

THESIS REQUIREMENT FOR M.S. STUDENTS

The Master of Science (M.S.) degree may be earned either with a thesis (Plan I) or with a written comprehensive examination (Plan II). This document outlines the procedure for M.S. students who elect Plan I (thesis).

The final requirements for Plan I are the submission of a thesis and the thesis defense. The thesis defense is an oral examination in which you present and defend your thesis to a committee of three tenured or tenure-track faculty members and you are examined orally for proficiency in your area of specialization.

****You must defend your thesis by the end of your second year of study****

Course Requirements

- A total of 48 units, of which 36 units must be in graduate courses. (Note: this is greater than the minimum requirements of the university, which is a total of 36 units.) Refer to the degree planner form for your discipline area for a list of core courses from which the 36 graduate course units must be selected.
- The course requirements must be completed within two years of full-time study. Your faculty/research advisor will help you select courses and approve your overall academic curriculum.

Scholarship Requirements

- The 48 units of required course work must be taken for a letter grade (A-F), except for graduate research (e.g., ECE 298, 299) for which only S/U grades are allowed.
- Courses for which a D or F is received may not be counted.
- You must maintain a GPA of 3.0 overall or above in upper division graduate course work undertaken, with a total of no more than 8 units of "F" and/or "U" grades.

Comprehensive Requirements

- You must take twelve units of ECE 299 (Research).
- You must defend and submit your thesis by the end of your second year of study.

Advancement to M.S. Candidacy

1. You must file the *Application for Candidacy for the Thesis or Comprehensive Examination Plan I or II, for the Degree of Master of Arts or Sciences* form no later than the second week of the quarter in which M.S. course requirements are to be completed. Ideally, you will complete at the time of registration in the last of "core" courses. See an ECE Graduate Student Affairs Advisor to obtain the relevant form.
2. Your *Application for Candidacy for the Thesis or Comprehensive Examination Plan I or II, for the Degree of Master of Arts or Sciences* form must identify your thesis committee. Selection of a thesis committee, which consists of 3 ECE faculty members, needs to be made in close consultation with your advisor, who will chair the committee. Selection of members should be from faculty who have similar research interests to you, and who will understand the research and be able to make positive contributions to it.
3. A thesis defense may not be held until ECE receives written approval of your thesis committee from Graduate Division (GD).

NOTE: At least one quarter must lapse between advancement to candidacy and passing the comprehensive exam or defending the thesis. The minimum residence requirement is 3 academic quarters.

EXAM PROCEDURES

Initial Preparation : Steps before your defending quarter

1. By the first quarter of your second year, meet with your research advisor to discuss your plan to prepare and submit a thesis. This includes detailing your research project and writing, timeline and deadlines.
2. By the first quarter of your second year, review the degree planner for your major depth (e.g., NDS, ISRC, SIP, etc.) and make sure you incorporate time in your schedule for 12 units of ECE 299 with the Chair of your committee as your instructor.
3. Discuss the selection of your committee with your research advisor as they will be chairing your committee and most informed about faculty members who would greatly contribute to your research. Your committee consists of 3 tenured or tenure-track faculty members, **two of which must be from ECE**. Tenure or tenured-track faculty means they hold the title Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Full Professor. If you have any doubts, you can always verify with your research advisor.
 - a. If you decide to elect a non-ECE faculty member as your Chair, you must elect one tenured or tenure-track ECE faculty as a Co-Chair. The one remaining committee member must be an ECE tenured or tenure-track faculty member.

Preparing for your Graduating and Defending quarter

1. Attend the graduation paperwork workshop during Week 1 of your graduating and defending quarter.

2. Complete the appropriate graduation paperwork and submit to the ECE Student Affairs Office by **Tuesday of Week 2** of your graduating and defending quarter.
3. At this point, you should have already started drafting your thesis. You must make an appointment with GD for a preliminary check of your thesis via the [GD Online Calendar](#). This is done before your thesis defense but well in advance of the last two weeks of the quarter. Appointments may be made at least one full day in advance, but not more than 60 days in advance.
 - a. Before the appointment, upload a completed draft of your thesis or bring a hard copy. All the preliminary pages, the margins, spacing, headers, figures T.O.C. Lists and references should be included. Quotations, font style and pagination will be reviewed. The content will not be reviewed, so if you are missing a chapter, you can still bring the draft for review. Instructions on the final preparation and submission of the thesis are given.
4. Once you are ready to defend your thesis, you must liaise with the members of your thesis committee to decide upon a date and time for your examination. Try to set a date and time for your exam **three weeks in advance**. Faculty members are very busy and are frequently out of town, especially during summer months. Keep this in mind when planning to schedule your exam.
 - a. You would normally take the oral exam during a regular quarter. You may, however, take your exam during the summer or between quarters to accommodate the availability of faculty. In this instance, you may be required to file a general petition to pay the filing fee in lieu of registration.
5. You should consult an ECE Graduate Student Affairs Advisor at least two weeks prior to your thesis defense. You will be required to provide the following information relating to your exam:
 - a. Date and time of exam
 - b. Title of your thesis
6. Once you have provided this information to an ECE Graduate Student Affairs Advisor, the following arrangements will be made for your exam:
 - a. Room booking—A calendar invite will be sent to you and your committee members. If you book a room with us, you will be emailed about how to access the room two days before your exam.
 - b. Preparation of your file for the exam committee—An exam reminder will be sent to your exam committee via email two days prior to the exam.
7. Once you have set the exam date, you may schedule your final submission appointment via the [GD Online Calendar](#). This must take place after your defense. Give yourself at least one week after your thesis defense date to allow sufficient time for finalizing your final paperwork and obtaining relevant signatures.
 - a. You may not schedule your final appointment on the last Friday of the quarter unless your defense is on the Wednesday or Thursday immediately preceding that Friday. Appointments may be made at least one full day in advance, but not more than 60 days in advance.
8. You must submit the completed thesis to the thesis committee for review prior to your oral exam. Information covering thesis preparation is contained in the publication, Preparation and Submission Manual for Doctoral Dissertations and Master's Theses, which can be found on the [GD website](#).
9. Complete and submit the following forms to the ECE Graduate Student Affairs office either prior to your examination date or when you return to collect your forms after your exam.

- Program Exit Questionnaire
- Alumni Form
- ECE Department Exit Form

Exam Format

1. All committee members must be present during the exam, and the exam is closed to the public.
2. The oral exam is about 2 hours in duration.
3. You should be prepared to present and defend your thesis before your thesis committee.
4. Plan to give a practice talk to your advisor and/or fellow students at least one week before your exam. This allows you plenty of time to make revisions and helps to strengthen your advisor's confidence in you.

Results of the Exam

1. You will be informed of the outcome following the end of the exam.
2. Your Chair will bring your Final Report Form, which upon passing will be signed by all members of your thesis committee. Proxy signatures are not acceptable.
3. If you have not already, please schedule your final appointment with GD for the submission of your final paperwork and thesis at least a week after your thesis defense date to allow sufficient time for finalizing your final paperwork and obtaining relevant signatures. You may schedule your final submission appointment via the [GD Online Calendar](#).
 - a. You may not schedule your final appointment on the last Friday of the quarter unless your defense is on the Wednesday or Thursday immediately preceding that Friday. Appointments may be made at least one full day in advance, but not more than 60 days in advance.
4. The ECE Graduate Student Affairs Advisor will notify you via email when your forms are ready for collection.
5. After collecting the following forms from the ECE Graduate Student Affairs Advisor, you must submit them to GD during your final submission appointment, by the last day of the quarter in which you will receive your degree:
 - a. Final Report of the Thesis or Comprehensive Examination (Plan I or II) for the Degree of Master of Arts or Science; and
 - b. Graduate Degree and Diploma Application
6. Concurrently, you must submit the thesis to GD and upon approval by the Dean of Graduate Division, file the thesis with the university archivist, who accepts it on behalf of the Graduate Council. **NOTE: The Thesis Submission Fee must be paid before your final appointment with GD and verified by obtaining the cashier's stamp on the Final Report Form.**
7. Acceptance of the thesis by the archivist, with a subsequent second approval by the Dean of Graduate Division, represents the final step in the completion by the candidate of all

requirements for the M.S. degree. All theses submitted in partial satisfaction of M.S. degree requirements will be filed with Proquest.

Completion of the MS degree

1. The M.S. degree will be awarded in the same quarter that you pass your oral exam and file your thesis (except for exams taken between quarters, for which the degree will be awarded at the end of the following quarter), as long as you advanced to M.S. candidacy no later than second week of the same quarter.
2. You will receive a letter confirming that you have successfully completed the M.S. degree requirements at the end of the same quarter.
3. Your diploma will be mailed 3-6 months after the end of the quarter. The diplomas are mailed directly to your permanent mailing address. Therefore, you must check your address for accuracy on [TritonLink](#) to avoid delays in delivery.
4. The Academic Computing Services (ACS) automatically extends the closing date of accounts belonging to students who applied to graduate. Students who have applied to graduate are sent an e-mail notice with details about the extension, which is for approximately 60 days. Please take the following steps before you graduate to preserve your valued computer files and to minimize the risk of missing e-mail sent to you:
 - Arrange for a new e-mail account through the UCSD Alumni Association, an off-campus ISP, an employer, or a new educational institution.
 - Redirect mail addressed to <username>@ucsd.edu to your new account. When you leave the University, ACT will continue to forward e-mail sent to your @ucsd.edu address for up to one year.
 - Move copies of your important computer files to portable media, your home computer or another computer account.
 - Ask ACS to delete your account from student/instructional systems. To do this login to your account BEFORE IT CLOSES and send a message to acs-consult@ucsd.edu requesting that your account be deleted.
 - Please visit the following website for further information:
 - <http://acs.ucsd.edu/account- tools/account-status.php>
 - Collect all mail from your student mailbox, and notify everyone who sends you mail at ECE of your current mailing address. Your mailbox will be cleared at the end of the quarter of your graduation, and all remaining mail will be returned to sender.
 - UCSD conducts one commencement ceremony each year at the end of Spring quarter. In order to participate in commencement, you must have completed all degree requirements, including filing of the thesis. NOTE: Late filing of master's advancement to candidacy forms may jeopardize your commencement participation; for this reason, it is especially important to file master's advancement to candidacy forms no later than the second week of the quarter.

Degree Completion Notes

- Filing Deadlines: The deadlines for filing theses is on the Friday before the last day of Fall and Winter quarters, and one week earlier for Spring quarter. If you are seeking to meet this deadline, you must have a preliminary appointment for a formatting check prior to your final appointment and submission of your thesis with Graduate Division. Schedule your thesis appointment with one of the Master's advisors in Graduate Division [here](#).
- Filing between Quarters: Registration will be waived if you are completing between quarters, as long as you were registered in the previous quarter. The M.S. degree will be conferred at the end of the following quarter.
- Filing Fee: If you are on an approved leave of absence and have completed all requirements except the defense of the thesis, you may petition to pay a filing fee (The filing fee is \$179 and must be paid at the Cashier's office) in lieu of full registration fees. Cashier validated General Petition must be submitted with your *Final Report* form.
- Summer Degrees: If you are completing your degree requirements during the Summer and you were enrolled in the previous Spring quarter, you do not pay any additional fees. If you are completing your degree requirements during the Summer and you were on leave of absence in the previous Spring quarter, you will pay the filing fee for completion and will also need to file a General Petition to complete between quarters.
- GD publishes a schedule of specific deadline dates for Summer degrees at the end of each Spring quarter.
- Registration in the Final Quarter for the Award of the Degree: If you need only to submit your thesis, or to defend your thesis, you may pay a filing fee in lieu of registration in the final quarter. The filing fee is \$188 and must be paid at the Cashier's office.