

Graduate Admissions Frequently Asked Questions (Domestic Applicants)

Getting Started

How many entry terms are there each year?

Thomas has six entry terms each year, according to the following schedule. For most all programs, students can apply for entry in any term. Specific start and end dates for each term can be found on [the Academic Calendar](#).

Entry Terms	
Fall I	August
Fall II	October
Spring I	January
Spring II	March
Summer I	May
Summer II	July

What are the application deadlines?

Thomas has a rolling admission process year-round with no set application deadlines. Students will be considered for the next available entry term or may indicate their desired entry term in the application.

Students may sign up for and complete up to three graduate courses before they must formally apply and matriculate into a degree program (please email grad@thomas.edu to sign up for a course). For students who intend to apply for student loans to help cover the cost of their tuition, please note that you must be formally admitted to a program and must file a FAFSA.

Do I need to hold an undergraduate degree in the same area of study as the graduate degree I hope to pursue?

No, Thomas does not require a specific undergraduate degree as a prerequisite for any of our online graduate programs. An admissions counselor is always available to answer any questions you may have and help advise you on which program may be the best fit for your specific goals.

Note exclusively for our Master of Science in Cybersecurity program:

This program is designed for individuals in the field of computer science/cybersecurity who are looking to pursue advanced studies as well as career changers looking to enter the field. Applicants without an undergraduate degree in cybersecurity, computer science, or significant work experience in the field are expected to pass two entrance exams to ensure they have the foundational knowledge and technical proficiency necessary to succeed in the program. Our team is here to help provide a study guide and resources to prepare for the assessments. To date, every student who has attempted the entrance exams has successfully passed and entered the program.

Is there a minimum GPA requirement for admission to the graduate program?

A minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 is expected for graduate admittance for students entering their graduate studies immediately following graduation from an undergraduate program. Applicants who have met the program prerequisites and have an undergraduate GPA of 2.5-2.9 may be reviewed by the Provost for consideration of admission to a graduate program.

I do not meet the GPA admissions criteria. What if I've been out of school for a while and feel that my undergraduate GPA does not reflect my present motivation and preparation to succeed in a graduate program?

We understand that your undergraduate GPA may not reflect the kind of student you are today, especially if you have been out of school for a significant period. Thomas will consider years of work experience and other professional achievements as part of a holistic application review.

Can I take a course before I apply?

Yes! Here at Thomas, anyone can sign up for and complete up to three graduate courses before you are required to formally apply and matriculate into a degree program. The only prerequisite to signing up for a graduate course is the completion of an undergraduate degree in any subject area.

We have found that many working professionals like to take a course or two before formally applying to evaluate firsthand whether they feel ready to go back to school. If you are interested in signing up for a course in an upcoming term, please feel free to review our [course listing webpage](#) and email grad@thomas.edu to get registered.

Are all the courses in the graduate program 100% online?

Yes, all graduate programs are designed to be completed 100% online.* Students are not expected to come to campus or complete any academic work in person. Thomas has an online learning management system where faculty post assignments, share course materials, and host discussion boards or upload recorded lectures. Students submit all work online and faculty are available to meet virtually to answer any questions about assignments or course material.

*Thomas offers two in-person graduate programs including a general Master of Business Administration and a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in accounting for students who prefer an on-campus learning experience. Classes in this program are held Monday – Friday from 8:00AM – 12:00PM during the Fall and Spring terms.

Are online classes synchronous or asynchronous?

Graduate courses at Thomas are asynchronous, allowing students to log in and complete work at times that work best for their schedule.* For most all classes there is no expectation for students to log in at a certain time or engage with coursework in real-time. However, some faculty offer optional evening programs for students to virtually meet with their faculty and peers in real-time or engage in a live discussion. These sessions are recorded for later viewing for students who are unable to attend synchronously.

*Please note that some courses in the Master of Science in Education program require live, online engagement at a certain time one evening each week for eight consecutive weeks.

Application Materials

Is there an application fee?

No, Thomas does not charge an application fee. Students can complete the [free online application](#) anytime.

How do I request an official transcript from other institutions I have attended?

Thomas requires the submission of official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended as part of the application process. An official transcript is one that is sent directly from the applicant's former institution(s) through the school's official transcript issuing provider.

Applicants can request an official transcript from their former institution(s) by visiting the Office of the Registrar website at the institution(s) they attended and request that an electronic copy is sent to grad@thomas.edu or mailed via US Mail to Thomas College, Office of Graduate and Professional Studies, 180 West River Road, Waterville, ME 04901. If you have any questions about official transcripts, please contact grad@thomas.edu

Who should I ask to write my letters of reference?

Thomas does not require that applicants receive letters of reference from certain individuals. Recommendations can be submitted by colleagues, present or former supervisors, mentors, as well as civic or community leaders, professors, or college advisors - anyone who you feel is in the best position to speak to your ability to succeed in a graduate program.

Letters of reference must be submitted directly from your recommenders using the online application portal. (Letters emailed from an applicant directly will not be accepted.) Once you start the online application, you can visit the "Recommenders" tab where you will be asked to enter the name and contact information for two professional references. This will send an automated email with a personalized upload link directly to your references where they can upload their letter and complete this required step.

Are there any testing requirements for admission, such as the GRE or GMAT?

No, Thomas does not have any standardized testing requirements for admission.

Is there an interview requirement for admission?

No, Thomas does not have an interview requirement for admission. However, if you would like to meet our team, schedule a tour of campus, or visit with a faculty member before you apply, please reach out to us anytime. We would love to welcome you to campus, set up a virtual meeting, or speak over the phone!

Finances and Scholarships

Where can I find the tuition cost and total cost of attendance for my program?

Prospective students can find the cost of attendance for any program on the [Tuition & Fees webpage](#). The tuition costs in the online graduate programs are calculated per course rather than per credit hour. Students will be responsible for covering a nominal technology fee and the cost of any books or materials.

Are there scholarships available?

Current Thomas Undergraduate Students: Please reach out to the graduate office directly to learn more about scholarships for current undergraduate students.

How do I apply for student loans?

You can find a comprehensive overview of the financial aid available at Thomas College on the [student financial services webpage](#). Information on [student loans](#), [completing the FAFSA](#), and other financial documents can also be found on our website.

If you have any questions about financing your education and the resources that are available, please do not hesitate to contact our student financial services team at sfsdir@thomas.edu.

How can I tell if my employer is part of the employer partner network?

Thomas College has a growing network of [employer partners](#). Employees at our partner organizations can take one graduate course tuition free (even before applying) and receive a 10% tuition discount on all remaining courses in any degree or certificate program. If you are interested in signing up for a course or learning more about tuition benefits for employer partners, please contact grad@thomas.edu or visit our [employer partner webpage](#).

Program Details

How many weeks are in a term?

Online graduate courses at Thomas College are offered on an accelerated timeline. Each term is eight weeks in length with six terms offered each year. In most programs, students can begin their studies in any term.

How long will it take for me to complete my degree? Can I customize a degree completion timeline that works best for my schedule?

Thomas offers flexible degree completion timelines to accommodate each student's goals and availability, including a part-time and full-time track. The part-time track is the most popular degree pacing and allows students to take one course each eight-week term to complete the program in two calendar years. The full-time track is designed to be completed in as quickly as one year for individuals looking to pursue a more accelerated pathway, with students taking two courses every eight-week term.

Some students like to pursue a degree completion timeline that is longer than two years to accommodate their schedule and financial situation. Our team is happy to work with you to design a degree completion timeline that meets your specific goals and circumstances.

How soon will I hear back with a decision on my application?

Thomas has a rolling admission process, and decisions are typically issued within 5 business days of submitting a completed application.

I've never been an online student before. How are assignments, deadlines, and coursework structured? Can I meet with faculty if I have questions or need help on my assignments?

Taking courses 100% online provides flexibility for students looking to balance higher education with their busy schedules, but this can be a new experience for students who may be accustomed to exclusively in-person instruction.

Students will be given set deadlines for each of their assignments at the beginning of the term as outlined in the course syllabus. Specific assignment details and materials are posted at least one week in advance of any deadlines and students can choose to work ahead or keep pace with the deadlines outlined in the course syllabus. Optional evening lectures are offered in many courses for students who are looking to engage in real time with their faculty, but all lectures are recorded for viewing on demand for anyone who may not be able to attend in real-time.

Faculty are also available to schedule a virtual meeting, telephone calls, or even meet in person to talk about coursework and provide academic support.