

# Master's Degree: Completion

## Related Policy:

- *Master's Degree: Completion*

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. ~~What if the student needs to change committee members after an initial committee is submitted and approved?~~

Can I change a committee member after my initial committee has been submitted and approved?

~~Changes in committee membership may be made after an initial committee is submitted and approved; such~~ Committee changes require program and collegiate approval and must be recorded by the collegiate in the system of record.

2. Must my advisor represent my major field on the final oral examination committee?

Yes. Your advisor must be one of the two individuals required to represent your major field on the examination committee.

- ~~2.3.~~ Is there a time limit on the length of oral examinations?

The expected length of an oral examination may differ by program. However, examinations typically range from 1.5 to 3 hours.

- ~~3.4.~~ Do the student and the committee members have to ~~be physically present on campus for~~ attend the final oral examination in person?

No, neither the student nor the committee members are required to attend be physically present on campus for the final oral examination in person as long as all of the conditions required for remote participation are satisfied in the exam are met.

5. Does the master's final oral examination require a public presentation?

University policy requires a closed examination, open only to the final oral examination committee and the student. Graduate programs may opt to require a public presentation component; however, a closed session with only the student and the committee must immediately follow the public presentation. The program's decision to include a public presentation component to the final oral examination must be publicized in its graduate student handbook.

6. I cannot satisfy the "oral" component of the final oral examination. What accommodations are available to support completion of this requirement?

Not all students can deliver their oral examination "orally"; for example, a student may need an ASL interpreter or assistive technology to satisfy the oral examination requirement. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is a resource for graduate students and graduate programs to explore formal disability-related accommodations not only for milestone examinations such as the final oral, but also coursework, program-specific exams, research/writing, teaching, and lab work.

**4.7. Why does my final oral examination committee have to include an outside committee member? Who qualifies as an outside member?**

An outside committee member is required to both ensure fairness and due process for the student in the examination and to ensure that the student is examined across the breadth of knowledge represented by their field of study. An outside member is typically from a different graduate program other than the student's major field; however see the question below.

~~**5.8. Can a faculty member representing a formal track within a graduate program that is different from the student's track satisfy the requirement that one committee member represent a field outside of the student's major field?**~~

I'm pursuing a formal track in a graduate program that offers multiple tracks. Can a faculty member from one of my program's other tracks qualify as the required outside examiner on my committee?

Yes, if approved by the program and collegiate unit.

**6.9. Can a committee member abstain from voting in the master's final examination?**

No, all committee members are required to vote in the master's final examination.

**10. An emergency situation has arisen with one of my committee members. Am I allowed to identify a substitute?**

Yes. Substitutions for an oral examination that are necessitated by emergency situations should, if possible, be approved in advance, if possible. ~~In such cases,~~ ~~the~~ advisor should consult with the appropriate collegiate unit staff before the start of the examination.

**11. Is it permissible to recess the master's final oral examination?**

Yes. Refer to the Procedure: Canceling or Recessing the Doctoral Preliminary and/or a Master's or Doctoral Final Oral Examination for information.

**7.12. I am retaking my final oral examination and need to replace one of my committee members due to an emergency situation. Is this allowed?**

Yes. As with other committee substitutions that are necessitated by emergency situations, the substitution should be approved in advance and the advisor should consult with the appropriate collegiate unit staff before the start of the examination.

**8.13. Can a collegiate unit delegate responsibility for approving changes in committee membership to the program level?**

No. It is the responsibility of the collegiate unit and the program to ensure that all initial and replacement members are eligible to serve on the master's final examination committee.

**9.14. Is there a requirement that Must a minimum amount of time elapse between a first attempt at the master's final examination and an approved retake?**

~~There is no University requirement that~~ The University does not require a minimum amount of time elapse between the first and second attempts at the master's final examination. ~~However,~~ collegiate units and/or programs may set a minimum time requirement.

**10. Who is responsible for communicating with a student who has failed the first attempt at the master's final examination and what information should be communicated?**

~~The committee chair must communicate with the student in writing to inform them of the reasons the first attempt at the examination was graded "fail" and what the student will be expected to do in order to pass a retake.~~

The committee chair must inform the student in writing why the first attempt at the examination was graded "fail" and what the student needs to do to prepare for a successful retake.

**41.15. I was asked to make revisions to my thesis as a condition of passing the final oral examination. How does my advisor/s certify that the revisions have been completed so that the degree can be awarded?**

The signature of your advisor (and co-advisor if applicable) on the signature page you are required to submit with your thesis certifies that the advisor/s have seen and approved the final version of the thesis.

**42.16. When should students apply for degree clearance?**

Students should apply via [MyUMyU](#) by the first day of the intended month of degree clearance.

**43.17. What does it mean to “file a digital copy of the thesis with the University in accordance with University standards”?**

University standards require ~~that Plan A~~ students ~~who complete a Plan A master’s degree to~~ submit a digital copy of their thesis to the University Digital Conservancy (UDC) [via ProQuest](#) for archiving. See the appendix: Thesis Formatting and Submission Guidelines for additional information. Students may request an embargo on publication of the dissertation for a limited period of time ([see question #14](#)).

**18. When should students request an embargo (hold) on the publication of the [master’s thesis/professional engineering design project](#)?**

The request for an embargo (hold) must be made prior to the conferral of the degree. Once the final approved copy of the thesis/[project](#) is submitted [and approved](#), students cannot make changes to the thesis/[project](#) or remove the thesis/[project](#) from the *University Digital Conservancy (UDC)*.

**19. [Under what circumstances should Plan A students request an embargo?](#)**

[Circumstances that argue for granting permission to restrict master’s thesis/professional engineering design project publication include: Patentable rights in the work or other issues in which disclosure may be detrimental to the rights or interests of the author; the ethical need to prevent disclosure of sensitive or classified information about persons, institutions, technologies, etc.; the interest of an academic or commercial press in acquiring the rights to publish the thesis as a book; or content that is likely to be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal. In rare instances, students may wish to request an extension to the embargo. Such requests must be submitted, following the same embargo-request process, before the original embargo expires. Approval of an extension to the embargo is not guaranteed.](#)