

# EARN AN ONLINE MASTER'S DEGREE

## HOW LONG CAN IT TAKE?

Like other professionals competing for highly desirable opportunities in your field, you may be thinking that pursuing a graduate degree may help you advance in your career. Whether you're currently working full-time or plan to focus on attending school, knowing how long it will take to earn your master's degree is an important part of choosing a degree program that best fits your needs and goals. Read on to learn more about the factors that determine how long it takes to earn a graduate degree and the length of time it might take you to complete a master's degree program at Colorado Technical University.

 **Colorado Technical University**  
ARE YOU IN?



## WHICH APPROACH CAN MEET YOUR NEEDS?

Studying at a traditional college campus is just one way to achieve your education. You can also earn a master's degree by attending a university that offers online or weekend and evening classes. What should you consider when making the choice? Most importantly, you want a program that will bring you closer to your professional goals while fitting into your life—whether that includes a full-time career, a busy family, or other personal priorities.

Read on for pros and cons of common program options, along with the amount of time you can expect to work toward graduation:

### You Can Expect

The length of traditional, full-time program to be one to two years.

# 1-2

#### TRADITIONAL, FULL-TIME PROGRAMS

Attending a full-time graduate program at a traditional campus offers access to residential living and the ability to meet classroom peers and faculty face-to-face. This may be particularly important if you are pursuing a degree that requires hands-on laboratory time, like nursing or forensics. This path usually comes with trade-offs since most classes are offered during the day, leaving less time for a full-time career. The length of traditional, full-time program is one to two years.

### You Can Expect

The length of traditional, full-time program to be two to five years.

# 2-5

#### PART-TIME EVENING AND WEEKEND PROGRAMS

Similar to traditional university programs, part-time evening and weekend programs are typically completed while living or attending on campus. On the plus side, this approach keeps your daytime schedule open for work and studying. On the other hand, the location of your campus can make travel time a burden and you will most likely want to reduce your evening and weekend activities to be successful in school. Since you'd be spreading your program over a few evenings and weekends per week, the length of a part-time weekend and evening program is two to five years compared to a full-time program.

#### ONLINE OR DISTANCE PROGRAMS

Mainstream adoption of online degree programs has been steadily increasing over the past last several years. Why? As a growing number of working professionals return to school,

### You Can Expect

The length of online or distance programs to be about two years.

# 2 yrs

we've seen significant technology advancements and the standardization of academic standards for online learning. In terms of rigor and content, interactive online programs offer curriculum that meets or exceeds the standards of what you'll receive in an on-campus program. Many universities, like CTU, offer robust virtual campuses with all the resources you can expect at a traditional college; plus online communities, peer mentors, and 24/7 tutoring so you don't have to sacrifice the personal interaction.

Unlike a traditional classroom, where an instructor likely gives lessons at the same pace for all students, online learning can allow you to control what, where, when and how you learn. Plus, the mobility of a virtual classroom won't require you to conform to a rigid schedule at a set location—so education can more easily fit into your busy life. For instance, you might spend your lunch hour responding to online discussions or participate in a live video lecture with your professor while you wait for your son to finish soccer practice. You can expect to earn an online graduate degree in about two years, although universities like CTU offer options to earn your degree in as few as 18 months.

### You Can Expect

The length of dual degree programs to take three to ten years.

# 3+ yrs

#### DUAL DEGREE PROGRAMS

Some universities allow you to combine a master's degree with another related post-secondary degree. For example, you might pursue a Master's in Business Administration (MBA) while simultaneously completing a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) or Juris Doctor (JD) program. This approach is almost always completed in a traditional, residency program and can take three to ten years to complete both programs.

If you are enrolled in an undergraduate program at CTU, you may also be eligible for Master's Advantage. This dual enrollment option allows students to swap classes in their bachelor's program for classes required for the master's, so your credit is applied to both programs. Doing so can reduce your tuition costs and help you graduate sooner than you otherwise would if pursuing degrees sequentially.

## WHAT IMPACTS THE TIME IT TAKES TO EARN YOUR DEGREE?

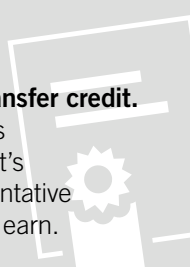
There are several key factors that can shorten or extend the time it takes to complete your Master's degree, including:

- ▶ **Transfer credit<sup>1</sup>:** Wherever and however you decide to study, you should inquire about earning credit for prior college courses, professional experience, experiential learning, and military training.
- ▶ **Fast Track<sup>TM2</sup>:** You may also be eligible for CTU Fast Track<sup>TM</sup> ([www.coloradotech.edu/fasttrack](http://www.coloradotech.edu/fasttrack)) challenge exams that give you the opportunity to earn college credit for what you already know. By passing multiple Fast Track<sup>TM</sup> exams you may graduate up to 30% faster and save up to 30% on tuition.

## At CTU, 78%

of undergraduates earn their degree with transfer credit.

The number of available transfer credits varies and is assessed on a case-by-case basis, so it's always best to speak with a university representative to find out how many transfer credits you can earn.



- ▶ **Course load:** You may be able to shorten the time it takes to complete your degree by as much as 6 months by completing more than the minimum number of required courses in an academic term. At CTU, for example, this is considered studying at an accelerated pace and involves taking an additional course in each 5.5 week session to move more quickly through your program.
- ▶ **Academic progress:** Students who achieve satisfactory academic progress—or a minimum grade point average (GPA)—are better able to stay on pace to graduate within the fastest time frame allowed. Those who must repeat courses after receiving a non-passing grade or withdraw from one or more classes may experience a delay in graduation and implications in their financial aid—including out of pocket expense near the end of their program.
- ▶ **Periods of non-enrollment:** Like repeating a course, taking a break from your degree program can affect the length of time it takes to earn your master's. Before enrolling in a degree program, decide if you are able to commit the next two or more years to your education. Life happens, so if an unexpected event occurs that demands you take a break from school, work with your university to protect the credits you've earned and develop a plan to re-enter as soon as you can.

## TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR CAREER WITH A CTU MASTER'S DEGREE

If you are a professional seeking a graduate degree taught by real-world instructors with practical knowledge driven by the demands of today's employers, explore more than 35 CTU master's degree programs. Accessible online or as a hybrid of online and on-campus classes in Aurora or Colorado Springs, CO., you can earn your master's in as little as one year and be on your way to the rewarding career you've been striving for.

### GET STARTED: CONNECT WITH US

Join the over 70,000 CTU alumni who make up a powerful, professional network that you can use the rest of your career. Take the next step toward accessing CTU's innovative learning technology to earn your master's degree.

If you have questions along the way, we're here to help. Call or visit us online to learn more.

**Call: 855.230.0555**

**Visit: [coloradotech.edu/degrees/masters](http://coloradotech.edu/degrees/masters)**

<sup>1</sup>Not all credits eligible to transfer. See the university's catalog regarding CTU's transfer credit policies.

<sup>2</sup>The ability to reduce time in school and/or reduce tuition depends on the number of Fast Track<sup>TM</sup> tests successfully passed. Fast Track<sup>TM</sup> program credits are unlikely to transfer. Not all programs are eligible for possible 30% reduction in time and money. CTU cannot guarantee employment or salary. Find employment rates, financial obligations and other disclosures at [www.coloradotech.edu/disclosures](http://www.coloradotech.edu/disclosures). Not all credits eligible to transfer. Military tuition rate subject to conditions, which are posted in the tuition schedule. See the university's catalog regarding CTU's transfer credit policies. Courses eligible subject to change. Courses eligible subject to change. Financial aid is available for those who qualify. Not all programs are available to residents of all states. 4435 N. Chestnut Street | Colorado Springs, CO 80907 3151 South Vaughn Way | Aurora, CO 80014. 852-1234567 0870253 03/15