D. Master’s Degree Academic Policies: Thesis/Non-thesis Option

The thesis is a scholarly, original study that is a significant contribution to the knowledge of the chosen discipline. A non-thesis master's will include a culminating project, scholarly paper or comprehensive examination that assesses the student’s ability to integrate understanding of concepts across the discipline. The master's degree candidate's advisory committee members must read and return drafts of theses or projects to the student within a reasonable period of time. The Faculty Senate's Graduate Studies Committee recommends that advisory committee members hold drafts for no longer than 30 calendar days.

Prior approval for use of human subjects, animals, or biohazardous materials in research is required. If the student plans to utilize human, animal, or biohazardous materials subjects for research, the student must contact the Office of Research Assurances (see Chapter 11 for additional policies and resources concerning research). Please note that departments/programs should ensure that all procedures have been followed and forms filed with the appropriate offices; they can also determine the appropriateness of such narrative within the thesis. The Graduate School only seeks verification that university approval has been granted.

No material in the thesis or special problem/project submitted to fulfill the requirements of a degree may be restricted in any way. The thesis must be made available through ProQuest and the WSU Libraries for inspection by any interested parties.

After passing the final oral examination for thesis students, the student must submit the thesis to the Graduate School for final acceptance. Details for submitting the thesis can be found in Chapter 6.H. Non-thesis students may be required to take a comprehensive examination, or submit a written paper, or give an oral presentation as part of their non-thesis 702 project. Information regarding any non-thesis special problem/project option is available by contacting the graduate program directly.