

2016

Master of Arts in Writing Graduate Thesis Requirements

Nova Southeastern University

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Nova Southeastern University, "Master of Arts in Writing Graduate Thesis Requirements" (2016). *College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Course Catalogs*. 7.

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M.A. in Writing 2016 Graduate Thesis Requirements



Graduate Thesis Requirements

The thesis represents the culmination of a student's work in a master's degree program at the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. Completing the thesis demonstrates that the student can work independently, integrate discipline-specific information, and respond to feedback. Students must register for 18 credits of graduate coursework before taking master's thesis courses.

Types of Theses

The thesis may take one of the following forms:

- **Research Thesis:** Student designs, conducts, and reports findings from qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research projects.
- **Theoretical Thesis:** Student examines a well-focused question or problem through an informed context that is critical, theoretical, and/or historical.
- **Creative Thesis** Student produces one extended work or a collection of works of fiction, nonfiction, or poetry. All creative theses should include substantial explanation of the student's evolution as a writer and placement of thesis work in an historical or literary context.
- **Technical Thesis:** Student produces a substantial manual, guidebook, scholarly or professional Web site, white paper, report, or grant proposal.

Thesis Phases

Thesis projects, formats, and credit requirements are specific to the student's area of study. Thesis details should be finalized with the thesis adviser. The thesis process should include the following three phases.

PHASE 1: Selecting a Committee and Writing a Proposal

Advising Committee

For guidance throughout the research and writing process, students first select a thesis adviser. The thesis adviser must be a full-time NSU faculty member in the student's discipline. Ideally, the thesis adviser will have expertise that is relevant to the student's area of study. In consultation with the adviser, students then select additional faculty members to be a part of the thesis committee.

Writing students must select only one thesis committee member, who must be a member of the college's full-time faculty.

The thesis adviser meets regularly with the student to set goals, review drafts, and ensure progress. Committee members give feedback on the proposal and the final draft, as well as evaluate the Thesis Defense.

Writing a Thesis Proposal and Submitting an IRB Application

After selecting a committee, the student must write a short proposal describing the theoretical background, proposed methods, timeline, and budget (if applicable) for the thesis project and submit it to the committee for approval. Under consultation with the committee, the proposal is reviewed to ensure feasibility, clear focus, and potential for development. When the proposal has been approved by the committee members, the student and committee members sign the Thesis Proposal Approval Form (can be obtained from a faculty adviser), and the committee authorizes the student to complete the IRB application form (if applicable). Students should initiate the thesis IRB application process as early as possible, as the process can be time consuming. The necessary requirements and forms are available [here](#).

Once completed, the student submits the Thesis Proposal Approval Form and the IRB application(if applicable) to the chair of the Department of Writing and Communication for review and approval.

PHASE 2: Research, Data Collection, and Writing the Thesis

Thesis research and data collection should occur according to the approved timeline and IRB specifications (when applicable).

In the latter stages of writing, line edits should be implemented to make the writing clear, cohesive, and grammatically correct. Documentation should be accurate and conform to the most recent updates of documentation style required of the student's discipline.

Prior to the defense, the student submits final copies of the project to each committee member and to the Department Chair.

PHASE 3: Thesis Defense

After the student has submitted final copies of the thesis, he/she will schedule a Thesis Defense, with the thesis committee's approval. The thesis defense should take place during the student's final semester of the program. The student and the thesis adviser should discuss appropriate presentation of the project prior to the defense. The defense will be before the graduate faculty and an audience of other students and invited guests. During the event, the student summarizes the project, presents the major findings, and addresses questions from the thesis committee. If appropriate, the student may give a reading. The student's presentation of the project and answers to these questions will be considered as part of the assessment of the thesis project. After the committee finishes asking questions, audience members will have the opportunity to ask questions of the student.

After the Thesis Defense, the committee members will assess all parts of the project and decide whether or not to recommend approval of the thesis. The committee may require that the student complete further work or revisions following the defense. If approval is recommended, the committee will complete the signature page, and the student will submit the thesis for final approval by the department chair. Finally, the student will submit one copy of the final thesis to the department to be bound and become part of the university's thesis archive. This copy must adhere to the Thesis Format and Style Guidelines (below).

Important Deadlines

	FALL SEMESTER	WINTER SEMESTER
Thesis Proposal due to Department Chair	midterm week of winter semester	midterm week of fall semester
Thesis due to Department Chair	October 1	March 1
Thesis Defense	November 1–7	April 1–7

Format and Style Guidelines

Students must adhere to the following Thesis Format and Style Guidelines. After successful completion of the Thesis Defense, each student will complete the following steps.

1. Make all final revisions and prepare one final manuscript according to the following guidelines.
 - The manuscript should be double-spaced in Times New Roman, 12-point font.
 - The left margin should be 1.5".
 - All other margins (top, right, and bottom) should be 1".
 - Page numbers should be placed in a header: top right, 0.5" from the top, numeral only.
 - Front matter should be prepared.
2. Submit an electronic copy of the manuscript, including front matter, in one document to the Department Chair. The chair will review the formatting and alert student to any necessary changes.
3. Once the manuscript has been approved by the chair, the student will:
 - Submit one final electronic copy to the chair that will become part of the department's digital thesis archive.
 - Print one copy of the complete manuscript, including front matter, on 100% cotton fiber paper. The signature page must include original signatures. This copy should be submitted to the Department Chair, will be bound, and will become part of the department's thesis archive.

If the student would like to have a bound copy, he/she must submit an additional manuscript, including front matter and original signatures, and a check for the total amount. Interested students should ask the chair for current pricing information. All manuscripts should be submitted at the same time.