

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN INFORMATION SYSTEMS
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE ADVISOR'S AND STUDENT'S HANDBOOK

Second Edition
2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. Admission**
 - A. Admission process summary
 - B. Admission deadlines
 - C. Basic requirements for admission
 - D. Additional international student admission requirements
 - E. Types of admission
- 2. Completion of Program**
 - A. Prerequisites
 - B. MSIS core courses
 - C. Support area courses (electives)
 - D. IS component
 - E. Integrative component
 - F. Maintaining enrollment in the program
- 3. Financial Information and Assistantships**
 - A. Financial information
 - B. Graduate assistantships
 - C. Steps for applying for a graduate assistantship
- 4. Things To Do Before Starting Your First Semester**
 - A. Program schedule link
 - B. Sample start-to-finish course schedules
 - C. Selecting and working with program/thesis advisor(s)
- 5. Satisfying the MSIS Integrative (Thesis and/or Project) Component**
 - A. Project Option Requirements (Non-thesis)
 - B. Thesis Option
- 6. Substitution or Waiver of Program Requirements**
 - A. Transfer credit policy
 - B. Course substitution policy
- 7. Completing the MSIS concurrent with other degree(s)**
- 8. Getting ready to graduate**
 - A. Applying for completion of program**
 - B. Written and/or oral thesis or project defense**

1. ADMISSION TO THE MSIS PROGRAM

A. ADMISSION PROCESS SUMMARY

1. The student applies to MSU Graduate Programs via the MSU Graduate Web Link or via snail mail; an application form is available on the MSU Graduate site (www.moreheadstate.edu/graduate).
2. The student submits all required application materials to the MSU Graduate Office by the deadlines found in the next area of this manual. Students are advised to plan accordingly to meet these deadlines. The international admission process to universities in the US can be especially time consuming. Summer submissions for application are not recommended because academic faculty members are often not available during the non academic year summer months.
3. After the graduate office verifies all application requirements are complete, the application materials are forwarded to the MSIS Director by the graduate office. The MSIS Director then forwards the materials for a recommendation by three Faculty MSIS Admissions Committee members. The final decision plus the student's advisor assignment is communicated to the candidate via mail by both the graduate office and the College of Business.
4. As soon as possible after being admitted, the student should contact his/her advisor to design a program of study.

B. ADMISSION DEADLINES

- Applications for admission will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Students can expect to be notified within 3-6 weeks after receipt of all required application documents.
- **Spring semester :** All application materials must be postmarked no later than *November 1 for international candidates and December 1 for US candidates.*
- **Fall semester :** All application materials must be postmarked no later than *May 1 for international candidates and August 1 for US candidates.*
- **Summer semesters :** All application materials must be postmarked no later than *June 1 for US candidates.*

C. BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

In order to be admitted to the MSIS program students must meet the following criteria:

- General Admission to graduate study.
- If a student has earned a Master's degree from a regionally accredited institution, the GRE or GMAT is waived.
- Admission is determined by an admission index, computed as follows:

GRE Index = (undergraduate GPA x 200) + (composite GRE score (verbal and quantitative)). The GRE index score must equal at least 1250 for admission. The minimum individual scores allowed for consideration of admission is 750 for the composite GRE (verbal and quantitative).

GMAT Index = (undergraduate GPA * 200) + GMAT Score. The GMAT Index must equal a minimum of 1000. The minimum score allowed for consideration of admission is 400 for the GMAT.

- Minimum undergraduate GPA 2.5 overall or minimum 2.75 GPA in last 60 hours of undergraduate study
- A portfolio is required which contains (1) a one-page statement outlining the student's career goals and objectives as related to the program; and (2) documentation that addresses achievement of each of the prerequisite competencies.
- Conditional admissions to the MSIS are not allowed; however, student may opt to be admitted to MSU's graduate program while preparing for consideration for full admission to the MSIS program; contact MSU's Graduate Office for details. Often, this admission falls under "unclassified" graduate student status.

D. ADDITIONAL INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

International students who qualify for admission are required to take the English Language Institute Test of the University of Michigan, the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) given by the Educational Testing Service. If the Michigan Test is taken, a minimum score of 82 is required. Students taking the IELTS must score a minimum of 5.5. A TOEFL score of 500 on the old testing system or 61 on the new system is required for admission. All International students must have their transcripts evaluated by Josef Silney & Associates, International Academic Credential Evaluators, or Worldwide Education Services (WES).

International residence students are required by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations to be enrolled in a minimum of six hours of on-campus classroom courses each semester.

International students will be officially admitted and issued a Form I-20A only after the Graduate Office has been notified that they have passed the English Test successfully, have met program admission requirements, and have submitted a statement certifying their ability to meet all financial obligations

International Students, in addition to the MSIS admission requirements, please submit the following materials:

- Completed original MSU graduate application.

- Official/Original or certified copy of your transcript with baccalaureate degree/date of completion (the official transcript must show all undergraduate courses taken and grades received). The credentials must be verified via WES or other agencies approved by the MSU graduate office.
- Official verification that your degree is equivalent to a four-year baccalaureate degree program in the United States.
- Official original copy of graduation diploma
- Official original report of your TOEFL score
- Official original report of your GRE/GMAT score
- Verification of finances (financial statement on official stationery with address and telephone number)
- Original letter from your sponsor and verification of sponsor's financial ability. (If you will have a sponsor)
- Additional information for international graduate students is available on the University website (www.moreheadstate.edu/graduate/index.aspx?id=2233).

E. TYPES OF ADMISSION AT MSU

- **Unconditional** - students who meet the requirements for both general admission to graduate study and for a particular program. MSIS admits unconditionally.
- **Conditional** - students who meet general requirements for admission to graduate study but fail to satisfy one or more special requirements for admission to a particular program. This is a temporary condition and students must work to meet the specified conditions. *MSIS does not admit conditionally; rather students typically enroll as unclassified until they are qualified for unconditional admission.*
- **Unclassified** - students who meet the requirements for admission to graduate study, but do not wish to work toward a graduate program or are attempting to meet unconditional admission requirements. No more than nine credit hours earned as an unclassified student may later be applied to a graduate program.
- **To qualify** - students whose undergraduate grade-point average is slightly below 2.5, but not less than 2.3. Students so admitted may, after completing a minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate work with at least a g.p.a of 3.0, be considered for admission to a degree program. Upon admission to a program, six of the twelve semester hours of graduate credit may be counted toward meeting degree requirements.
- **To a Non-degree program** - students who wish to do a planned graduate program that leads to renewal or additional certification, but not to a degree. Prerequisites include a baccalaureate degree and a teaching certificate.
- **Visiting Students** - Students admitted to a graduate program at another institution. Students may enroll by submitting an application for admission to Graduate study. Visiting students must submit an **official** transcript with bachelor's/master's posted or a letter signed by their graduate dean or registrar certifying the student is in good standing and has permission to enroll for graduate work at Morehead State University.

- **Graduates of Non-accredited Colleges** - These students must meet the MSU requirements for graduation. If this preparation is inadequate, this deficiency must be satisfied by taking designated courses that will not be counted as graduate credit. This deficiency may otherwise be satisfied by presenting a GRE score of Verbal 450 and Quantitative 450.

2. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The MSIS program has five program components, outlined in this section. Requirements for program continuation are also explained in this section.

A. PREREQUISITE COMPONENT

Before acceptance into the program, students must display evidence of knowledge in information systems either through work experience and certifications, or academic course work. These requirements are to be documented by the student in the application packet.

- Concepts of information systems in organizations.
- Fundamentals of PC hardware, software applications, and networking
- Undergraduate foundation in mathematics and statistics
- Expertise in one or more IS areas

MSIS Foundation (Pre-requisite) Courses – The following MSU graduate courses are recommended to meet pre-requisites; however, students may also verify their background with their academic advisor based on their undergraduate coursework and/or work experience.

- CIS 615 Managing Information Technology
- CIS 634 Management of Telecommunications and Networking
- One mathematics and statistics course

B. IS CORE COMPONENT (12 HOURS)

Competencies contained within the following coursework are required by all students in the program:

- CIS 641 Introductory Qualitative & Quantitative Research Methods
- CIS 640 Systems Planning and Implementation
- CIS 650 Innovation, Technology & Organizational Change
- CIS 636 Global Information Systems

C. SUPPORT AREA COMPONENT (6-9 HOURS)

Based on individual career goals; students select 6-9 elective graduate credit hours from their career area, to be approved by their advisor.

For example, electives might be within or spread among areas such as: Government; Healthcare; Computer Science; Biology; Environmental Science; Business; Education; Industrial Education and Technology; The Arts; Music; Math; Communications; Geography; or other areas of professional interest to the student.

D. IS COMPONENT (12 HOURS)

The student may select 12 credit electives from approved graduate information systems courses (the approved list is dynamically updated; check with your advisor for the latest list of approved courses):

- CIS 625 Web Information Systems & Internet Technologies

- CIS 628 E-Business Application Programming
- CIS 635 Seminar in Information Systems
- CIS 638 Database Systems Design Implementation & Management
- CIS 642 Systems Security
- CIS 645 Customer Relationship Management Systems
- CIS 660 Enterprise Systems
- CIS 670 Directed Research
- CIS 698 Advanced Supervised Field Experience
- MBI 660 Data Warehousing and Data Mining (NKU)
- MBI 675 Enterprise Workflow Design and Reengineering (NKU)
- CIS 699 Selected Workshop Topics (i.e. Collaborative Technologies, Advanced Networking and Wireless, Knowledge Management, Advances in Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Internet Programming, Systems Analysis and Design, Data Warehousing/Data Mining, Advanced Project Management, Expert Systems, HIPAA & IT Standards, Medical Informatics, Supply Chain Management, Human Computer Interaction, Strategic IS, Decision Support Systems, Cryptography, digital Media, Advances in ABAP Programming tools, Web Service Administration, Performance Improvement Technologies, and additional courses that will be added as the program and IS field evolves.)

E. INTEGRATIVE COMPONENT (3-6 HOURS)

Students may opt to complete the program by choosing one of the following integrative courses:

- **Thesis Option:** CIS 697 Thesis (6 credit hours)
- OR
- **Non-Thesis Option:** CIS 690 IS Team Project (3 credit hours)

Students are allowed to complete both integrative courses; however, most students choose one option based on their career goal.

F. MAINTAINING ENROLLMENT IN THE PROGRAM

In order to maintain enrollment in the program, students are expected to maintain an appropriate level of academic performance and will be required to have a minimum of a 3.0 GPA to graduate. Any student receiving two grades of C or below in any graduate level course will be placed on probation. If a student on probation receives a 3rd grade of C or below, they will be dismissed from the program.

3. FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND ASSISTANTSHIPS

A. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

To find current tuition information, go to: <http://www.moreheadstate.edu/abc/>

Because the MSIS is offered in an online delivery format, at this time, non-resident students are not required to pay out of state tuition.

Financial aid is available to graduate students. Information and forms are available in the Office of Financial Aid, 100 Admissions Center. The phone number is (606) 783-2011.

B. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

A number of graduate assistantships are available each year for students who have been admitted unconditionally to a graduate degree program. Assistantships provide a stipend of \$7000 per year (fall and spring semesters). Non-resident graduate assistants are not required to pay out of state tuition; all recipients must pay the regular Kentucky resident and incidental fees.

A graduate assistant must be a full-time student who maintains a 3.0 grade point average and registers for at least nine graduate credit hours (600 level), but no more than 12 hours credit each semester. If students fail to maintain a 3.0 g.p.a., they will be removed from their position. Twenty hours a week must be devoted to the duties of an assistantship.

Graduate assistants are also eligible for a free residence hall room based on double occupancy in Fields Hall. If the student desires University housing outside of Fields Hall, the student is responsible for paying the difference in the two rates.

Students must apply for reappointment each fall semester in the department. If a student has been a graduate assistant for the academic year, they are eligible for in-state status if they wish to enroll in summer courses.

Students are advised to apply well before the beginning of the academic semester.

C. STEPS FOR APPLYING FOR A GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP

For more information, please refer to the University's website:

www.moreheadstate.edu/graduate/index.aspx?id=4303.

1. Complete the Graduate Assistant application for employment through the Office of Human Resources located at <https://secureweb.moreheadstate.edu/NovusHRapps/JobPostings.aspx>.
2. The student must first be admitted to a Graduate degree program.

- Conditionally admitted students, on a limited basis, will be eligible for a one semester appointment. If unconditional admission is not obtained within that one semester, the student will lose his/her GA appointment.
 - Unconditionally admitted students are eligible for a GA position for up to four semesters (two years).
3. Various offices that have been allocated assistants will review the file and request a student for their office. The Graduate student may also approach a representative from the department and request to be hired. Slots are available across campus and department chairs are typically the best contact. In the School of Business, slots are typically available through Associate Dean as well as the MBA program (contact Mr. Keith Moore, MBA Director).
 4. Once the department has made the hiring decision(s), a PAR (Personnel Action Request) will be submitted to the Graduate Office. Please contact the department to determine if you have been selected as one of their GAs.
 5. Once approved, the following steps will take place:
 - All GA waivers (tuition and/or housing) will be applied to the student's financial account approximately one week prior to the beginning of the semester.
 - The student is to report to their hiring department and begin the 10/20 weekly hours of work during the first week of classes.
 - Also during the first week of classes, an award letter/contract will be issued to the student from the Graduate Office. This contract must be signed and returned in order for the GA appointment to be valid.
 6. In order to assure proper benefits are awarded to the appropriate students, a list of approved GA's will be distributed to the necessary University offices.

4. THINGS TO DO BEFORE STARTING YOUR FIRST SEMESTER

A. PROGRAM SCHEDULE LINK

The MSIS web site (www.moreheadstate.edu/msis) maintains a dynamical long-term class schedule used in program planning. Students are advised to use the long-term schedule to plan their program with their program advisor and to concurrently check the official class offerings. Occasionally classes on the long-term plan may not be offered due to extenuating circumstances and new classes are also often added. Current class schedules are also posted for each semester.

B. SAMPLE START-TO-FINISH PROGRAM DESIGNS

Sample start to finish program designs are being added to the MSIS web site as new areas of emphasis are developed. Check www.moreheadstate.edu/msis for new samples as they are developed. This integrative program is working with other universities and departments on campus to develop dynamic areas of emphasis for our students.

C. SELECTING AND WORKING WITH PROGRAM/THESIS ADVISOR(S)

Upon official admission to the program, the MSIS Director appoints an academic graduate faculty advisor for each student. The advisor decisions are based primarily on faculty graduate advising loads; we try to equalize advising loads. All appointed advisors are fully qualified MSIS graduate faculty members. The MSIS Director is also available to all MSIS students and their advisors to help navigate MSIS advising issues.

When the student is ready for the integrative component of their program (thesis or project), the student selects and invites a thesis/project committee chair that best fits their research or project goals. The thesis/project chair's task is to work with the student on the integrative requirement for the program (thesis/project). As the student works through the thesis or project component, an oversight committee is established. After the student invites a professor to chair his/her integrative committee and the professor accepts or rejects the offer based on his/her time availability and comfort level with match, the student then selects his/her committee members. Over time, if circumstances change and it becomes necessary, a student may request a change the faculty member chairing his/her integrative component or serving on his/her committee.

The project class professor typically opts to manage the project option, working with the MSIS oversight committee to provide committee review of student projects. However, the student may also opt to choose his/her own committee oversight.

The student's academic advisor typically remains the same throughout the student's complete program, with the academic advisor working with the student to ensure that all program requirements are fulfilled.

5. SATISFYING THE MSIS INTEGRATIVE (THESIS AND/OR PROJECT) COMPONENT

Every student enrolled in the MSIS degree program is required to complete an integrative component comprising three to six hours of graduate course credit.

Two options exist to complete the integrative component:

- ❖ Project Option – Requires 3 credit hours of CIS 690 and a submitted project portfolio completed as part of the requirements of the CIS 690 class.
- ❖ Thesis Option – Requires 6 credit hours of CIS 697 and the completion, submission, and acceptance of a research thesis in Information Systems.

A. PROJECT OPTION REQUIREMENTS (NON-THESIS)

- Successful Completion of CIS690 – IS Team Project course for 3 credit hours
- Completion of IS Project Work and submission of Project Portfolio
- Projects must be proposed, planned and carried out as a group project; final group and project tasks assignments will be made/approved by the CIS 690 class instructor.

- Approval of Projects:
 - All students in the group shall agree upon a project proposal approved by CIS 690 Course Instructor
 - Students shall produce a detailed project proposal (including individual task assignments)
 - Proposals and project plans shall be reviewed and approved by the CIS690 instructor and by the academic advisors for each student in the project group. This group of faculty advisors serves as each student's project oversight committee.

- Presentation of Completed Project Portfolios:
 - All project portfolios must be certified as complete by the student's CIS690 instructor and the academic advisor project oversight committee
 - After completion, all projects must be presented publicly and will be reviewed and approved by both the project class instructor and the student group's academic advisors

- Approval of student project for satisfaction of the MSU Graduate School Comprehensive Component
 - Each student completing the Project (Non-Thesis) integrative component shall have a committee composed of the following:
 - The students advisor

- The advisors of all students in the students CIS690 Project Group
- The CIS690 instructor
- At student option, professional(s) with expertise in project area

The supervising committee will be responsible for reviewing the project presentations and final documentation to sign off on the students MSU comprehensive requirements. The CIS 690 instructor, in cooperation with the MSIS Director, oversees the paperwork completion for the committee.

B. THESIS OPTION

➤ Completing thesis hours

- Thesis hours are variable but should not exceed 6 hours total; students may register for any number of hours per session, receiving an “IP” until thesis completion is achieved. Typically, students take several semesters/sessions to complete a thesis. Permission to register for thesis and thesis seminar hours can be obtained by contacting your thesis advisor or the MSIS Director, who will then contact the IS departmental specialist.
- Once a student registers for thesis and receives an IP grade, he/she must replace the IP with a final grade or must officially withdraw the thesis course.
- Students cannot graduate in a degree program with an IP grade on their transcript.
- For international students, a withdrawal (W grade) may create issues related to INS regulations for continuous full-time enrollment.
- If you have questions about your preference for electing the thesis option to fulfill the Integrative Component, we suggest consulting with your program advisor before enrolling for thesis.

➤ Choosing a thesis topic

- The student will choose an advisor(s) for his/her research thesis. Typically, students work with one faculty thesis advisor, but co-chairs are allowed. If the thesis advisor is a different faculty member from the academic advisor, the student then works with the thesis advisor(s) exclusively on the research component of the program. The thesis advisor/co-advisor must be a full graduate faculty member in the MSIS program.
- The student, working with their thesis advisor(s) will determine the topic for his/her thesis.

➤ Thesis Review Committee

- Student and thesis advisor(s) will select a thesis review committee consisting of not less than 3 persons (including the advisor and not more than 5 members. The majority number of members of the committee shall be full MSIS graduate faculty members; other members may be external, including graduate faculty or known experts from other universities, the

business world or outside IS or COBA. The student academic advisor may serve on the student's thesis review committee in any appropriate capacity.

- It is recommended, but not required, that at least one member of the committee be a qualified person outside of the MSU COBA IS department and be a recognized expert in the student's chosen Cognate Area
- The thesis chair should notify the MSIS Director of committee membership.

➤ **Thesis Proposal Defense**

- The student's thesis proposal will be submitted and reviewed by the thesis committee before student begins his research project in earnest.
- Thesis data collection should not begin before thesis defense and IRB approval
- It is the responsibility of the student to work with his/her advisor to assure that this thesis proposal defense occurs in a timely manner. The student bears the responsibility for communicating with committee members to schedule meetings and to get the thesis proposal in committee member's hands in a timely manner.
- The student works with his/her advisor to prepare a well-conceived and refined research proposal. When the proposal is ready for review, the advisor will approve the proposal to be released for review by the student's thesis committee. Before that time, the student works primarily with his/her advisor and optional research advisors. A minimum of 4 weeks should be provided to allow thesis committee members to review the proposal before the proposal review meeting.
- The proposal is discussed at the proposal review meeting, with direction provided from committee members for subsequent thesis development.
- It is possible, but discouraged, to schedule additional proposal review meetings. It is important the student works closely with his/her thesis advisor(s) to ensure a quality proposal is presented at the proposal defense meeting.

➤ **Thesis Defense**

- After the student's thesis advisor approves the thesis for defense, the student, with his advisor, shall set a defense date, notify the committee of this date, and receive verification of committed availability 4 weeks prior to the proposed defense date. Check MSU deadlines for graduation paperwork when scheduling the meeting.
- The student shall be required to produce a complete written draft of the thesis and have it distributed to the committee members, following MSU thesis format publication guidelines, 3 weeks prior to the scheduled defense date.
- Committee members shall submit, preferably in writing, proposed revisions to the student's thesis at the defense.

- Students are required to give a public oral defense of their thesis on the defense date in front of their entire committee. It is the responsibility of the student and their advisor to notify any interested parties, which must include all of the IS department and MSIS student body of the date of the public defense. Questions and feedback on the defense are allowed from the public as well as the committee.
- The student's thesis committee chair(s) will act as the moderator of the thesis defense and will take responsibility, working in cooperation with the MSIS Director, to submit final paperwork.

➤ **Thesis Approval**

- A student's thesis should be approved by his/her thesis advisor and all committee members, with all original signatures in an approval sheet.
- Follow all MSU guidelines for thesis submission (available from Graduate Office); a minimum of two copies of the final thesis draft, signed by the student's committee, must be submitted to the Graduate Office at least two weeks before the end of the term in which the student anticipates completing all degree requirements.
- Thesis students are encouraged to submit working drafts of their thesis work and other research conducted during the program on the MSIS web site; in addition, students are encouraged to work with their advisors to publish their thesis work (as advised by their advisors) in an IS journal after thesis defense, with students serving as the primary author on all resulting publications. Consult his/her thesis advisor(s) or the MSIS Director for guidance regarding ethical guidelines on publication of student research.

6. SUBSTITUTION OR WAIVER OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A. TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY

In most cases the student has already completed the course at another institution and is asking that it be transferred. The desired process is for the student to meet with his/her advisor first, obtain authorization and then complete the course at another institution.

In order for a course to be transferred to MSU, students must have an official transcript sent to the MSU Registrar's Office and submit a course substitution form. The form is available in the department, the Graduate Office, or at www.moreheadstate.edu/graduate. The student and the advisor initiate the form, the form is then forwarded to the department chair for approval, and on to the graduate dean for approval. When the form reaches the Graduate Office, the student should make sure that an official transcript is in his/her file for the transfer to be made. The Graduate Office representative then reviews the form and transcript for accuracy and instructs the Registrar's Office to place the course on the student's transcript.

A maximum of nine semester hours of graduate credit earned at another accredited institution may be accepted toward meeting requirements for the graduate program provided:

1. the credit has been earned at an accredited graduate institution within 10 years of the date on which the graduate program requirements are completed;
2. the work is acceptable as credit toward a comparable program at the institution from which transfer is sought;
3. the course(s) to be transferred carry a mark of "B" or better (9 quality points); and
4. the course(s) are approved by the advisor, department chair and the graduate dean. Approval is based on the evaluation of an institution using these criteria: length of the instructional term, frequency and length of class sessions, availability of library services, course syllabus and/or statement of requirements, and faculty member's qualifications

Transfer credits taken during the final semester of a program may delay program completion until official transcripts of the courses have been received in the Graduate Office.

B. COURSE SUBSTITUTION POLICY

The course substitution form is to be used when a student has taken a different MSU course than the one listed on the online program checksheet. The student meets with the advisor in advance of taking the course. The advisor reviews the course to be substituted, and the advisor will then complete a course substitution form notifying the department chair, the graduate dean, and the graduate office of the change. The course to be substituted must be no older than 10 years, must carry a mark of "B" or better (9 quality

points), and must be relevant to the required course listed on the online program checksheet.

7. COMPLETING THE MSIS CONCURRENT WITH OTHER DEGREE(S)

Graduate students at MSU seeking to receive multiple master degrees (either sequentially or concurrently) must meet the following requirements:

- ✓ Meet admissions requirements for all degrees
- ✓ Be fully accepted to all degree programs
- ✓ Complete all requirements for all degree programs
- ✓ In the case of two masters degrees at MSU, currently a minimum of 15 hours of the courses taken for the second degree must be coursework not counted to satisfy the requirements for their first Masters degree.
- ✓ Complete the appropriate comprehensive exam requirements for all degrees being pursued concurrently or sequentially.

8. GETTING READY TO GRADUATE

A. APPLYING FOR COMPLETION

The student must file an application for completion of their program. The application should be made in the Graduate Office at the beginning of the term in which the student is anticipating completion. The application for degree card serves to notify the Graduate Office staff that a final check of the student's record should be conducted and to forward the degree completion data to the Registrar's Office where the student's name is added to the graduation list. There is a graduation fee which must be paid by the degree candidate prior to graduation.

The student should work with his/her advisor to ensure all deadlines are met and all processes are followed. Occasionally processes change and therefore, the student should check with the registrar and the graduate office to ensure all current guidelines are met by the deadline.

B. WRITTEN AND/OR ORAL THESIS OR PROJECT DEFENSE

The student must pass a written thesis or a written project in the field of study. This includes the defense of the student's thesis or project. These processes for MSIS are outlined in detail in Section 5 of this manual.

For MSIS students who must defend their thesis or project, the program completion forms must be filled out by the students' committees.

Those students who pass the thesis or project defense generally have the forms completed and submitted by the program coordinators/directors, committee chairs, or department chairs who have received the results. In the MSIS program, the forms are submitted by the thesis chairs in cooperation with the MSIS director. Once the advisee's program completion becomes a reality, a copy of the program completion form is added to the advisee's file. The form also serves as notification that the student successfully finished the program.

The MSIS program does not currently have a comprehensive written exam; however, the final projects (thesis or project) are written and a juried oral defense of the final project is required.