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# **Graduate Student Handbook: Master's Degree**

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**UND** SCHOOL OF  
GRADUATE STUDIES  

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

**Introduction** This handbook is intended to guide University of North Dakota graduate students through the procedures and processes of the School of Graduate Studies. The School of Graduate Studies is dedicated to serving students as they progress through their programs. One of its missions is to ensure that standards are being met. This handbook is a step-by-step guide for students who strive to meet those standards.

**Any exception to these policies must be approved by the School of Graduate Studies Dean.**

This handbook is published by the School of Graduate Studies of the University of North Dakota under the authority of the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. It is considered a supplement to the UND Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog.

Edited by Gail Holweger, Brenda McCauley and Rita Amundson, School of Graduate Studies.

**UND is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution (for additional information on Equal Opportunity policies and procedures, see UND catalogs and other major printed pieces). The ADA Accessibility Line is available to report disability access problems on campus, 701-777-2796 (TDD) or 701-777-2591 (Voice).**

## Master Degree Checklist

For more information refer to the Master's student handbook and the Style and Policy Manual for Theses and Dissertations. All forms, handbooks, and manuals are available on the School of Graduate Studies website at: [graduateschool.und.edu](http://graduateschool.und.edu). Published deadlines are printed in the UND academic catalog and the Dates & Deadlines for each semester

- Complete undergraduate pre-requisites as stated in your admission letter** (*This only applies to students admitted in provisional or qualified status*).
- Select the Members of Your Faculty Advisory Committee** (*thesis only*) (*Recommended: Second Semester*)
- Submit Your Program of Study** (*Recommended: Second Semester*)
- Submit a Topic Proposal of Your Research** (*As early as possible, but no later than the semester before you plan to graduate*)
- Advance to Candidacy** (*You must be advanced to candidacy the semester before you plan to graduate. When all the above requirements are met, and you have completed at least 12 graduate credits with a 3.0 GPA, you will be advanced to candidacy. You will be mailed a status sheet from the School of Graduate Studies of Graduate Studies.*)
- Apply to Graduate** (*You must submit this by the published deadline for the term in which you plan to graduate*)

### **Graduation Requirements for Independent Study, Scholarly Project or Design Project**

- Submit the final copy of your independent study, scholarly project or design project to your advisor**  
*Check with your advisor for this requirement. He/she will need sufficient time to read before the Final Report Deadline.*
- Complete Comprehensive Exams** (*Check with your department for this requirement.*)
- Your Advisor will submit the form "Final Report on Candidate" to the School of Graduate Studies.**  
*(This form must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies by the published deadline for the term in which you plan to graduate)*

### **Graduation Requirements for Thesis Completion** – Please check our website for any updated information and deadlines.

- Submit Preliminary Approval and Notice of Defense form to the School of Graduate Studies**  
*(Forms must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies by the published deadline for the term in which you plan to graduate)*
- Format Check** - The School of Graduate Studies will provide one format check. A list of formatters/editors is also available at the School of Graduate Studies if you prefer to hire your own formatter. Submit a complete one-sided draft of your thesis or dissertation to the School of Graduate Studies so that the format review can begin. Be sure to include the [Format Checklist](#) with your document. If you have scheduled your defense in advance of the [deadline](#), you must submit the complete draft within two weeks before the defense date.
- Hold your oral defense.** Forms to bring to your defense for committee signatures: (1) Approval page of thesis and (2) Final Report on Candidate. (*Last day to defend is the published deadline for the term in which you plan to graduate*).
- Submit Electronic PDF of Thesis to UMI/ProQuest for Publishing.**
- Complete Comprehensive Exams** (*Check with your department for this requirement*)
- Final Report on Candidate form will be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies**  
*(This form must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies by the published deadline)*

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## Mission of the School of Graduate Studies

### The Mission of The School of Graduate Studies

- \* Provides opportunities for scholarly and creative specialization through study for advanced degrees;
- \* Offers opportunities for advanced study for those pursuing professions, personal interests, and life long learning;
- \* Ensures the standards of excellence in graduate education.

### Mission of the University

The University of North Dakota, as a member of the North Dakota University System, serves the state, the country and the world community through teaching, research, creative activities, and service. State assisted, the University's work depends also on federal, private, and corporate sources. With other research universities, the University shares a distinctive responsibility for the discovery, development, preservation and dissemination of knowledge. Through its sponsorship and encouragement of basic and applied research, scholarship, and creative endeavor, the University contributes to the public well-being.

The University maintains its legislatively enacted missions in liberal arts, business, education, law, medicine, engineering and mines; and has also developed special missions in nursing, fine arts, aerospace, energy, human resources and international studies. It provides a wide range of challenging academic programs for undergraduate, professional, and graduate students through the doctoral level. The University encourages students to make informed choices, to communicate effectively, to be intellectually curious and creative, to commit themselves to lifelong learning and the service of others and to share responsibility both for their own communities and for the world. The University promotes cultural diversity among its students, staff, and faculty.

In addition to its on-campus instructional and research programs, the University of North Dakota separately and cooperatively provides extensive continuing education and public service programs for all areas of the state and region.

**Student  
Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of the student to become informed and to observe all regulations, procedures and deadlines required by the University, the Graduate Catalog, and the program the student is pursuing. Faculty are available for advisement, but the student must initiate all steps of the processing of documents by the published deadline. Deadlines are published in the time schedule of classes and the UND academic catalog. Ignorance of a rule does not constitute a basis for waiving that rule.

The student is responsible for ascertaining his or her academic standing and grade-point average. All graduate students must maintain a 3.00 GPA. While the School of Graduate Studies attempts to notify students regarding any problems in the student's progress toward a degree, the student alone is responsible for maintaining satisfactory academic standing and progress.

**Listserv Information**

The School of Graduate Studies is regularly seeking to improve communication with our stakeholders. Our listservs provide a convenient way to distribute important information to graduate faculty, graduate students and administrators. In order to better manage the flow of notices, we shall be posting to our listservs on a weekly basis. We encourage all of our stakeholders to review the notifications to ensure you are aware of current activities.

## Step One: Advisor or Chair of Committee

*Recommended Time Frame: First Semester*

### *Advisor*

Students are appointed an advisor when admitted to the program. If you are forming a committee or making a change to your advisor, use the form titled: “***Master’s Degree – New Committee or Change to Advisor or Committee***”. Your advisor/chair must be a member of the Graduate Faculty. The list of Graduate Faculty is available on our website: <http://graduateschool.und.edu/faculty-and-staff/resources.cfm>

Be prepared to tell your advisor what you want to research. Although it is all right to change your mind later, you should have a clear sense of what you want to study.

### *New Committee or Change to Advisor or Committee*

Complete the form “***Master’s Degree – New Committee or Change to Advisor or Committee.***” Please have the faculty member(s) sign. \* **The graduate director of your department also needs to sign or it cannot be processed!** Then forward this form to the School of Graduate Studies. The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies has the final authority for approving your committee or change.

It is wise to put a good deal of thought into your decision, as you will be working closely with your advisor/chair for as long as it takes you to finish your degree. Questions you may want to consider when choosing your advisor/chair include the following:

### *What are the professor’s academic interests? Do they match my own?*

It is common sense to choose faculty who have similar academic interests as you. For example, if you study the Vietnam War, why would you choose someone who specializes in medieval history?

If you are not sure whether faculty have expertise in your specific topic of interest — ask. You may also want to ask for a list of his/her recent and past publications. Reading faculty’s own work is the best way to determine his/her academic interests. If your interests do not match, he/she will likely suggest someone else with whom you should work.

***How many other graduate students does the professor advise? Will he/she have time for you?***

***What has the experience of other students who have selected professors as their advisor/committee been?***

It is important that you find out how much time the professor has for each of his/her students. A professor who is spread too thin may be a source of frustration for you. If possible, talk with other students who have worked with the professor you are considering. Keep in mind, however, that some personalities simply do not mix well together. You will not necessarily have the same experience with a certain professor as that of another graduate student. Do not base your decision about a faculty member on one person's opinion. Again, common sense is key here. You may find and look over past theses, dissertations, and independent studies. Find out from the professor who you are considering, what his/her recent graduates are doing now. A good advisor will be able to share some success stories.

***Do I get along with this Professor?***

It is of absolute importance to have a cordial and professional relationship with your faculty advisor/chair. You will be spending far too much time with one another over the course of several years to have a contentious relationship. That having been said, do not select faculty because he/she is a nice person.

\*Although it may be more enjoyable to work with someone who is amiable, do not choose someone on the basis of personality. You need to select a person who you can guide you along and who is the best fit for you academically and professionally.

***Will the professor speak honestly with me about my progress and ideas?***

A good advisor/chair will have clearly articulated and realistic standards. You need to select someone who will support you and your efforts, but who is also willing to offer his/her honest opinion and criticism, whether or not you want to hear it.

***Will the professor offer ideas and suggestions related to my research?***

When you visit with them are new ideas generated? Do the two of you talk about your topic with enthusiasm? Master's theses take time to complete. Make sure you have a topic that is stimulating and an advisor/committee who is interested in it.

Although you will probably not know the answers to all of these questions, they are important issues to consider. Talk to other graduate students and, if necessary, talk to other professors who you trust. Perhaps the best way is to visit with the members of your department. Ask to set up a brief meeting with various professors, visit with them in the hall, pull them aside after class, etc. Make an informed decision.

**\* GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR - POSITION DESCRIPTION:** Each academic graduate department or program should have a faculty member who is the director or coordinator of graduate affairs for that program. This individual, with the assistance of the other graduate faculty in the department, is responsible for the administration of the graduate program(s) in the department or across departments – in the case of cross-departmental programs – and also serves as a liaison with the School of Graduate Studies. The specific duties assigned to the graduate program director position may vary somewhat from department to department, but typically such an individual often has responsibility for coordinating a variety of activities, such as academic advising of graduate students, reviewing graduate applications, admissions decisions, the allocation of fellowships and assistantships, and the appointment of faculty members to graduate student committees. This person is often the department's point of contact for prospective students. The graduate program director communicates university-wide policies about graduate programs to the departmental faculty and communicates the departmental decisions and recommendations to the School of Graduate Studies.

## **Step Two: Select the Members of Your Faculty Advisory Committee (thesis)**

*Recommended Time Frame: Second Semester*

Once you have selected the chair of your committee, the two of you must decide who will make up your Faculty Advisory Committee. Before you complete Step Three in the School of Graduate Studies process (submitting your program of study), you will need to formalize your committee.

### **Thesis Option**

You and your advisor need to select at least two other graduate faculty members to serve on your committee. Three committee members including your chair are standard. If your program of study includes a minor, one of your three-committee members must be from that respective department.

### **Non-thesis Option**

(Independent Study  
Scholarly Project  
Project Design)

If you have chosen the non-thesis option, you need only an advisor.

*The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies recommends that you convene your Advisory Committee at least once every six months. Discuss your progress and any potential research problems with your Advisory Committee early and often.*

*Remember, your Advisory Committee is there to help you!*

## **Step Three: Submit Your Program of Study**

*Recommended Time Frame: Second Semester*

Your Program of Study is a listing of the courses and credits you need to take in order to meet the requirements for your degree and major (your area of concentration). In addition to a major, some students elect to obtain a minor (a concentrated study in a specific supporting field) or to take courses in a cognate area (a selection of courses providing broad support to the major). The courses for your major, minor, and/or cognate are to all be included in your Program. All courses need to be approved for graduate credit unless in a cognate area.

It is your responsibility to know what the course and credit requirements are for your department. Review the “Departmental Programs” section of the Graduate Student Catalog for detailed information regarding your requisite courses. You should also consult your advisor or the departmental Graduate Director when preparing your Program of Study.

### **Number of credits required for UND graduate degrees**

Keep in mind that credits vary with each department. Check the degree requirements for your program in the Academic Catalog)  
**Do not enroll in more than 2 credits of 997 independent study or 995 scholarly project.**

### **General Guidelines**

At least one-half of the credits for your degree must be in courses numbered 500 or higher. Keep your graduation date in mind, as most upper level courses are not offered every semester.

Only those UND courses listed in the Graduate Catalog are eligible for use on your program (except for courses used in a cognate area).

### **Minor**

A minor is a concentrated study in a specific supporting field at the graduate level. A minor must be titled (a UND graduate program) and listed on the student’s program of study and be approved by a Graduate Faculty member of the minor department/program. The minor will be listed on the student’s transcript. Only the courses approved for graduate credit may be included in a minor.

### **Cognate**

If you choose to have a cognate, all UND courses numbered 300 and higher listed in the Undergraduate and Graduate catalog are eligible. The number of credits required for a cognate varies from department to department. Check with your advisor or Graduate Director for the mandatory number of credits you need to complete.

If you choose to use 300 or 400 level courses for graduate credit, it is understood that you will be required to do additional work,

over and above that typically required of undergraduates. This additional work is typically of an independent nature. For more information, talk with the professor of the course. Be sure these courses are labeled as a “cognate” on your program of study.

### **Organization of your program of study**

Group your courses into the appropriate sections and supply a title for each one: major, minor, cognate, foundations, etc. Leave some space between your sections to allow for any future minor revisions.

Be sure you have included the number of required credits in the total program, the major, the minor, the cognate, and the foundations areas.

Make sure to list the credit amount for each course in the appropriate column.

### **Transfer credits**

Graduate work is considered for transfer only on an individual basis and only after the student has completed satisfactory work in residence at UND. The transfer credits are approved by the student’s advisory committee and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and are included in the program of study for the UND graduate degree. Only those transfer credits will be recorded on the UND transcript. If you plan to include transfer credits in your program, make sure they can be applied to your degree. This is something you may want to double check. The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies has the final say on transfer credits.

Transfer courses must be listed on your program of study exactly as they appear on your transcript with the exception that quarter credits be converted into semester credits. If you have not yet completed the courses from which you will be transferring credits, list the institution they will be taken from next to the course.

Do not list more than the maximum number of acceptable transfer credits on your program. Up to 8-9 credits of *eligible* transfer work is acceptable with a grade of B or better. For detailed information, refer to the “Transfer of Graduate Credits” section in the Graduate Catalog. An official transcript should be sent to the School of Graduate Studies.

### **Non-degree credits**

You can apply up to nine graduate non-degree credits to your degree if they are approved on your program of study.

**Over-age and Obsolete courses**

Graduate courses more than seven years old are considered obsolete and may not be included on your program of study. However, you may revalidate a UND course by submitting a plan of study for approval to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. If you plan to revalidate any UND courses, a revalidation plan must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies Dean before the revalidation process is undertaken. Your revalidation plan must involve the professor with whom you took the course or a faculty member with similar expertise if the original professor is no longer at UND. Attach the revalidation plan to your Program of Study for approval if you want the course(s) to be applied to your degree.

**Regulatory Compliance**

If you plan to conduct research on human subjects, you must first receive approval from the Institutional Review Board (See Step 4). You are not allowed to conduct research until you receive this approval. Forms and information are available at the Office of Research Development & Compliance (Twamley Hall, 777-4279). Keep in mind that you must complete the appropriate training to do human subjects research. The Office of Research Development & Compliance posts a website with the necessary training module: [www.und.edu/dept/orpd](http://www.und.edu/dept/orpd). Research involving animals, recombinant DNA, radiation, and bio-hazardous agents also require special approval. Please consult with your advisor regarding approval of such research.

**Signatures**

*Non-thesis /Independent Study:*

Advisor and Graduate Director

\* If you declare a minor you also need the Graduate Director of that department to sign the program.

*Thesis*

Advisory Committee

*\*If you declare a minor, one committee member must be from the minor department*

**The final step is to submit your program to the School of Graduate Studies for the Dean’s approval**

A copy will be sent to you and your advisor once approved.

**Changes to a program of study**

After consulting with your advisor, fill out the form “Changes to a Program of Study”. After your advisor signs the form, submit it to the School of Graduate Studies for the Dean’s approval. **Do not submit a new program of study, unless there are major changes.**

**SPECIAL NOTE:**

**Think about your education and career goals before determining whether you will choose the thesis or non-thesis option (if this choice is available).**

**If you change from a thesis to a non-thesis option, you need to submit a new program of study, as well as a new topic proposal and advisor appointment. This change requires the approval of the Dean and must be clearly justified.**

**Do not register for your thesis or independent study until you are sure which option you are choosing. Any changes to a transcript require an administrative procedures petition. A permanent SP or UP for thesis credits already taken will be recorded on your transcript.**

## **Step 4: Submit a Proposal of Your Research Topic**

*Recommended Time Frame: As soon as possible, but no later than the semester prior to your final semester*

*The Dean of The School of Graduate Studies recommends that you convene your Advisory Committee at least once every six months. Discuss your progress and any potential research problems with your Advisory Committee early and often.*

*Remember, your Advisory Committee is there to help you! You should submit your research proposal at the beginning of your research, not the end.*

Your proposal of a topic for an independent study, research project, or thesis, must be approved by your Faculty Advisory Committee and the Dean of The School of Graduate Studies before you can become a candidate for your degree (Step 5). You cannot graduate in the same semester or summer session in which you become a candidate and therefore **you must receive approval on your proposal prior to your final semester**. This requirement is in your best interest, for it is important that you do not waste time and energy by undertaking substantial work on a topic that has not yet been approved. Work with your advisor to determine what requirements your department needs to submit the topic proposal.

The earlier you submit your proposal the better. You should expect to go through many drafts of your project, whether it is a thesis or independent study. This is often frustrating for students, for it can and often does delay their planned graduation date. The sooner you know what you are researching, the sooner you can begin your project, and the sooner you can begin making revisions. When possible, plan ahead!

### **Regulatory Compliance**

Students need approval from the appropriate institutional oversight committee if the topic involves any of the below listed research. Your Topic Proposal will not be approved by The School of Graduate Studies until this approval is received.

Contact the Office of Research Development & Compliance (701) 777-4279 or [www.und.edu/dept/rdc](http://www.und.edu/dept/rdc) for information on:

- IRB (*Institutional Review Board*) if the research involves human subjects.
- IBC (*Institutional Biosafety Committee*) if the research involves the use of recombinant DNA or biohazardous materials.

Contact the Center for Biomedical Research at (701) 777-4493 for information on:

- IACUC (*Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee*) if the research involves animal subjects.

Contact Safety & Environmental Health at (701) 777-3341 for information on:

- RSHMC (*Radiation Safety & Hazardous Materials Committee*) if the research involves the use of radiation and hazardous materials.

## **Plan your Topic Proposal**

Your topic proposal is intended not only to give you direction, but also to aid your advisor and advisory committee in determining whether or not the problem or study is appropriate for the degree you are seeking. It is wise to consult with your advisor as you write your topic proposal. He/She should be able to advise you on the practicality and pertinence of your project. Your advisor should also be able to offer suggestions on how to conduct research on your topic and to help you think about what kind of results you might find.

## **Write your Topic Proposal in Narrative Style**

Once you have a solid idea of what your research project will be, you need to describe it in a narrative style on the appropriate form. Your proposal should be lucid and concise - no more than one page in length. You can download a Topic Proposal form off the web at [graduateschool.und.edu](http://graduateschool.und.edu)

You will be asked to provide the following items in narrative form:

- 1) A title (it can be changed at a later date)
- 2) A brief description of the nature of the problem or study
- 3) The procedure or methodology to be followed
- 4) The anticipated results

## **Signatures Required**

After you have written the proposal, you need to secure the signatures of your Faculty Advisory Committee. It is necessary to have your advisor sign first. Some departments have processes by which they handle the topic proposal. Talk to your advisor. Non-thesis students need only their advisor's signature. Approved copies of the proposal will be sent to you, your advisor, and the department from The School of Graduate Studies.

## **Step 5: Advancement to Candidacy**

*Recommended Time Frame: No later than the semester  
before you plan to graduate*

There are a number of steps that you must fulfill before you can advance to candidacy. The Program Director, your advisor, or The School of Graduate Studies can provide specific information about what these are. The School of Graduate Studies will send you a status sheet when you become a candidate for your degree.

There is no separate form to fill out for advancement to candidacy.

### *Thesis and Non-Thesis Options*

**These requirements must be completed before you are advanced to candidacy:**

- 1) You need to have completed at least 12 graduate credits.
- 2) Your GPA for all the coursework you attempted must be at least 3.00.
- 3) You need to have a Faculty Advisor and/or Committee appointed by the Dean upon the recommendation of the Graduate Director from your department.
- 4) You must complete all undergraduate prerequisites and be in approved status.
- 5) Your Program of Study must be approved by the School of Graduate Studies.
- 6) Your Thesis/Independent Study/Scholarly Project Proposal must be approved by the School of Graduate Studies.

***You must be advanced to candidacy at least one semester  
prior to the semester in which you plan to graduate!***

## **Step 6: Apply to Graduate**

*Recommended Time Frame: You must submit this by the published deadline for the term in which you plan to graduate*

This is a simple, but essential step in the School of Graduate Studies process. It is of utmost importance that you **pay close attention to deadlines** at this stage in the game. A missed deadline will put you at risk for delaying your graduation date. Starting with your “Application for a Graduate Degree,” you need to make yourself aware of what paperwork is due and when you need to turn it in. This is your responsibility!

### **Apply to Graduate – Online Application**

The on-line graduation application can be found on our website: [graduateschool.und.edu](http://graduateschool.und.edu) under the Current Student Forms. Only students that have been advanced to candidacy can apply to graduate. When you submit a graduation application, notification is sent to your advisor, The School of Graduate Studies, and the Registrar’s Office. The deadlines to apply for graduation are published in the graduate catalog, the campus connection Dates & Deadlines, the School of Graduate Studies website at [graduateschool.und.edu](http://graduateschool.und.edu). Deadlines are also sent out on the School of Graduate Studies listserv. Please be sure you adhere to these deadlines.

### **You must be registered the term in which you graduate.**

You must also be registered the term in which you graduate. If you have taken all your coursework, you may enroll in 996 continuing enrollment. You will need to get the call number from your department. A maximum of two separate semesters for master’s students is allowed for 996 enrollment.

*\* If for some reason your graduation is delayed, please call The School of Graduate Studies to let us know that you want your name removed from the graduation list. You will then need to submit a new application for the next semester.*

## **Step 7: Thesis Preliminary Approval**

*(Non-thesis students skip to Step 11)*

***Recommended Time Frame: You must submit this by the published deadline for the term in which you plan to graduate***

Before you can schedule your defense, you need to receive preliminary approval from your Faculty Advisory Committee. You should plan on distributing a preliminary draft of your work to your committee members at least eight weeks before your tentative defense date. You need to give each of them about a month to read and comment on your thesis. Let them know in advance when you plan on distributing your first draft so they can schedule reading time into their calendars.

Be sure to allow yourself enough time to make the changes suggested or required by your committee. At this stage the changes may be significant, so you want to make sure you will be able to address them fully. Once you have made the appropriate corrections and your committee has approved the changes, you may request that they sign the Preliminary Approval form. Ideally, it would be helpful to you to get the committee together to discuss your draft and to sign the Preliminary approval form. They should not sign the form until it has met their requirements.

### **The Preliminary approval form is for your protection.**

When your committee signs this form, they are stating that they accept the content, organization, and style of your thesis. They are stating that you will not have to make any major changes or perform a new set of experiments for the final copy. Each committee member should read your thesis prior to signing the preliminary approval form.

### **If you miss this deadline you will be removed from the graduation list and you will have to apply for graduation again the next semester.**

The Preliminary Approval form is available on the web at [graduateschool.und.edu](http://graduateschool.und.edu).

You must turn in this form by the published deadline. The form itself is fairly straightforward. Besides your name and the degree you intend to receive, you will be asked to provide the exact title of your thesis. After supplying the required information, secure the signatures of your committee members and deposit the form in the School of Graduate Studies office by the published deadline.

## **Step 8: Final Defense of Your Thesis**

*Recommended Time Frame: At least two or three weeks before commencement*

If you write a thesis, you are required to appear before your entire advisory committee for a concluding examination or defense before you submit your electronic final copy for publishing. Be aware of the deadlines for final submission of thesis when you schedule your defense. Academic calendars can be found in the Graduate Catalog, the campus connection Dates & Deadlines and online at [graduateschool.und.edu](http://graduateschool.und.edu).

### **Schedule your defense**

The first step is to have your advisor schedule your defense. You must complete the "Notice of Defense" form and secure the necessary signatures. This Notice of Defense form, along with the Preliminary Approval must be received at the School of Graduate Studies two weeks in advance of your defense. Do not submit a Notice of Defense without Preliminary Approval. Talk over potential dates with your advisor and other committee members to ensure that you schedule an appropriate time for all involved.

### **Your entire committee must be physically present at your defense.**

The candidate and committee members must be physically present at the defense unless the program has developed clear guidelines and instructions by which the candidate or committee members may participate at a distance using real-time synchronous technology. Any technology used to facilitate distance participation by the candidate or committee members must be supported by UND, capable to real-time audio and video, compatible with "presentation" software, such as PowerPoint, and must be open and accessible to the candidate, committee and non-committee members.

What is included in the defense varies from department to department. Some departments have students give a summary of their thesis research in a short presentation with a question/answer period following. Your advisor should be able to help you prepare.

Your Faculty Advisory Committee will conduct your examination, which will be written and/or oral and will include a defense of your thesis. You may also be required to take an exam based on the courses you completed for your degree. Check with your advisor to see what is expected of you. Your committee will indicate their endorsement of you and your work by signing the Approval Page of your thesis. The results of your defense must be certified by your committee on a form titled "Final Report on Candidate" by the deadline specified on the Academic Calendar (Step 13).

## Step 9:

### Submit a Draft Copy of Your Thesis to The School of Graduate Studies to be Checked for Format and Style

*Recommended Time Frame: by the published deadline for the term in which you plan to graduate.*

Your thesis must be prepared in accordance with the *Style and Policy Manual for Theses and Dissertations*. The manual is available online at [graduateschool.und.edu](http://graduateschool.und.edu). The manual is particularly important, for it provides you with precise information and models on how your thesis is supposed to look. If you need help with grammar or sentence structure, please call the University's Writing Center to schedule an appointment (777-2795). The School of Graduate Studies is not responsible for editing manuscripts.

#### Style and Format

**Do not look to previously approved theses for style and format guidance** since whoever checked the project may have omitted errors or may have exempted the author from certain policies. To ensure a properly prepared thesis, use the *Style and Policy Manual*, which is available on our website ([graduateschool.und.edu](http://graduateschool.und.edu)). If you have any questions – ask. Asking someone in the School of Graduate Studies to clarify a question about margins, page numbers, etc., prior to turning in a final copy of your project will save you both time and stress. **Please be sure your approval page meets the School of Graduate Studies guidelines before you have your committee sign it. You will be required to obtain all signatures again if the page does not meet formatting guidelines.** The School of Graduate Studies can also provide you with the names of typists who can format theses according to the *Style and Policy Manual*.

#### Draft copy

The School of Graduate Studies will provide one format check after receiving Preliminary Approval. A list of formatters/editors is also available at the School of Graduate Studies if you prefer to hire your own formatter.

- Submit a complete **one-sided** draft of your thesis to the School of Graduate Studies so that the format review can begin. **Do not bind or staple the copy that you bring in for a format check.**
- Be sure to include the [Format Checklist](#) with your document.
- If you have scheduled your defense in advance of the [deadline](#), you must submit the complete draft within two weeks before the defense date.

Please note that it is expected there will be content revisions needed after receiving feedback from your committee. However, it is also expected that the document is ready to defend, meaning that your document is in its final stage of completion.

If you are not on campus, you can either mail a copy of the thesis to the School of Graduate Studies, or you can arrange to have UND Duplicating Services print your document. They can be reached at 701-777-5088 or [duplicating@email.und.edu](mailto:duplicating@email.und.edu)

A staff member of the School of Graduate Studies will send you the format changes by either e-mail or mail. Provide an e-mail address, telephone number, and postal address when you submit your copy.

### **Formatting Checklist**

The checklist is available on the last page of this handbook and on our website.

## Step 10:

### Submit Electronic Thesis to UMI/ProQuest Publishing

*Recommended Time Frame: You must submit your thesis by the published deadline for the term in which you plan to graduate*

#### Electronic Submission

You will find all of the information you need on completing your thesis on the School of Graduate Studies website, from completing paperwork, to format checking and electronically submitting your work through ProQuest.

- The [Overview of Manuscript Submission](#) page lets you know what you will need to do to prepare for your submission.
- You will upload your Thesis in PDF format to the ProQuest ETD Administrator site. Please see the instructions on [How to Prepare your Manuscript for Submission](#).
- The [Electronic Thesis Submission Guide for UND Graduate Students](#) will take you step by step through the ProQuest system.
- After your format has been checked by the School of Graduate Studies and you have made the required changes from your committee, you will [submit](#) the final version of your document electronically to UMI/ProQuest at [www.etsadmin.com/und](http://www.etsadmin.com/und).
- **Once you electronically submit your final copy for publishing, no changes are made to the format or content. Therefore, the burden of how the manuscript looks is entirely the responsibility of the student author.**

#### Additional Copies

Check with your advisor, Program Director, or committee to see how many copies for your department are required. Many students also provide the members of their advisory committee with a copy of the final version of their theses. Some choose to have them hardbound, others do not. For information on binding, see the Chester Fritz Library Periodicals Department. (777-4646)

The Graduate Dean recommends that you keep at least one hard copy of your thesis for your records in addition to the electronic files. You may wish to refer to the document in the future.

**Step 11:**  
**Submit the Final Copy of Your Independent Study (997),  
Scholarly Project (995) or Design Project (595) to Your Advisor**  
*(If you wrote a thesis skip to Step 13)*

*Recommended Time Frame: At least two to three weeks before commencement.  
Check with your advisor for this timeline.*

As a non-thesis Master's student, you need to prepare a report on your independent study, scholarly project or design project for your advisor's approval. See your advisor or department for detailed information on what to include in the report. Check with your advisor to see how many copies your department needs. He/She will then certify that you completed your project by signing the "Final Report on Candidate" (Step 13), submitting the form to The School of Graduate Studies, and forwarding a grade to the Registrar's Office all by the deadline printed in the Academic Calendar. **Keep in mind that it is your responsibility to complete your Independent Study in time to meet these deadlines.** Do not rely on your advisor to remind you of due dates.

## **Step 12: Comprehensive Exams**

*Recommended Time Frame: Check with your department for this timeline*

### **Written exam**

If you are a Master's non-thesis student, you may have to take a written final comprehensive examination before you can graduate (check with your department to see if they require comprehensive exams). The examination will cover your major field but may, at your advisor's discretion, also cover various supporting areas. Talk to your advisor to see what is expected of you. He/She will be able to help you prepare.

Your examination will be arranged by your advisor. You will qualify to take the examination only after you have advanced to candidacy (Step 5) and if you are in satisfactory academic standing.

### **Submit results of the exam**

The results of your exam must be certified by your committee on a form titled "Final Report on Candidate" by the deadline specified on the Academic Calendar (Step 13). This form is available at The School of Graduate Studies office or online at [www.graduateschool.und.edu](http://www.graduateschool.und.edu). If you do not pass your examination, you may repeat it with the consent of your advisor, your department, and the School of Graduate Studies Dean, but at a date no earlier than the next regularly scheduled offering. Check with your advisor for more information.

**Step 13:**  
**Your Advisor will submit the form “Final Report on Candidate”  
to The School of Graduate Studies**

*This form must be submit by the published deadline for the term in which you plan to graduate*

<b>Final Report on Candidate Non-Thesis Option</b>	This form certifies completion of an independent study, scholarly project, or design project, as well as the subject, date, and result of your final examination(s). It is essentially a written record of your fulfillment of the requirements for the degree. Your advisor and the graduate director of your department must sign this form.
<b>Final Report on Candidate Thesis, Research Report, or Professional Exhibition Option</b>	This form certifies completion of your oral defense and the required comprehensive exams required for the degree. Your advisor and committee members must indicate whether or not they found your performance at the examination to be satisfactory or unsatisfactory by signing their name in the appropriate column.

This form is the School of Graduate Studies’s verification from your advisor and/or committee that you have finished the requirements for the degree. **If this form is not received at the School of Graduate Studies by the published deadline, the School of Graduate Studies will remove your name from the graduation list and you will not be able to graduate that semester.** You must then submit another on-line application for graduation for the semester you plan to graduate.

**\*Diplomas**

*Master’s diplomas are mailed out approximately six weeks after graduation. Please be sure you have updated your home address on the Campus Connection System. Also, please notify the School of Graduate Studies when your address changes.*

## APPENDIX

### Graduate Appointments

#### **GTA – GRA – GSA Assistantships**

A Graduate Assistant (GA) is both a university student and an employee. There are a variety of appointments available to students including Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA), Graduate Research Assistant (GRA), and Graduate Service Assistant (GSA). Although GA's are typically appointed on a half-time basis, some are appointed as quarter-time assistants. You must apply within your department for graduate assistantships. Check with your advisor or graduate director or your department. See the School of Graduate Studies website *Financial Assistance for Graduate Students* for detailed information on each of these positions.

### Petitions

School of Graduate Studies Petition forms are available at [graduateschool.und.edu](http://graduateschool.und.edu). The student must clearly state what is being petitioned. If the petition involves a specific course, the course number must be listed.

### Leave of Absence & Readmission

**Degree and certificate seeking graduate students** who wish to take a leave of absence from their program for fall or spring semester must notify their graduate program and the School of Graduate Studies by submission of a “***Readmission or Leave of Absence***” from Graduate Study in advance of their leave. **Students will be required to obtain the Graduate Director’s signature from their department prior to submitting the form to the School of Graduate Studies.**

Summer semester is not counted as a break in enrollment.

Students who do not submit a leave of absence will be required to submit a “***Readmission Application***” for School of Graduate Studies. Applications for readmission will be reviewed and approved by the program and the graduate dean.

These forms can be found on our website: [www.graduateschool.und.edu](http://www.graduateschool.und.edu)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What are the hours of the School of Graduate Studies?**

The School of Graduate Studies is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you have questions, you are welcome to email us or call using UND's toll free number: 1-800-CALL-UND.

### **Can I get grades and test scores over the telephone?**

No, it is not possible for us to give out grades and test scores over the telephone. We need verification information to ensure we are giving this information out to the appropriate individual. Grades are available on CampusConnection. For all other confidential information, you will need to come in and show identification.

### **Do I need to be continually enrolled?**

No, this is not a School of Graduate Studies requirement, unless you are utilizing University services. However, some departments do require continuous enrollment so you do not lose your standing within the department. Check with your department for this requirement. You will need to be enrolled the semester you graduate.

### **Do I need to file a Leave of Absence or a Readmission application?**

You will only need to file a “*Readmission or Leave of Absence*” form if you are not enrolled for the fall or spring semester (summer semester does not count as a break in enrollment).

### **Can I take undergraduate courses when I’m a graduate student?**

Your main goal as a graduate student should be to complete courses pertinent to your program of study. Some programs allow students to take undergraduate courses in their cognate, and it is understood that the student will be required to do additional work, over and above that typically required of undergraduates.

### **Can I take courses for S/U grading?**

Graduate students do not have the option of electing S/U grading in either graduate or undergraduate courses, unless that is the only way they are offered.

### **What happens if I can’t complete a course on time?**

If you can’t complete a course on time because of something beyond your control, you may request to receive an incomplete grade. Your instructor may allow this if they feel that there is reasonable certainty that you will successfully complete the course without retaking it. There is a form called, “Report of Incomplete Grade”, that will need to be completed by the instructor. Please be aware that the work needs to be completed by the specified deadline that your instructor indicates on this form.

### **I received a D or F in one of my courses—can I retake it?**

Courses taken by graduate students, for which a grad of D, F, or U was received, may be repeated once for credit, with only the second grade to count in the grade point average. This option does not apply to

students who have been dismissed. Contact The School of Graduate Studies so your transcript will be marked as a retake once the course is graded.

### **What happens if I fall below a 3.00 GPA?**

If you fall below a 3.00 GPA your record will be reviewed. Students having accumulated 12 or more credit hours will be placed on academic probation for one semester; students having accumulated fewer than 12 credit hours will be placed on academic probation until either (a) the GPA is raised to at least 3.00 (2.75 for M. Engr) or (b) 12 graduate credit hours are accumulated, whichever occurs first. If, at the end of the probationary period, the GPA is still less than 3.00 (2.75 for M. Engr.), the student will be dismissed. Students must maintain a 3.00 GPA to be eligible for assistantships.

### **How do I drop courses after the deadline?**

To drop a course after the deadline, you must complete an Administrative Procedures petition. This form can be found on The School of Graduate Studies or the Registrar's web sites. This form, with signatures and recommendations for approval or disapproval, must be brought to The School of Graduate Studies for the Graduate Dean's signature. Explain clearly why you are requesting to drop a course after the deadline. Clearly specify the course and term you are requesting to drop. The administrative procedures committee will meet on these petitions throughout the semester, and you will be notified by letter.

### **What is considered full time?**

For students without an assistantship to be considered full time the minimum credits taken in the fall and spring semesters are 9 and during the summer semester are 6. To qualify for Federal Financial Aid you must be registered in a minimum of 6 credits (half-time status).

### **What are the reasons for grad holds?**

1. Prerequisites not completed on time as stated in your admission letter.
2. Enrolled in the maximum amount of 996 continuing enrollment credits
3. Failure to complete certain admission stipulations (ex. GRE tests)
4. Dismissals
5. Special Permission to Register

### **How do I get loan deferments and enrollment verification?**

UND is using the National Student Clearinghouse for loan deferments and enrollment verification. Enrollment verifications can be printed from your CampusConnection.

### **North Dakota residency—what is it?**

For tuition purposes, please see the section entitled, "Regulations regarding non-resident fees" in the Academic Catalog for information about North Dakota residency requirements.

## **Residency requirements for thesis.**

ND residency is not to be confused with the department residency requirement. Students writing a thesis or research project are required to spend a minimum period of time in residence during their course of study. A student must be registered for at least 9 credits in a semester or be a graduate teaching or research assistant. Please check with your department on your particular residency requirement, as not all departments have this requirement.

## **How do I notify The School of Graduate Studies of my advisor or committee?**

Complete the form “Advisor or Committee Appointment” and submit to the School of Graduate Studies with the proper signatures. Be sure the Graduate Director of your department also signs this form, or it will be sent back.

## **How do I change my advisor or committee?**

Complete the “Advisor or Committee Appointment” and submit to The School of Graduate Studies with the proper signatures. Be sure the Graduate Director of your department also signs this form, or it will be sent back.

## **How do I change my program of study?**

After consulting with your advisor, fill out the form “Changes to a Program of Study.” After your advisor signs the form, submit it to The School of Graduate Studies for the Dean’s approval. Do not submit a new program of study, unless there are major changes.

## **Can I change from a thesis option to a non-thesis option?**

As you develop your program of study, work with your advisor on making this choice. If you change your option, you will need to submit a new advisor or committee appointment, program of study and topic proposal. Do not enroll in thesis credits until you are sure of this option. If a change has been made after you have enrolled, a permanent SP or UP for thesis credits already taken will be recorded on your transcript, and you will need to enroll for the non-thesis course. No change can be made the same semester you are graduating.

## **Will my credits for 995 Scholarly Project, 997 Independent Study, 998 Thesis, or 999 Dissertation remain an incomplete until I am finished?**

Yes, they will remain an incomplete until your final copy is finished. A grade of “SP” Satisfactory Progress, or “UP” Unsatisfactory Progress, will be assigned. The “SP” or the “UP” grade, which usually span several semesters, will be replaced by a grade at the conclusion of the activity, usually a student’s final semester. Grades of “SP” or “UP” are not calculated into term or cumulative GPA values and will be expunged from the record upon submission of final grades.

## **What is the Topic Proposal and where do I get the form?**

The Topic Proposal is a summary of the student’s Dissertation, Thesis, Independent Study, Project Design, or Scholarly Project. The form can be found on our web site under [current students' forms](#).

## **Where do I get a policy manual for writing my thesis or dissertation?**

The Style and Policy Manual is available on our website as a PDF document . All theses and dissertations are submitted electronically by the student for publishing with ProQuest/UMI. [Please refer to our website for information regarding the electronic submission.](#)

## **What can I enroll in if I'm finishing my thesis?**

If you have finished all your courses on your program of study, you can enroll in 996 continuing enrollment (1-9 credits) to finish your independent study, thesis, or dissertation. A maximum of 6-9 credits for two semesters for master's and four semesters for doctoral is allowed. The fee is \$100 per credit. Do not enroll in more 998 thesis credits, or 999 dissertation credits than are on your program of study.

## **Where do I bring my thesis or dissertation for a format check?**

The School of Graduate Studies will provide one format check after you have received "Preliminary Approval" from your committee. A list of formatters/editors is also available at The School of Graduate Studies if you prefer to hire your own formatter.

If you are not on campus, you can either mail a one-sided copy of the thesis to the School of Graduate Studies, or you can arrange to have UND Duplicating Services print your document. They can be reached at 701-777-5088 or [duplicating@email.und.edu](mailto:duplicating@email.und.edu)

A staff member of the School of Graduate Studies will send you the format changes by either e-mail or mail. Provide an e-mail address, telephone number, and postal address when you submit your copy.

- Be sure to include the [Format Checklist](#) with your document.
- If you have scheduled your defense in advance of the [deadline](#), you must submit the complete draft within two weeks before the defense date.

Please note that it is expected there will be content revisions needed after receiving feedback from your committee. However, it is also expected that the document is ready to defend, meaning that your document is in its final stage of completion.

## **How much does the electronic submission of my thesis/dissertation cost?**

There is no submission fee for submitting your document electronically through ProQuest/UMI. The publishing fee is waived when submitting in this way. The only required charge when submitting your manuscript is for a hard-bound copy to be kept at the Chester Fritz Library. Other optional fees may be charged depending on the publishing agreement you choose and if you choose to register a copyright. You may also choose to order personal bound copies of your manuscript during the submission process for an additional fee. Please refer to our website for more information on the submittal process.

## **How do I apply to graduate?**

You need to be advanced to candidacy the semester before you plan to graduate. This means you need to be in approved status (not qualified or provisional), and your program of study and topic proposal need to be approved by the School of Graduate Studies. Doctoral students also need to complete their

comprehensive exams. You will receive a status sheet every time you turn in a form to the School of Graduate Studies. When all the above is turned in and approved by The School of Graduate Studies, you will automatically be advanced to candidacy. You can then go online and apply to graduate. The link to the graduation application is on our website and the registrar's office website. Please be aware of the deadlines, which are printed each semester on the [Dates & Deadlines](#) listed on The School of Graduate Studies website and the registrar's office website. Deadlines are also found in the front of the UND academic catalog.

**The online graduation application asks to list my “hometown”. Why?**

The UND commencement program lists all the students graduating and where they are from. Write down the name of the town or city that you want listed in program. This is only for the commencement program and does not change your address in CampusConnection.

**Is there a time limit on finishing my degree?**

Yes, graduate courses more than seven years old are considered obsolete and may not be counted to fulfill course requirement for an advanced degree program. Programs of study more than 7 years old also are obsolete. Obsolete UND graduate courses may be revalidated and may be counted toward an advanced degree on the recommendation of the student's faculty advisory committee and the Dean of The School of Graduate Studies. The revalidation form is available on our web site. Graduate work from another institution, which is overage, cannot be revalidated and will not count towards a UND degree.

## FORMAT CHECKLIST FOR THESIS OR DISSERTATION

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Please refer to the “*Style Guide*” found on the School of Graduate Studies website – guidelines and sample pages are included: <http://graduateschool.und.edu/graduate-students/current/style-guide.pdf>

**Format questions?** Please contact Carla – [carla.ralston@graduateschool.und.edu](mailto:carla.ralston@graduateschool.und.edu) or 701.777.4388

**Submit this form with one unbound, one-sided document to the School of Graduate Studies for a format check.**

Before submitting your document, please check all of the following:

- The “**Title Page**” meets guidelines – the title on this page matches the title on your **Permission page**.
- The “**Copyright Page**” (optional) meets guidelines – if included, this would be page number “**ii**”
- The “**Approval Page**” meets guidelines (**please refer to this page in the “Style Guide”**) – this will be pg. “**ii**” or “**iii**”

• *Submit this page to the School of Graduate Studies, with **original** signatures of your committee, **after your successful defense**. If your committee is not ready to sign, it is your responsibility to keep track of this page until it is submitted to our office for the dean’s signature - please notify the School of Graduate Studies of this.*

- The “**Permission Page**” meets guidelines (**refer to this page in the “Style Guide”**) – this will be pg. “**iii**” or “**iv**”
- The “**TABLE OF CONTENTS**” meets guidelines:
  - Line spacing is correct.
  - List only items that follow the Table of Contents - (chapter titles, subheadings, & page numbers)
  - Verify page numbers, chapter numbers and chapter titles for accuracy.
  - Verify all headings & subheadings for accuracy - (they match what is in the text word for word).
  - Verify that headings and subheadings are the correct format.
- The “**LIST OF FIGURES**” meets guidelines – (figure titles match figure titles in text exactly).
  - ◆ *See examples of Figures in the “Style Guide”*
- The “**LIST OF TABLES**” meets guidelines – (table titles match table titles in text exactly).
  - ◆ *See examples of Tables in the “Style Guide”*
- The “**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**” Page” (optional) – meets guidelines & is spelled the same in Table of Contents.
- The “**Dedication**” Page” (optional) – this page is **not numbered or counted**.
- The “**ABSTRACT**” meets guidelines.
- The **text** of my thesis/dissertation meets guidelines.
  - I have **double spaced** all text (**excluding** titles longer than one line, these would be **single spaced**)
  - I have used an acceptable **font & font size** throughout – including **all** page numbers (12 pt. is preferred)
  - I have adhered to **all margin** guidelines - (**margins are an essential part of your work**)

The “**APPENDICES**” adhere to all guidelines.

The “**REFERENCES**” adhere to all guidelines.

**Ph.D. Students Only** – Please complete the *Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED)* –

<https://sed.norc.org/survey>

**Once your final copy is electronically submitted to ProQuest/UMI for publishing, no changes are made to the format or content. Therefore, the burden of how the manuscript looks when published, is entirely the responsibility of the student author.**