

HOWARD UNIVERSITY POLICY

Policy Number:	100-009 The Academy and Research
Policy Title:	MASTER'S-IN-PASSING POLICY
Responsible Officer:	Provost and Chief Academic Officer Delegated to Dean, The Graduate School
Responsible Offices:	Office of the Provost and Chief Academic Officer Office of the Dean, The Graduate School Office of the Registrar
Effective Date:	July 5, 2023

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Howard University supports faculty and students through continuous improvement of academic programs and related procedures. In furtherance of this objective, the Master's-in-Passing Policy allows doctoral students in good standing, who have completed all requirements for a master's degree in their respective program of study, to receive a master's in passing, (MA or MS degree).

II. RATIONALE

This policy allows students at Howard University who have fulfilled all requirements of a master's degree in their respective field of study to receive formal attribution for their work.

III. ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

This policy affects students who are enrolled or may enroll in a doctoral program at Howard University. Faculty members have a responsibility to be familiar with this policy as do staff who support graduate students.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Master's-In-Passing – A Master of Arts (MA) or Master of Science (MS) degree conferred through The Graduate School at Howard University.

V. REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

A program may recommend to The Graduate School that the master's-in-passing be awarded to students enrolled in a PhD program. PhD students can be considered for the masters-in-passing when they have completed all requirements for the master's degree outlined in their respective program of study. The Dean of The Graduate School may recommend to the Provost and Chief Academic Officer revisions to the following requirements and procedures.

Requirements

To earn the master's-in-passing (which appears on the transcript as an MA or MS degree), students must meet The Graduate School's requirement of 30 credit hours, 18 of which must be earned at Howard University; must meet the program's cumulative GPA requirement; and must be in good academic standing as outlined in The Graduate School's "Rules and Regulations."

- Students must have a faculty advisor to be eligible for the master's-in-passing.
- Students who have already earned the master's degree at another institution and have transferred 24 credit hours to their PhD program must earn, minimally, 18 credit hours at Howard University before being eligible for a second master's degree.
- Students can petition for the master's-in-passing after they have successfully completed all core courses and/or earned 30 credit hours (18 of which have been earned at Howard University) and after they have passed comprehensive exams at the master's or PhD level.
- Students must have an approved program of study from the doctoral program on file, and that program of study must confirm that the master's degree requirements have been met.
- Students seeking to earn the master's-in-passing must be awarded the master's degree no later than 5 years after being admitted to the PhD program.
- Students who leave the PhD program may request a terminal master's degree if they have fulfilled all the requirements for the master's degree.
- Students who opt to end their matriculation in the PhD program after earning the master's-in-passing must reapply to the PhD program for consideration to be readmitted.

Procedures

- A. Students complete the form requesting a master's-in-passing.
- B. The faculty advisor, graduate program director, and department chair approve the form.
- C. The approved form is submitted to The Graduate School coordinator assigned for processing.
- D. The Graduate School notifies the registrar to complete an administrative award of the degree if the student's request is approved by The Graduate School.
- E. The master's degree will be awarded at the end of the semester, per normal graduation procedures.

VI. SANCTIONS

There are no sanctions associated with this policy. Students who do not meet the requirements or follow the procedures explicated in this policy will not qualify for a master's-in-passing degree.

VII. HYPERLINKS

The Policy Office: [Policy Office | Howard University Office of the Secretary](#)

The Graduate School: [Homepage | The Graduate School \(howard.edu\)](#)

Related Form: Master's-in-Passing Request Form