

**3.6.2** The institution structures its graduate curricula (1) to include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (2) to ensure ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences. (Graduate curriculum).

Compliance       Partial Compliance       Non-Compliance

**Narrative:**

The University of North Carolina Charlotte requires rigor and excellence in its graduate programs. As stated in its [2010-15 Strategic Plan](#), the mission of the Graduate School is to advance excellence in graduate and professional studies including research, teaching and service and to serve as the primary advocate for graduate education and for graduate students at the University.

It is the role of graduate education to explore and advance the limits of knowledge and to define the state of the art in every field. Its purpose is to serve society's needs in specific and technical and professional ways, but also to serve the need for intellectual expansion. In collaboration with academic units, the Graduate School seeks to uphold the highest standards in advanced education. Students complete a rigorous course of study wherein they gain mastery over the extant literature of their respective disciplines and the appropriate, discipline-based modality of intellectual inquiry. In those disciplines which require an applied focus, students are held to high standards in practice and application of their skill sets.

[The Graduate Catalog \(pp. 57- 432\)](#) also provides full descriptions of each program's requirements, including requisite courses and the research and/or experience-based learning expected in each discipline.

*Exposure to Literature*

All programs require a firm core foundation in the literature and reading of the discipline. Courses that would be considered content or literature-based provide graduate students with a full exposure to information and literature in the discipline, both current and historic. The example program descriptions below (found in the Graduate Catalog) show how students gain familiarity with the research or literature of their disciplines.

**The Master of Architecture I Program** involves four primary components: 1) the first year (including a summer session prior to the first fall of enrollment) focuses on establishing a strong foundation in fundamental design skills, architectural history and theory, building-to-site relationships, and introductory building technologies; 2) the second year focuses on comprehensive architectural design and its relationship to building systems as well as advanced studies in history, theory, and building technology; 3) the summer study program provides the opportunity to engage international education, research, or design experience; and 4) the third year is focused on the student's thesis research and project execution.

**The Master of Science in Criminal Justice** is designed to promote broad based study of the phenomenon of crime and to enhance career opportunities in the field of criminal justice. The program utilizes the social and behavioral sciences in an interdisciplinary approach to study law, crime, and social deviance, and to examine critically the systems created in response to deviance and crime. The objectives of the program are to: (1) provide present and future criminal justice personnel with the educational background necessary to function effectively in the dynamic field of criminal justice; (2) familiarize

students with the nature, methods, and functions of research, and with the existing body of knowledge on criminal justice; (3) provide the criminal justice system with qualified candidates for careers in the field; and (4) prepare students for entrance into doctoral programs.

### *Research and Professional Experience*

All students in the Graduate School have ample opportunity to participate in research and other professional experiences. Every program includes an element of research or scholarship. The doctoral degree indicates the recipient's ability to undertake original research and scholarly work at the highest levels without supervision. Recipients receive the degree only after demonstrating a comprehensive knowledge and extensive scholarship in a specialized field of study. The student demonstrates this ability by passing a series of comprehensive preliminary examinations in the field of specialization and related areas of knowledge, by writing a dissertation reporting the results of an original investigation, and by successfully defending the dissertation.

Master's degree programs at UNC Charlotte are designed with the objective of making possible a reasonable, comprehensive mastery of a chosen field. In most cases, the master's programs also provide training and experience in research to familiarize the student with the methods, ideals and goals of independent investigation.

Some specialized training programs utilize external relationships to provide their students with regular training and professional growth within the discipline. These programs often require their graduating students to make research presentations to their respective community partners.

The program descriptions below provide some examples where students are engaged in research and professional training experiences.

**The Ph.D. in Business Administration** is a research-oriented program designed to prepare graduates for teaching and research careers in academia. The program includes core courses covering all business specialties combined with an in-depth study in both theoretical and empirical aspects of the major and minor field. Students also receive training in pedagogy. Students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the existing body of knowledge in their major field and to develop new knowledge through original independent research. With the educational background provided by the program, graduates are qualified for tenure-track professor positions at both national and international research and teaching universities and other educational institutions.

**The Professional Science Masters in Bioinformatics** is an interdisciplinary degree that includes a core requirement of fundamental courses in biology, computer science, and bioinformatics; professional preparation courses in business, communications and ethics, with additional advanced level core courses in bioinformatics. Students have a required internship or faculty-supervised original research project leading to a thesis. This program is designed to educate and train professional for employment in the biotechnology sector where the need for knowledgeable life scientists with quantitative and computational skills has exploded in the past decade.

### **Evidence:**

[2010-15 Graduate School Strategic Plan](#)  
[UNC Charlotte 2010-2011 Graduate Catalog](#)