



GUIDELINES ON THE PREPARATION AND EXAMINATION OF THESES, MAJOR PAPERS, PROJECTS, OR EXTENDED ESSAYS

1. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are for all graduate programs at UFV. Used together with the [General Regulations for Graduate Studies](#) and the [Library Guidelines for Theses or Major Papers](#) most aspects of preparing and examining a master's thesis, major paper, project or extended essay are addressed. Note: Unless otherwise specified "major paper" is used in these guidelines to designate a major paper, project or extended essay.

Each program may also have additional requirements that have been approved by the Graduate Studies

of a monograph, demonstrating that the student is able to work in a scholarly manner, carry out research and organize results and is familiar with the principal works published on the subject of the thesis. A Master's thesis must be expressed in good literate style. Original scholarship is encouraged but not necessarily expected. A Master's thesis should not normally exceed one hundred pages. Longer theses are discouraged. Depending on the discipline, the duration of the thesis project can vary significantly, but should not normally exceed two years.

Major Paper

Major papers are shorter than a Master's thesis. They should normally be approximately fifty pages long. In some disciplines, the major paper may be a project report, a project evaluation report, a case study, an extended essay, or a more theoretical paper. Just like a master's thesis, they must be in good literate style and demonstrate that the student is able to work in a scholarly manner, carry out research and organize results and is familiar with the principal works published on the subject of the major paper. Original scholarship is encouraged but not necessarily expected. Depending on the discipline, a major paper can normally be completed within one semester, four months, of full time study.

3. POLICIES AND STANDARDS

Ethics Considerations

All research plans must comply with UFV Human Research Ethics and Animal Care [add links] policies. Students must familiarize themselves as soon as possible with these policies and, when applicable, seek the necessary approvals from the Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) or Animal Care Committee (ACC) before the research is initiated. Each program will have a point of contact that should be familiar with these policies as well. When a formal HREB or ACC review is required, the submission to the HREB or ACC must be submitted at the same time or after the thesis proposal is submitted to the AVP Research, Engagement & Graduate Studies for approval. The proposal must be approved by both the AVP and the HREB or ACC in order to proceed.

4. TIME LIMITS

Unless a different time limit has been specified for a particular program, a candidate for a master's degree is expected to complete all degree requirements **within seven years** of the date of the initial registration in the master's program. A Program Graduate Committee can specify its expectations of normal degree completion times for a given program as a guide to determining whether a student's progress is satisfactory.

5. CONTINUANCE REGISTRATION WHILE THE THESIS OR MAJOR PAPER IS BEING COMPLETED AND EXAMINED

Students must maintain their registration in the program until all the requirements, including the thesis or major paper, have been completed. See the General Regulations for Graduate Studies for more detail. Students who will not complete the thesis or major paper in the final semester of the program must seek GPC approval and register for a continuance section set up by the GPC in each semester until they are prepared to defend.

6. REGISTRATION OF TOPIC AND THESIS OR MAJOR PAPER PROPOSAL

The topic of the thesis or major paper must be registered with the Graduate Studies Office (GSO) before the student begins research. The registration process involves submitting a registration form to the GSO, which will then forward the information to the relevant faculty member for approval. The registration process is completed once the student has received approval from the GSO and the faculty member.

Guidelines on the Preparation

Make a recommendation to the AVP Graduate Studies on whether the Candidate should proceed to Final Oral Exam.

Participate in the Final Oral Examination whenever possible. If not possible, the External Examiner submits questions to be asked of the Candidate by the Research Supervisor.

NOMINATING THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER

The Candidate's Supervisor and Graduate Program Chair nominate at least two (but preferably three) people for the role of External Examiner. **Invitations to serve in this role must be initiated by the AVP Graduate Studies.** The AVP Graduate Studies will select and invite the External Examiner. The AVP Graduate Studies retains the authority to reject a recommended external examiner based upon a real or perceived conflict of interest, or ineligibility.

External Examiners are nominated using Form 04 [Recommendation to Proceed with Final Review or Examination](#). **This form should be submitted to AVP Graduate Studies approximately 6 weeks prior to the intended date of submission of the thesis for external examination.** Failure to provide this advanced notice is likely to result in delays in the later stages of the examination process. The external review cannot begin until the AVP Graduate Studies has an approved External Examiner confirmed to review the thesis.

External Examiner nominees should not be contacted by the Candidate, Supervisor or Graduate Program prior to the exam.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTERNAL EXAMINER

The Supervisor and Graduate Program are responsible for nominating well-qualified, objective, experienced individuals not associated or affiliated with UFV. Reflecting the importance of this role, it is imperative the External Examiner:

Have an established reputation in the area of the thesis research and be able to judge whether the thesis is acceptable at a university comparable to UFV.

Have had previous experience with the supervision and examination of master's students.

Hold a PhD (preferred) or at least a master's degree so they have a degree equal to or greater than the one which the Candidate is pursuing.

Hold the rank of Full, Associate, or Emeritus Professor (or the equivalent if outside North America) at a university that offers the degree the Candidate seeks, or have comparable expertise and standing if not at a university.

Have not acted as External Examiner in the Candidate's graduate program or for a Candidate

Guidelines on the Preparation and Examination

When required to make corrections to the thesis after the oral exam, the student must do so within two weeks following the exam and submit the corrected version to the supervisory committee who can then recommend that the degree be awarded.

If the corrections cannot be made by the deadline, and a new semester has started, the student must seek permission from the GPC to register for a continuance session and maintain registration until the corrected copies are submitted and accepted. A maximum of one semester is allowed to submit corrected copies of the thesis, unless permission has been obtained from the AVP Graduate Studies. Failure to submit the corrected copies within these time limits may result in the Graduate Program Committee closing the file.

14. ORAL EXAM OF MASTER'S THESES

A Master's thesis is subject to oral exam which is chaired by an Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor representing the AVP Graduate Studies and who is not a member of the examining committee. The Graduate Program Committee arranges the exam of a master's thesis.

Role of an External Examiner in a Master's Thesis Oral Exam

An external examiner participates in the examination of the thesis to provide an independent assessment of the quality of the candidate's research. Prior to the exam, the external examiner will submit to the AVP Graduate Studies the External Examiner Report. All members of the Supervisory Committee and the student will receive copies of the External Examiner's report.

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15. FINAL SUBMISSION OF