

The Path to Graduation – Master’s Students with Thesis Option*

- Develop program of study and file Permanent Program of Study form with the Registrar’s Office after 9 hours of coursework have been completed (usually during the second semester of enrollment). This form may be revised and resubmitted if the program of study changes.
- Complete required coursework.
- Identify faculty advisor to serve as committee chair and develop thesis proposal. If research protocol clearance is needed, submit application to the appropriate review board.
- Fill out Permission to Elect form, obtain required signatures and call number from department, and submit form to The Graduate College for approval prior to the first term of enrollment in thesis credit hours. Registration for thesis hours must comply with the University’s continuous enrollment requirement as well as any additional department requirements.
- Formally appoint thesis committee by submitting the Notification of Appointment to a Dissertation, Project, or Thesis Committee form to The Graduate College. The committee must be appointed prior to the final term of enrollment in thesis hours, but earlier appointment is advised. The committee may be revised if changes are needed by filling out the same form marked as a revision to the committee.
- Conduct research for and write thesis.
- Attend workshops on thesis formatting and electronic submission of thesis. Dates for workshops are posted on the Activities and Events Calendar.
- Apply for a graduation audit at least four months prior to the anticipated graduation date. Earlier application is advised – the graduation date can be changed for no additional charge by contacting Graduation Auditing.
- After Graduation Auditing has confirmed that all other requirements for graduation have been met, arrange for defense of thesis with thesis committee.
- Download and complete two thesis approval forms to be signed after defense. Also download Thesis Check-In Form which lists items that must be submitted with your thesis.
- Hold thesis defense at least one week prior to thesis submission deadline and secure the signatures of all committee members on the thesis approval forms.
- Format thesis according to *Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses, Specialist Projects, and Dissertations* and submit the committee-approved document to The Graduate College by the submission deadline specified in the audit letter and on the Calendar of Deadlines (usually the Friday four weeks before commencement).

- Graduation Auditing will send notification of commencement details several weeks before commencement to all students who have applied to graduate in that term. Since there is no commencement ceremony in August, August master's candidates will be invited to participate in the June ceremony.
- Final approval of the master's thesis must be attained no later than four weeks after commencement for the degree to be conferred.

**Note: This information is intended to serve as a brief overview of the timeline that should be followed to ensure timely graduation of students writing a master's thesis. The policies and procedures published in the Graduate Catalog and any additional requirements specified in your department's graduate handbook should be followed. Forms and additional information can be found on The Graduate College website at <http://www.wmich.edu/grad> .*