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From: **James Marshall** <[jamesm@csufresno.edu](mailto:jamesm@csufresno.edu)>  
Date: Mon, Feb 11, 2019 at 9:21 AM  
Subject: MS vs. MA  
To: Thomas T Holyoke <[tholyoke@csufresno.edu](mailto:tholyoke@csufresno.edu)>  
Cc: roberth <[roberth@csufresno.edu](mailto:roberth@csufresno.edu)>, Oscar Vega <[ovega@csufresno.edu](mailto:ovega@csufresno.edu)>, Amarasinghe, Rajee <[ramarasi@csufresno.edu](mailto:ramarasi@csufresno.edu)>

Tom,

I was invited to the Senate Exec Meeting today to discuss the conversion of the MA in Math to an MS.  Unfortunately, I have an eye doctor appointment this afternoon, and while I'd hoped to be back in time for the Senate meeting, the procedure prevents me from seeing well for several hours, i.e., no driving, read, etc.  So I don't think I'll be able to make it.  Instead I offer this:

While historically, many universities differentiated the MA from the MS by the focus, by time, and by the culminating experience, none of those reasons persist here at Fresno State.

For example, at some institutions the MS degree focuses only on the disciplines science and engineering.  That is not the case at Fresno State and throughout the CSU.  Our MS in Counseling and MS in Crim are a good examples.

The MS at some institutions carry more units than the MA and consequently taking more time.  That's not true at Fresno State.  We have 30 unit MA and MS degrees.  Our average time to degree for a 30-unit MA is virtually the same as a 30-unit MS.

Some institutions, the MS is exclusively for thesis-based programs.  Again, that's not the case at Fresno State.  Our MA in History is a thesis-based degree, as our many others here and across the CSU.

There is also one very good reason for Math to change from an MA to an MS and that is international recruitment.  For whatever reason, per ISSP, international students value the MS more than the MA.

Given all of this, plus the fact that their BA was approved for conversion to a BS, I support the Math department in converting their MA to an MS, as did the University Graduate Committee.

Hope this helps,

Jim

James E. Marshall, Ph.D.

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