

MA in Arts Administration Thesis and Thesis Proposal Guidelines

08/20/2015

Instructions to developing your proposal:

- 1) Review the thesis guidelines for the MA in Arts Administration Program.
- 2) Work with your potential advisor to develop research concepts.
- 3) Assemble your committee:
 - Receive approval from your potential thesis advisor to work with him/her as the main advisor of your committee.* Primary advisors must be full-time governing faculty within the MA in Arts Administration program. For the 2015-2016 academic year this includes the following:

Nicole Broughton (performing arts track)
Bill Irwin (performing arts track)
Sarah Lippert (visual arts track)
Cristen Velliky (visual arts track)
 - * Note: for topics that cross the visual and performing arts it may be appropriate to have co-advisors, but this must be agreed upon by the governing faculty. Co-advisors have equal authority over the student's work.
 - Discuss with your advisor who might best serve as the second and third members of your thesis committee (these will normally be other program faculty). At least one of these members must be another program faculty member, but need not be from the same track as the student's topic. In special circumstances, based on what the topic warrants, the third member of the committee may be another governing faculty member from the University of Michigan-Flint, or the U of M system, but may be from another program or department.
 - Especially in the case of a thesis project, or a highly specialised topic, it may be appropriate for a fourth committee member to serve as a volunteer service to the program. Such members may be part-time faculty members, or members from relevant professions in the community, or even faculty from outside of the University of Michigan system.
 - Committee membership should be largely coordinated by the student, in consultation with his/her main advisor. Final approval for committee membership will be voted upon by the program governing faculty at the time of the thesis proposal submission (determined by simple majority).

- Committee membership and thesis advisors may change during the course of the student's work. However, any change to committee members must be approved by the program faculty (in simple majority). Requests for such changes should be submitted in writing by the student to the program director.

4) Write your proposal, to include the following:

a) Abstract: This should be a 300-word summary of your topic, which will later serve as the abstract for your completed thesis/thesis project.

b) Description: Write 4-5 pages outlining your thesis/thesis project topic. You should address the following:

- Your primary thesis argument should be outlined in the introduction of your proposal. Even if it changes slightly with further research, you should be starting with an idea that you want to develop. For projects, your argument would be the creative or administrative goal that the project seeks to achieve.
- Identify how your topic/project will create new scholarship/knowledge/creative output in the field. What is original in your topic? Briefly summarise what has or has not been done in the area by other scholars/artists?
- Content for a thesis: Outline the chapters that you plan to include (minimum 3) and explain what each will demonstrate, providing tentative titles.
Or content for a thesis project: Outline the project including the following: project goal and description, project timeline, resources needed, research required, product of the project (i.e. published journal, theatrical production...), community partners (if any), and other central components

Note: It is natural that your topic, chapter organisation/project etc. may change somewhat during the thesis/thesis project's development. As long as you are fully discussing these changes with your advisor this kind of modification will usually be acceptable. Significant changes are discouraged and need to be reviewed by the program faculty.

c) Annotated Bibliography: Include a bibliography with the preliminary primary and secondary sources that you have found. These two kinds of sources should appear in two clear categories, with at least 15 sources noted in each category. Annotation means that under each bibliographic entry you provide 1-3 sentences explaining the value of the source to your research.

d) Timeline: Outline in point form the anticipated dates of completion for the following, bearing in mind that the normative period to complete the degree is 2-3 years.

- i) Proposal Presentation to Program Faculty and Students (one is held each fall and winter semester, so specify your semester, noting that this should normally occur by the end of your second semester in the program.
- ii) Completion of research

- iii) Completion of written thesis draft (both projects and theses)
- iv) Completion of thesis project component (for projects only)
- v) Oral Defence
- vi) Submission of finished work (normally within 1 month of the oral defence)

5) Format Requirements (for the thesis and thesis project, as well as the proposal):

- Chicago Style citation method with content footnotes where appropriate (discuss with you advisor what these are). If a strong reason exists to use a different citation method, you should include a request from the program faculty to use a different style in your proposal.
- Footnotes in Arabic numerals with continuous numbering throughout the entire document.
- Parenthetical citations are not acceptable. Footnotes must be provided, along with a bibliography.
- 1.5 line spacing
- 1" margins on all four sides of the page
- no headers or footers
- continuous page numbers at the bottom right in Arabic numerals
- chapter headings should be provided, but in brief
- subheadings may be used at the student's discretion
- tables, figures, and illustrations must be cited
- a list of figures in the Chicago Style
- a table of contents must be provided
- a signatory page must be provided in triplicate at the oral defence (use the sample signatory page available from the program assistant Linda Blakey)
- content should follow this order:
 - blank page
 - title page
 - signatory page
 - acknowledgements (include both personal and professional)
 - table of contents
 - key words (minimum 20)
 - abstract
 - list of figures
 - introduction
 - chapters (each one should have its own title page and be numbered--note, footnotes appear at the bottom of each page where a source is referenced)
 - conclusion
 - illustrations, tables, figures
 - appendices (if relevant)
 - bibliography
 - blank page
- See the Chicago Style manual for quotation, footnote, bibliography, list of figures, and other formatting information.

Approval Process and Thesis/Thesis Project Development Timeline:

Note: Timelines for those adopting the fall 2015 catalogue will differ from those below--speak to your advisor for assistance on an appropriate timeline

i) During your first semester, or even before starting the program, you may want to begin investigating external grants for which you may wish to apply to develop your thesis research. Your academic advisor can help with this, but this is the student's responsibility to apply for and secure grants as needed. Grants may be for conducting research, research travel, supporting you while you complete your thesis work in the graduate program, or for aspects of a project that may be sponsored by a foundation, etc.

ii) In your first 1-2 months in the program you should be meeting with program faculty, your academic advisor, and possibly your instructors to investigate ideas for a thesis/thesis project.

iii) By the end of your first full-time semester (6-9 credit enrolment), you should have selected your main advisor, and in consultation with him/her start research on your possible topic.

iv) By the beginning of your second semester you should have a general topic (even if it is not yet a thesis argument/project). You should also assemble the rest of your committee at this time.

v) During your second semester you should write your proposal in consultation with your advisor and committee members.

vi) At the end of your second semester in the program you should participate in the thesis proposal presentation. This is held near the end of each fall and winter semester. Please note that you are required to present on the specified day in order to get your proposal approved. Thesis proposal presentations are of utmost importance in the program--all MA students and faculty are expected to attend the proposal presentations, notwithstanding extraordinary circumstances. Presentations will be 15-20 minutes each, and should be professional oral presentations with appropriate visual aids. Fall and winter dates will be announced at the beginning of the academic year.

vi) By the end of the semester (deadline for entering grades) the program faculty will inform you in writing regarding whether your topic has been accepted, and if any modifications are recommended. You will then work with your committee to make appropriate modifications. Proposals that are not accepted may be re-presented up to 2 times, for a total of 3 attempts.

vii) Thesis research of 3 credits may be undertaken at any point during your program, by enrolling in ADM 600. This course must be pre-approved for your schedule by your thesis advisor (note that your thesis advisor may be different than your academic advisor in the program). A second 3 credits of ADM 600 should normally fall during the student's

final semester. Each 3 credits of thesis research requires an average of 12 hours per week of thesis research, which does not need to occur on campus. However, students must be available for meetings with their thesis advisor, as with an independent study. Although the thesis credits allow students to concentrate their work in 2 semesters on research and writing, it is expected that students will make progress each semester towards their thesis work.

viii) The thesis oral defence should be held during the final semester of coursework, and following the submission of the final thesis work by the student to thesis committee members. Students must remain continuously enrolled in at least 3 credits of ADM 600 during fall/winter semesters while the thesis is being completed, if all other coursework is already finished. Enrolment in spring/summer thesis credits is not required, but would need to resume in fall if the defence occurs after the spring/summer deadline to defend.

Thesis/Thesis Project Requirements

Purpose:

The purpose of the thesis/thesis project in the MA Arts Administration Program is to support the following:

- i) The development of original scholarship/creative work and knowledge in the fields of study related to arts administration.
- ii) To enhance the learning experience and provide students with a foundation of specialist knowledge on a topic, in order to help with professional experience, application to other graduate programs, achieving publication and presentation opportunities, having written/creative work samples to submit to potential employers, and to generally be more competitive with graduates in comparable programs.

Topic:

Students, in consultation with their thesis advisors, may develop a thesis/thesis project in any area of arts administration studies. The relevant disciplines will vary depending on the student's track in the program (for example, production, safety, and performing arts education may be relevant in the performing-arts track, while museum studies, connoisseurship, art education, conservation/restoration, restitution, etc. may be relevant for visual-arts track students). The main goal of your topic is that it should represent original scholarship that contributes to the field of arts administration.

Requirements:

Students must complete a minimum of 6 credits (preferably consecutively rather than concurrently) of ADM 600, enrolment, which requires instructor approval. The instructor is normally the student's main thesis advisor (also known as the thesis committee chair).

Students must successfully pass the thesis proposal presentation to proceed with their topics. Up to 3 of the 6 credits in ADM 600 may be taken before the proposal is passed.

Students who complete all coursework but require additional time to complete thesis requirements should continue to enroll in at least 3 credits of ADM 600 each fall/winter semester until their oral defence. However, it is intended that students complete their thesis in a timely fashion that does not require additional enrolment beyond 6 credits of ADM 600.

There are two options to complete the thesis requirement, which are outlined below. Once a student commits to the topic and format it may not be substantially changed without re-presenting the proposal to the program faculty. Although theses/thesis projects might be informed by or related to occupations in arts administration that are already held by the student, please note that the student may not produce for thesis/thesis project work anything that is the product of a current or former occupation, that represents course work for courses (other than ADM 600) in the program, or work that was produced for other purposes at other universities.

1) Thesis: A fully written thesis must be a minimum of 50-100 pages, including only the introduction, chapters, footnotes, and conclusion. This option is best for students who wish to publish their thesis work in scholarly journals/books, who intend to present their work at conferences/symposia, or who plan to submit writing samples to prospective graduate programs and employers. Administrative positions that require a good deal of writing would greatly benefit from this experience.

2) Thesis Project: A written thesis that must be a minimum of 20 pages, in addition to a project. The project must be substantive and represent original research, but the final work will be in a different form than the full thesis length. Projects, for example, might include directing a play, organising an art museum fund-raiser or community event, etc. Please note that program faculty will rigorously enforce the expectation that projects should be as ambitious and time-consuming as the full written thesis. Additionally, for projects that involve events, the student will need to come up with a plan to document the event, such as photography, videography, letters from staff/community partners, project websites, participant surveys, etc.

Oral Defence: Also required of all students is to participate in an oral defence of the thesis/thesis project, which will result in the following scores from each member of the student's committee (all members must provide a score out of 5). The total of all members' scores is then divided by the number of members on the committee (i.e. member A: 4/5 + member B: 5/5 + member C: 3/5 = 12/15 = 4

Pass with Excellence (5.0-4.5 points)

- usually indicates that only minor revisions are needed, the quality of the work is clearly of the graduate level, and the work makes a notable contribution to scholarship in the field

Pass with Merit (4.4-4.0 points)

- moderate revisions may be needed, but are possible to make within a 14-day timeframe; the quality of the work is graduate level, but requires improvement; the work makes a contribution to scholarship in the field

Pass (3.9-3.0 points)

- considerable revisions are needed, but must be made during a 14-day timeframe; the work shows signs of graduate-level proficiency, but requires improvement; the work is of merit, but may not be extremely original in the field

Failure with Merit (2.9-2.0 points)

- significant revisions are needed, and likely will take more than 14 days to complete; the work is not of adequate quality in one or more areas of writing style, research quality, original contributions to scholarship, or the thesis does not represent graduate-level work

Failure (1.9-0.0 points)

- the work is unacceptable and requires extensive revisions, which may or may not be possible

Defence Procedures: Students and program faculty must follow the following procedures regarding oral defences for thesis or thesis projects.

i) Students must communicate regularly throughout their time in the program with their thesis advisor and committee members, regarding any delays to their thesis development timeline, as presented in their thesis proposals.

ii) Students should regularly submit polished drafts of chapters to all committee members throughout the thesis/thesis project's development. For projects, updates on project work, including appropriate documentation, should be submitted. If an event is the product of the project, the student should work carefully to schedule the event when advisors can attend, if possible. It is recommended that students meet at least once each fall/winter semester with each member of his/her thesis committee members. Meetings with the committee chair/main advisor should be much more frequent, but will be up to the chair to set with the student.

iii) Students must schedule their defence at least 60 days prior. All committee members must be available for the defence. It is the student's responsibility to schedule a mutually agreeable time for all committee members, to book a room with program assistant Linda Blakey, and to notify committee members of the time, date, and location of the defence at least 60 days prior to the defence date.

iv) Completed final (fully edited and formatted) drafts of written work should be submitted in hard and electronic copy to all committee members at least 21 days prior to the defence. For projects, written components should be accompanied by supporting media as appropriate (videos, weblinks, etc.). It is the student's responsibility to arrange for the hard and digital copies to be available within this timeframe.

v) Individual committee members should bring the hard copies of thesis written work to the defence, along with comments/corrections in either hard or electronic format. Committee members are entitled to comment upon all aspects of the thesis/thesis project. It is up to each member to assess whether a weakness in any component warrants a certain score.

vi) Students are allowed to make a 15-minute presentation on their thesis/thesis project at the beginning of the defence. Following the presentation, the committee chair will lead discussion with the student and committee members regarding the thesis/thesis project. Each committee member must be given the opportunity to share all questions/points that he/she considers relevant to the defence. Oral defences (excluding faculty deliberation) are open to the public, including to graduate students in the program.

vii) The student and visitors will be excused from the room while committee members deliberate. Such deliberation is confidential. Scoring should be done through anonymous ballot and be calculated by the program assistant, or another neutral party. Records of scoring for each student in the program must be kept by the program director with assistance from the program administrator, for the purpose of program assessment. Scores and the scoring rubric should be recorded in TK20. Additionally, paper ballots should be kept on file by the program assistant for at least 5 years following the defence.

viii) Following the committee deliberations the student will return to the room and the committee chair will share the results of the defence. For both failing and passing results all of the committee members will provide the student with specific corrections that need to be made to the finished copy. The signatory page will be signed at the close of the defence, providing that a passing score was achieved. No committee member's name or signature may be substituted for any reason. Members who gave a failing score (3.0 or less) should refrain from signing the signatory page, but their names should still appear on the signatory page, in order to acknowledge their work on the thesis/thesis project.

ix) Passing thesis/thesis project students will have 14 days following the defence to complete corrections to written work from all committee members. The student should work with his/her committee chair during that time to implement the corrections. At the end of the 14 days, the final copy of all written work should be sent electronically to all committee members, who will have another 14 days to verify that corrections were adequately addressed. Committee members should communicate in writing to both the student and the rest of the committee whether or not the corrections meet their satisfaction by the end of the 14 days. If corrections cannot be made to the satisfaction of all committee members, the committee chair and program director will confer on whether additional changes are needed, or if the student has met an appropriate level of revision to proceed to final submission. It should be rare, however, that all committee members' corrections are not made to their satisfaction.

x) Once the thesis committee chair has confirmed that all corrections have been made for theses that have been passed, the student should submit his/her thesis in both hard and

electronic format. Hard copies should be bound (spiral or glued binding is acceptable) and submitted to the program director, who will submit hard copies to the library. Electronic copies should be in a single PDF format and should be uploaded into TK20 with the help of program assistant Linda Blakey. These must also be sent to the program director, as well as all members of the student's thesis committee. Students will not be eligible to graduate until both the hard and electronic copies have been successfully submitted (see the due dates below).

Due Dates:

For fall semester graduation (December):

- Oral Defence must be held by October 30th
- Submission of passed thesis with corrections must be completed by November 13th
- Review of corrections by committee members must be completed by November 27th
- Eligibility to graduate must be confirmed by the program director with the registrar by December 10th
- Hard and electronic copies of the final thesis must be submitted by the student to the library (for hard copies), and the program director and thesis committee members (for electronic copies), by December 15th
- program director must enter passing grade to the registrar by the date that grades are due in a given semester

For winter semester graduation (May):

- Oral Defence must be held by February 28th
- Submission of passed thesis with corrections must be completed by March 14th
- Review of corrections by committee members must be completed by March 28th
- Eligibility to graduate must be confirmed by the program director with the registrar by April 10th
- Hard and electronic copies of the final thesis must be submitted by the student to the library (for hard copies), and the program director and thesis committee members (for electronic copies), by April 20th
- program director must enter passing grade to the registrar by the date that grades are due in a given semester

For spring/summer semester graduation (August--note that August graduates walk in the December graduation ceremony):

- Oral Defence must be held by July 15th (students who hold their oral defence by May 31st need not enroll in spring/summer thesis credits, but are still eligible to graduate and complete the remaining steps in spring/summer)
- Submission of passed thesis with corrections must be completed by July 29th
- Review of corrections by committee members must be completed by August 12th
- Eligibility to graduate must be confirmed by the program director with the registrar by August 18th

- Hard and electronic copies of the final thesis must be submitted by the student to the library (for hard copies), and the program director and thesis committee members (for electronic copies), by August 25th
- program director must enter passing grade to the registrar by the date that grades are due in a given semester

Appeals:

Generally the process is as follows:

1) The student attempts to resolve disputes over thesis proposal or defence results through individual consultation with his/her thesis committee chair (the chair must confirm that the student has met with him/her in a resolution attempt before an appeal will be considered).

2) Conflicts not resolved through step 1 should proceed in the following manner: the student submits a written statement appealing the decision to the program director (if the director is the subject of the appeal then an appropriate neutral party should be appointed from program faculty). The program director should meet with the student to discuss possible resolutions to the conflict.

3) If neither the committee chair nor the program director are able to resolve the student's concerns, the student may appeal in writing to the program faculty, through a written request to the program director, who must convene all governing program faculty to determine whether a simple majority exists to grant the student's appeal. The decision of the program faculty is final.