.
3. Six credits of coursework in the physical sciences, life sciences, or engineering.
4. Six credits of coursework in the social sciences, history, business, or law.
5. Three credits of coursework in English composition or technical writing.
6. Pre-requisite courses from 2 to 5 above must have been completed at the college level, preferably with a grade of B or higher.
7. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Exam if you plan on seeking funding (GRAs, tuition waivers) via the department or a faculty member. Otherwise, it is not required for admission to the MS program.
8. Submission of a written statement of interest highlighting the candidate's interest in space studies and motivation to undertake this program.
9. Satisfy the School of Graduate Studies' English Language Proficiency requirements as published in the graduate catalog.

Financial Assistance

Graduate assistantships (GTA/GRA) are available from a variety of internal and external sources. These are awarded on the basis of academic merit and students' abilities to contribute to departmental research and teaching. Students desiring graduate assistantships must take the GRE. The deadlines for applying for financial aid through the Department of Space Studies for a given semester are as follows: April 30 for the Fall semester; October 31 for Spring semester; and February 28 for Summer semester. Funding is renewable if progress toward the degree, research goals and teaching are satisfactory. Support is typically for two years on a nine-month basis. Summer funding may also be available.

Degree Requirements

All students are required to complete a minimum of 33 credits. The following plan should be used:

1. SPST 501 Survey of Space Studies I and SPST 502 Survey of Space Studies II (6 credits).
2. Students select either the non-thesis or thesis option and declare which social or technical area is their area of specialization. This is the area in which they do their SPST 997 Independent Study Report or SPST 998 Thesis.
3. Two (2) courses from designated social area courses outside the student's area of specialization (6 credits).
4. Two (2) courses from designated technical area courses outside the student's area of specialization (6 credits).
   Note: The choice of courses in the required social and technical areas outside the student's area of specialization must take into account the breadth of disciplines, which is a critical part of Space Studies education. In order to meet the breadth requirements within the degree options, students are required to spread their courses as per guidelines outlined in the Department of Space Studies Graduate Student Handbook.
5. One credit of SPST 590 Space Studies Colloquium (1 credit).
6. At least half of the total credit hours must be from classes at the 500-level and above.
7. Comprehensive Examination: Stages 1 and 2.

   Note: Stages 1 and 2 are completed at the conclusion of SPST 501 and SPST 502, respectively. The comprehensive exam process should demonstrate the student's core knowledge and integrative skills.

Non-Thesis Option:

1. SPST 997 Independent Study Report (2 credits).
2. Comprehensive Examination: Stage 3.

   Note: Stage 3 requires the student to apply principles and methodologies, and understanding of the interplay between different, often competing, disciplines. The student must show that information from Space Studies courses can be used to assess and analyze a broadly cross-disciplinary issue. Stage 3 can be taken during either the fall or the spring semester.

1. At least 3 elective courses.
2. Completion of SPST 595 Space Studies Capstone (3 credits).

Thesis Option:

1. SPST 593 Individual Research in Space Studies (1 to 3 credits).
2. SPST 998 Thesis (6 credits).
3. At least 2 elective courses.
4. Submission of the thesis, or an article derived therefrom, to a peer-reviewed journal.

Approval of the thesis option will only be granted if a clear alignment of research interests between a faculty member and a student is demonstrated, and a faculty adviser has been identified and is available to supervise the research. Distance students who wish to complete the thesis option must satisfy the residence requirement. Interested students should consult the School of Graduate Studies or department.