The purpose of graduate education at the University was first articulated by the Aims and Ends statement associated with the organization of the Graduate School in 1927. The statement is as follows:

The student who undertakes graduate study should understand at the outset that work of this character implies more than the acquisition of knowledge under competent instruction. He or she should aspire to a degree of knowledge of a given subject in order to make a contribution that is of original and independent value. This does not imply that much of the student's energies are not still to be applied in the acquisition of facts universally accepted, a process that should continue through life, but in graduate study these facts are to be weighed, coordinated, and supplemented by the students own contributions.
Graduate Education Learning Outcomes
The Graduate School of the University of Mississippi has master's, specialist, and doctoral degree programs. The general learning outcomes of these degrees are summarized as follows. A student who completes a master's degree should - demonstrate a mastery of a body of knowledge in the discipline; the level of the material and/or the extent of mastery must be above that for the baccalaureate degree; - successfully use the basic methodologies of the discipline; - retrieve, evaluate, and utilize information relevant to the discipline; - communicate, both orally and in writing, in a manner and level of proficiency that is standard for the discipline; - (for thesis master's) conduct research or produce creative work; - (for non-thesis master's) function as a professional in the discipline. A student who completes a specialist degree should be able to demonstrate the above competencies and should - master a body of knowledge beyond that for a master's degree; - function as a professional in the discipline. A student who completes a doctoral degree should - demonstrate broad and advanced knowledge within the discipline; - successfully use a range of methodologies of the discipline; - independently perform original research; - communicate effectively; - function as a professional in the discipline.

Operational Procedures
The policies and regulations of a given Fall version of the Graduate School Catalog take effect with the registration procedures for that fall session. Graduate students whose notices of admission have been issued prior to a given fall session registration, but who deferred their initial registration, must conform to any changes in regulations made between the date of the admission and the initial registration. A graduate student making application for degree must meet the requirements of the catalog under which he or she was admitted or re-admitted. When a graduate student completes a degree program and seeks another degree, the student must satisfy the requirements stated in the catalog in effect during the enrollment period for the new degree. In the event that any regulation of the Graduate School conflicts with the regulation of a department or school, the Graduate School regulation must be met; the preceding statement, however, does not preclude the right of a department or school to impose additional requirements that exceed those of the Graduate School. Graduate students are expected to familiarize themselves with the academic requirements and regulations stated in this catalog. Ignorance of these requirements and regulations, incorrect statements or advice from faculty or students, or misunderstandings of these procedures will not be accepted as cause for waiving any requirement or regulation in this catalog. Graduate students who, because of exceptional or extraordinary circumstances, wish to be granted exceptions from the regulations of this catalog may petition in writing to the dean of the Graduate School. Such petitions must bear the recommendation of the department chair or dean concerned. The dean of the Graduate School may act upon the petition, or he or she may refer it for the recommendation of the Graduate Council. The recommendation of the Graduate Council will be considered final when approved by the dean of the Graduate School and the chancellor of the university.