THESIS AND DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

If a student chooses or is required to complete a master's thesis, they must enroll for six credits of thesis research as prescribed by the program (see §5.3.1- Registration Process for Master's Students in the GSAS Academic Policies and Procedures Guidebook).

A master's thesis committee must consist, at minimum, of a thesis director (mentor) and one reader, each of whom must be a full-time faculty member in the student's department or program at Fordham. Committee members are specified, along with the thesis topic, on the Thesis Title Approval form, which is submitted to GSAS by the department chairperson or program director. The department chairperson or program director is responsible for ensuring that the committee is professionally appropriate.

When a thesis title and committee have been approved, the student's program will be notified. For any changes made to the thesis title or thesis committee membership, a new form must be prepared and sent to the dean's office for approval.

An oral defense of the master's thesis is not required by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, but it may be a program requirement. If it is a program requirement, the student must be physically present at the defense and may not participate virtually (such as Skype, teleconferencing, Zoom, etc.).

Students should note that the presentation of the thesis to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences is the last requirement that is necessary for the degree. All other requirements for the master's degree must be completed before the thesis is submitted to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

Some departments require master's research papers, projects, or internships. These papers are not always presented to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, though the approval forms for these projects are presented to the school as part of the last requirement for the degree. Students in these departments should consult their departments about requirements for these projects.

Presentation of Master's Thesis

Please note that we are making the following changes to the procedures by which the GSAS policy on the presentation of the master's thesis to GSAS is implemented (see §7.7.2- Presentation of Master's Thesis to GSAS in the GSAS Academic Policies and Procedures Guidebook).

If you choose, or are required, to submit a master's thesis, you are now required to upload the thesis to ProQuest/UMI. While the final thesis paperwork should still be submitted to GSAS, a physical copy of the thesis is no longer needed. Capstone papers, long papers, final project papers, research papers, etc., should not be uploaded to ProQuest/UMI. Only those final requirements officially described as a "master's thesis" should be uploaded.

Students are not required to present their master's theses in person to GSAS. Instead, the presentation of the master's thesis to GSAS will be conducted "in absentia:" after uploading the thesis to ProQuest/UMI, students must submit the final thesis paperwork to GSAS for review. Once the thesis and the paperwork have been reviewed, students will be cleared for graduation.

In programs requiring capstone papers, final project papers, and the like, students should follow that program's process for submitting the project and then file the final paperwork with GSAS. Again, no appointment is required.

The master's thesis should be uploaded to ProQuest/UMI at http://www.etdadmin.com/fordham.

The uploaded thesis should be in its final version, including any changes required by the committee and in the proper format as indicated in Appendix E of the GSAS Academic Policies and Procedures Guidebook.

Programs are required to submit the final thesis paperwork to adgsas@fordham.edu by the deadline in the academic calendar so that the student can be processed for graduation.

Please follow the deadlines posted in the academic calendar.

Dissertation Guidelines

All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within eight years of the first semester of matriculation in the graduate school for those students who enter with a master's degree from another institution, or within 10 years of the first semester of matriculation for those students who are direct doctoral students (students who receive a master's degree *in cursu* from Fordham) or who complete a master's degree from Fordham and then continue directly into a doctoral program. Time limit requirements apply to both full- and part-time students.

The requirements for doctoral students are typically as follows:

1. Completion of the appropriate number of graduate credits (see §7.1- General Requirements in the GSAS Academic Policies and Procedures Guidebook).
2. A language and/or research skills requirement (see §7.5- Language Requirements in the GSAS Academic Policies and Procedures Guidebook).
3. Comprehensive examination (see §7.6- Comprehensive Examinations in the GSAS Academic Policies and Procedures Guidebook).
4. Dissertation proposal acceptance.
5. Doctoral dissertation.
6. Oral dissertation defense.
7. Presentation of the dissertation to the dean

Individual departments and programs may impose additional requirements.

Students who wish for an extension to the doctoral time limit must apply before the conclusion of their final academic year. Such a request must be directed in writing through the department chairperson or program director, must be approved by the dissertation mentor, readers, and the department chairperson and must receive the written approval of the dean. An extension to the time limit for degree completion will be granted only if, in the dean's judgment, there is sufficient evidence that the degree will be completed expeditiously and that the dissertation will be of high merit.

Extensions beyond the time limit will not be granted to students who have not secured approval of a dissertation topic prior to the expiration of the time limit or who have otherwise not made substantial academic progress toward completion of the degree, except with the permission of the dean.

Requests for an extension of the doctoral time limit must include:

- A sufficient portion of the dissertation to permit an objective evaluation of the quality of the student's work. In the humanities, a reasonable portion is one-half of the dissertation; in the sciences, research through the stage of data collection should be presented.
- A timetable for the completion of the remaining portions of the dissertation.
- A plan for renewed demonstration of language and/or research skills competency (if needed for dissertation research) if more than five years have elapsed since the original completion of these requirements.
- A plan to demonstrate currency of knowledge for any courses taken prior to the request for extension, and departments may require that they retake certain courses.
- A timetable for retaking and passing the doctoral comprehensive examinations in the department's or program's current format if more than five years have elapsed since any portion of the comprehensive examination was completed.