

# MASTER'S DEGREE BY THESIS

## Admission

Admission to a master's degree program as a regular student is granted, on the recommendation of the department concerned, to:

- the holder of an honours baccalaureate or its equivalent, as set out in the Admission Requirements ([calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/admission/admission-requirements/](http://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/admission/admission-requirements/)); or
- a student who has satisfied the requirements for transfer from the provisional student category.

Individual programs may have additional admission requirements. Before applying, applicants are responsible for consulting the specific program in this calendar regarding such requirements.

## Minimum Duration

At least two semesters of full-time study must be devoted to a master's degree program if the student is admitted as a regular student. However, some programs may require a longer minimum duration period. A student admitted as a provisional student requiring two semesters in that category, must spend at least one additional semester as a regular full-time student. For a student registered part-time, the minimum duration period is four part-time semesters.

## Completion

Normally, a thesis must be formally submitted (see Submission of Thesis ([calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/thesis/](http://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/thesis/))) or the program otherwise completed, within six semesters (Program Duration ([calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/registration/](http://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/registration/))). However, some programs may require completion of the degree requirements within a briefer time period.

## Advising

The student's program is established and progress kept under review by the academic unit in which the student is enrolled (see Enrolment and Registration ([calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/registration/](http://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/registration/))). The day-to-day responsibility will rest with the Advisor. There will be an Advisory Committee of at least two graduate faculty members, the chair of which committee is normally the Advisor of the student's program. Departments and schools are encouraged to involve graduate faculty from other academic units as members of Advisory Committees. The Advisory Committee must be established and the Advisory Committee Appointment form submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies not later than the 20th class day of the student's second registered semester.

## Courses

A master's degree by thesis at the University of Guelph requires the demonstration of a reasonable mastery of a concentrated area/field of study. This is shown by the achievement of satisfactory standings in courses, as determined by the department, and completion of a thesis.

## Prescribed Studies

The proportion of weight attached to the research and thesis may vary, even within a department. Accordingly, the number of prescribed courses may correspondingly vary. Where the student's program requires a thesis, the number of course credits will not be fewer than 1.5, and must

be made up entirely of graduate level courses. Any courses selected that exceed the 1.5 minimum credits must also be acceptable to the department and the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies) for credit towards the graduate degree. The student must obtain an overall weighted average grade of at least 'B-' in the prescribed course (see Establishment of Program ([calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/student-programs/](http://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/student-programs/)) and Prescribed Studies ([calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/academic-standings/](http://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/academic-standings/))).

## Additional Courses

In addition to the prescribed studies the candidate may take ancillary courses that support the specific discipline. These courses may be at either the undergraduate or the graduate level.

## Research

At least one full-time semester must be devoted to thesis research. Students should register for UNIV\*7500 Research/Writing in each semester that they are working towards their thesis and/or are not taking any other courses for which an active section exists. Individual programs may require a longer period. To avoid undue prolongation of the student's program, the research topic should be identified early in the program and approved by the Advisory Committee.

## Thesis

Each student will submit a thesis, expressed in satisfactory literary form, based on research in a topic connected with the student's special discipline. The thesis must demonstrate the student's capacity for original and independent work and should include a critical evaluation of work that has previously been done in the student's area/field of research. The thesis should emphasize any new conclusions that may be drawn from the student's own research.

For purposes of equivalency calculations, a master's thesis is generally considered to be the equivalent of 2.0 credits.

## Procedures

The thesis may be submitted at any time of the year, but candidates are encouraged to have the final examination well in advance of the deadline date for thesis submission. Students should be aware of the deadline schedule, a copy of which may be obtained in the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. and Postdoctoral Studies. Students should discuss their thesis with their Advisors early in their final semester.

As the student writes their thesis, they are expected to be in regular communication with the Advisory committee who will review a draft(s) and recommend revisions. When a draft is completed that the Advisory Committee recommends for examination, the final draft is sent to the members of the Master's Examination Committee and the final oral examination is scheduled.

Each department is expected to establish master's examination guidelines to assist members of the Examination Committee to follow, as far as possible, a uniform procedure in the evaluation of theses, and in the conduct of oral defenses of the thesis, so that all students are subjected to uniformly fair examinations. Where policy in this calendar appears to conflict with that in departmental guidelines, the policy in this calendar takes precedence.

Following the master's examination the student, if successful, prepares the thesis in final form for its submission to the Assistant VP Graduate Studies (see below). The thesis must include any minor corrections or

revisions by the Examination Committee. Approval of the thesis takes the form of a Certificate of Approval, signed by the Examination Committee.

## Master's Examination

The final oral examination, devoted chiefly to the defence of the thesis, is a departmental examination identified as the master's examination. The Master's Examination Committee normally consists of four members appointed by the Department Chair, as follows:

- A member of the regular graduate faculty or retired faculty with Associated Graduate Faculty status of the department, who is not a member of the Advisory Committee, to act as chair of the master's Examination Committee and to make arrangements therefor;
- A member of the candidate's Advisory Committee (normally, the Advisor);
- A member of the graduate faculty who may be a member of the Advisory Committee;
- A fourth member appointed from among graduate faculty from another department, from the department or from the Advisory Committee, according to departmental and/or examination requirements.

If possible, a graduate faculty member of another department should be included on the Master's Examination Committee.

### Note:

- The Chair serves to administer and ensure the proper conduct of the examination. The Chair is expected to exercise full control over the proceedings and does not participate directly in questioning the candidate during the examination. In unforeseen circumstances where an examiner is unable to attend due to sudden illness, accident, etc., the Chair will attempt to receive questions to ask on behalf of the absent member, to be answered by the student to the satisfaction of the examiners.

The examination is open to the public; members of the audience may question the candidate only upon invitation of the Chair of the Examination Committee.

The examination is passed and the thesis approved if there is no more than one negative vote. An abstention is regarded as a negative vote. The report to the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies) will record the decision as unsatisfactory or satisfactory. If unsatisfactory, the candidate may be given a second attempt. A second unsatisfactory result constitutes a recommendation to the Board of Graduate Studies that the student be required to withdraw (see Unsatisfactory Progress ([calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/unsatisfactory-progress/](http://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/unsatisfactory-progress/)) and Appeals of Decisions ([calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/appeals-decisions/](http://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/appeals-decisions/))).

## Copies of Thesis

One electronic (.pdf) copy of the certified thesis must be submitted to the Atrium (<https://atrium.lib.uoguelph.ca/>) by the thesis submission deadline date shown in the Schedule of Dates in the Graduate Calendar. A brief abstract consisting of no more than 150 words must also be included in the electronic submission. The Certificate of Approval signed by the Examination Committee, a copy of the circulation waiver, and the copying license must also be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Departments may have a requirement to submit a bound copy of the thesis.

## Publication

The university requires publication of the thesis in the following manner:

One electronic copy of the thesis is uploaded by the National Library of Canada, which will also receive the agreement form signed by the student authorizing the National Library to publish the thesis and to make copies available for sale on request. The National Library will upload the thesis exactly as it is and will list the thesis in Theses Canada (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/services/theses/theses/Pages/theses-canada.aspx>) as a publication of the National Library.

An abstract of not more than 150 words, prepared by the author and approved by the Advisor, and submitted as part of the electronic thesis submission, is also uploaded by the National Library.

The National Library's Theses Non-Exclusive License (<https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/frm-nl59-2-e.pdf>) will be sent to the student prior to the master's examination, to be signed and submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies immediately after the successful completion of the examination.

The student, in consultation with the Advisor and the Department Chair, has the right to request that circulation and/or copying of the thesis in any form be withheld for up to one year.

## Program Regulations

Individual programs may have regulations in addition to those described in this section. Students are responsible for consulting the specific program in this calendar regarding any such regulations. University regulations, as specified herein, take precedence, and may not be overruled by any program regulation.