

# Master's Thesis Guidelines

*Revised on July 3rd, 2018*

**Thesis supervisor and committee:** the student needs to find a faculty member (with a terminal degree in the area) willing to serve as the supervisor on the student's thesis. The thesis supervisor and the student together select a committee of two more readers, who can be part-time faculty members and/or external to DePaul. The supervisor should then submit the committee together with a short description of the research topic (short paragraph) to the relevant Program Committee (PC) which will approve the choice of committee (but not the topic which is for reference only). The thesis supervisor should also notify the CDM Academic Advising office ([cdm-advising@depaul.edu](mailto:cdm-advising@depaul.edu)) sending an email with the student's name, ID number and the quarter when the student is planning to defend the thesis. This information is used to identify those students who are graduating during the same quarter of the thesis defense and may need a retroactive enrollment in XXX 698 (see below).

**Proposal Defense (optional):** The supervisor and the student may choose to present the proposed research topic to the committee in a proposal defense. This will not be a formal process, but is meant to acquaint the committee with the student's research plan, and solicit some early feedback from the committee.

**Credit:** 8 hours of XXX 695 research and writing credit are required for a thesis. In exceptional cases the student may request that the thesis committee make a recommendation to the student's academic advisor to approve up to 4 hours of relevant substitute course work to fulfill part of this requirement. Ordinarily this determination would be made at the time of a Thesis Proposal Defense.

**Defense:** the student must defend his/her thesis in a public presentation. After the defense, the committee officially approves or rejects the student's thesis. It is understood that some changes to the thesis might still be necessary after the defense. There is a form (see Appendix C) to be filled out by the committee, reporting the decisions of the committee. The filled-out form should be given to an academic advisor.

**Formatting:** the first two pages of the thesis will follow the templates supplied in standard formats (Word, latex). Beyond that, there are no formatting restrictions.

**Enrolling in XXX 698.** When the thesis has been accepted by the committee (with or without revisions), and the thesis defense report has been filed with the CDM Academic Advising Office, the academic advisor registers the student in XXX 698 in the quarter that the thesis was successfully defended (this may require a retroactive enrollment).

**Publication:** students are encouraged to submit their final thesis as a CDM technical report.

**Comments:** external reader, proposal defense, and examination are not required for a master's thesis.

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# FAQ

**Can the student graduate before completing the thesis?** The short answer is: no. For the degree to be conferred, the student's coursework needs to be completed, including the 0-credit thesis course, if it's desired by the student. However, the student is eligible to walk in the graduation ceremony as long as they have successfully defended their thesis (even if the final version has not yet been completed).

**What if the student can't find two additional readers, or wants more than two?** The student's advisor can submit a request to the relevant PC, justifying having a different number of reviewers.

**What if the student has taken all the course-work except for the 0-credit thesis course, but needs to be registered for the current quarter?** *CSC 601 Master's Research Continuation* and *SE 691 Master's Research Continuation* cover this. It is a 0-credit course, ensuring that the student retains residency.

**What if the student completes 8 hours of research, but it is not of thesis-level quality or originality?** In this case the student is given credit for the work done, and encouraged to write a CDM technical report, but they are not allowed to register for the thesis course XXX 698.

**What if the thesis advisor wants a dedicated full-time student to devote 8 credit hours of work to his or her thesis in a single quarter?** The advisor can arrange special registration with the dean's office.

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## **Appendix C: Thesis Defense Report**

see next page

DePaul University  
College of Computing and Digital Media

**Thesis Defense Report**

I have read the thesis written by:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ ID \_\_\_\_\_

**(To the advisor):** The following thesis title is identical to the one on the title page of the draft returned to the student. This title is approved by me and it is to be used when the final copies of the dissertation are prepared.

Title of thesis:

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Advisor's Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Acceptable. Candidate may proceed to prepare final copy

Pass, with revisions stated below:

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Not Acceptable. Please explain:

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_____ Advisor (Print Name)	_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ 1 <sup>st</sup> Reader (Print Name)	_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ 2 <sup>nd</sup> Reader (Print Name)	_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ 3 <sup>rd</sup> Reader (Print Name)	_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ 4 <sup>th</sup> Reader (Print Name)	_____ Signature	_____ Date