Master of Arts—Economics

David D. Selover, Graduate Program Director

The Master of Arts in economics is a flexible degree that can meet a wide range of student needs. The program allows students to pursue a traditional approach as preparation for entry into a doctoral program or an applied approach geared toward policy analysis in a specialized area.

Some graduates of the M.A. in economics have chosen to continue their graduate training and have successfully completed Ph.D. programs at universities across the nation. Other graduates have become economics teachers, primarily at the community-college level. Others have gone to research and analysis positions in governmental agencies and private business firms. Finally, still others have chosen to pursue careers in general business management.

All students in the program are trained in theory and research methods, and take several courses emphasizing business or government policy analysis in chosen specialty areas. An independent research project is required, permitting students to apply theory and empirical techniques to real-world problems.

The Department of Economics also encourages interdisciplinary training. The master’s program can be adapted for students desiring a diverse background by combining economics with graduate courses in sociology, political science, computer science, statistics, mathematics, finance, management, marketing research, or public administration.

Admission

In addition to the University’s graduate admission requirements, applicants seeking regular admission must have at least a 3.00 grade point average in their major. In addition, applicants are required to take either the Graduate Record Examination or Graduate Management Admission Test, and they must submit at least one letter of recommendation. If the undergraduate grade point average falls below that required for regular status, applicants may qualify for provisional admission.

Requirements

Undergraduate prerequisites include principles of economics, calculus (three hours), statistics (six hours), intermediate microeconomics, and intermediate macroeconomics with grades of at least B-.

Thirty semester hours of approved graduate work are required for the award of the Master of Arts degree in economics. A maximum of six hours of 500-level courses approved for graduate credit may be applied toward the degree. The remaining 24 hours of credit must be taken from 600- and/or 700-level courses. Up to six hours of electives (approved by the graduate program director) may be taken from courses outside the Department of Economics. Required core economics courses for the graduate program are:

- **ECON 625** Mathematical Economics 3
- **ECON 701** Advanced Economic Analysis: Microeconomics 3
- **ECON 703** Advanced Economic Analysis: Macroeconomics 3
- **ECON 706** Econometrics I 3
- **ECON 697** Readings in Economics 3
- **ECON 698** Economic Methodology and Research 3
- Select four Electives 12

Total Hours 30

* These are generally 600- or 700-level courses from within the economics discipline. However, two of the courses may be approved 500-level courses, and two of the courses may be outside of the Department of Economics.

Near the completion of formal course work, candidates conduct independent research projects with thesis or non-thesis options. Students who choose the thesis option should register for ECON 699 in the final semester. Six hours of credit are given for this course. The thesis is guided and approved by the committee of at least three members of the department. Detailed instructions, requirements, and deadlines are contained in the guide for Preparation of Theses and Dissertations, available from the Office of Graduate Studies web site, http://www.odu.edu/graduatestudies.

Students who choose the non-thesis option register for ECON 697 and ECON 698 in the last semesters of course work. Non-thesis students conduct independent research projects under the guidance of a department faculty member. Students must first register for ECON 697, a reading course under the supervision of a faculty member, for three credits, and then register for ECON 698, the research project writing course, also under the supervision of a faculty member, for three credits. All master’s candidates must pass written comprehensive examinations covering microeconomics, macroeconomics, econometrics I, and one elective course area selected by the student.

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