

MASTER OF NURSING

THESIS GUIDELINES

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INTRODUCTION

The requirement for the Thesis Stream of the Master of Nursing program is a successful completion of ten course credits (or equivalent) on a full-time basis, **only**. Courses are scheduled during all three semesters of the academic year. Students enrolled in the Thesis Stream have a maximum of 6 terms to complete the program requirements.

When considering your program option, please note that students enrolled in the Thesis Stream are required to maintain their full-time status. As a program policy, we do not permit full-time students to change their status to part-time. All students must remain active in the program unless they are on an approved Leave Of Absence.

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The Thesis Stream curriculum has been designed to provide students with theoretical, research and practice courses in one of the two fields: **Field I** – Leadership in Health Policy and Education; or **Field II** – Health and Illness of Individuals and Communities. The core program consists of five required courses that address theoretical issues and research skills that are common to both fields, one required course that is specific to student's chosen field of study, plus a Master's Thesis.

Specific Guidelines for Master of Nursing Thesis Stream

In addition to the following, students are required to adhere to the policies and procedures of the Yeates School of Graduate Studies and Ryerson University. Information about these policies and procedures is available on the Yeates School of Graduate website, in the University Calendar, and in the Master of Nursing Student Handbook.

REQUIREMENTS

Students in the thesis stream must complete 10 course credits. This includes: 5 required Core courses, 1 required Field course, and a Thesis (equivalent to 4 course credits)

Students **must** complete all **5 required courses AND a Thesis**

Course Number	Course Title	Credits
MN8901*	Quantitative Research Methods	1
MN8902*	Qualitative Research Methods	1
MN8903*	Nature & Development of Nursing Knowledge	1
MN8904**	Seminar in Professional Nursing Advancement	1
MN8905**	Practicum in Professional Nursing Advancement	1
MN8000	Thesis	4

* Students taking the thesis stream are required to have completed (or be taking concurrently) the following three courses before enrolling in the MN8000 Thesis: MN8901 Quantitative Research Methods: Design and Critical Appraisal; MN8902 Qualitative Research Methods: Design and Critical Appraisal; and, MN8903 Nature and Development of Nursing Knowledge.

** The required Core course MN 8905: Practicum in Professional Nursing Advancement is an intensive practice experience where a student is in a practice setting for 16 hours per week over the 12 week term (192 hours). This practicum course is taken concurrently with the course entitled “MN 8904: Seminar in Professional Nursing Advancement”, which requires in-class attendance 3 hours per week, over the same 12 weeks.

Enrolment in these courses is only allowed after the student has successfully completed all other REQUIRED CORE courses and one REQUIRED FIELD course.

Thesis students must complete **1 required field course from their Field of Study**

Field I: Leadership in Health Care Policy and Education		
Course Number	Course Title	Credits
MN8920	Health Policy: Comparative Analysis	1
Or		
MN8921	Leadership in Education	1
Or		
M8934	Inter-professional Education and Collaboration	1
Field II: Health and Illness of Individuals and Communities		
Course Number	Course Title	Credits
MN8910	Health & Illness: Theoretical Perspectives	1
Or		
MN8921	Population Health & Health Promotion	1
Or		
M8934	Diversity and Globalization: Promoting Urban Health	1

SUPERVISION, ADVISING, AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

All first time thesis supervisors will be automatically partnered with a faculty member who has independently supervised thesis students within the previous 5 years.

The selection of supervisor should be based on *goodness of fit* among potential supervisor and thesis students. Decisions regarding goodness of fit should be made with the potential supervisor's methodological proficiency in mind, as the main consideration, followed by content expertise. So, a supervisor may or may not have the expertise in a particular content area, but are proficient with the proposed method.

Co-supervision may occur if faculty:

- Have not recently (>5 years)/never supervised thesis students
- Volunteer to co-supervise
- Have an expertise in a specific methodological and/or content area
- Have access to main data that can be used for secondary analysis

A thesis committee is to be formed no later than the first term of enrolment in the thesis course. All committee member names are to be sent to the Program Director no later than the start of the second semester of the student's enrollment. Students are required to meet with their committee at least once every semester. During all thesis committee meetings, students are expected to document all conversations in the form of thesis committee minutes. These minutes are to be circulated to all committee members within one week of the committee meeting.

Developing productive relationships with thesis supervisor and supervisory committee is one of the most important and rewarding aspects of being a graduate student in the Master of Nursing program. The Yeates School of Graduate Studies has produced a guide to help Ryerson University's graduate community of students, supervisors, program directors and others involved in graduate supervision understand their respective roles and responsibilities. It is modeled on policies and guidelines in use at many other Canadian, and specifically Ontario universities. The

underlying principle is one of mutual respect for students, faculty, and staff in a university environment governed by traditional standards of research and academic integrity, without prejudice or discrimination.

Graduate Supervision document may be found at:

<http://ryerson.ca/graduate/currentstudents/academicmatters/supervisionandadvising.html>

The policy is neither exhaustive nor exclusive and should be viewed in the context of normal circumstance in the Master of Nursing program. These guidelines should be viewed as complementary to the policies that pertain to rights and responsibilities of members of the Ryerson University community, including the Student code of Conduct, the Graduate Appeals Policy, the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy, the Policy on Ownership in Student Work in Research and the Faculty and Staff Ownership of Research Results Policy.

STUDENT/SUPERVISOR DISCUSSION CHECKLIST

This checklist provides a guide for discussing mutual expectations between a Master of Nursing thesis student and their supervisor. Students and supervisors are expected to complete the checklist along with the first progress report, either in fall or winter.

Discussion Checklist document may be found at:

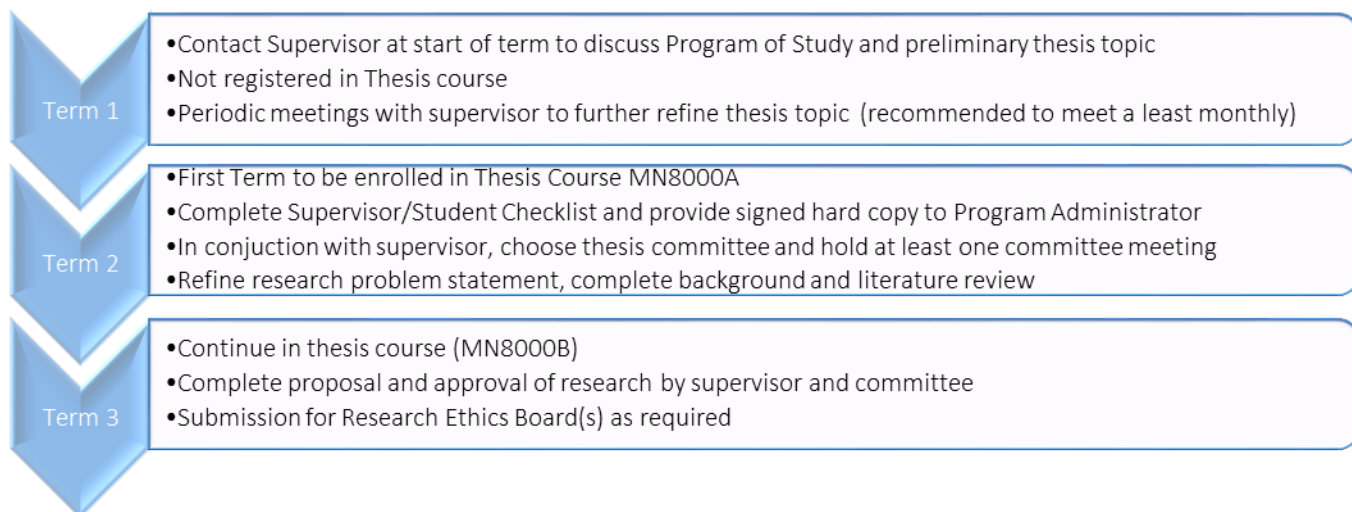
<http://ryerson.ca/graduate/currentstudents/academicmatters/forms.html>

Mandatory Completion of Progress Report at end of each semester

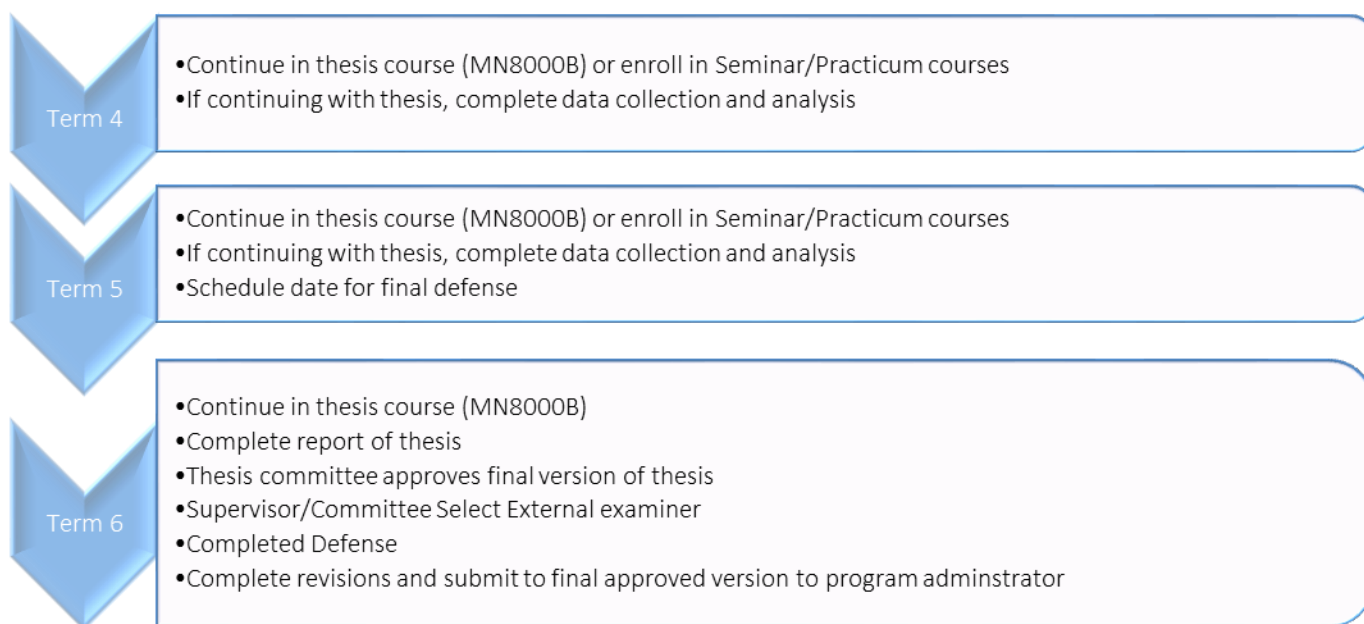
Students are expected to review their progress with their supervisor regularly throughout the semester. At the completion of EACH semester, the student must complete a progress report, which reviews the student's academic progress in that semester. The progress report relates to the successful completion of milestones related to each semester, as well as specific goals identified by the student and supervisor related to expected progress in a given term. It is the responsibility of the student to have their Progress Reports reviewed and signed by their thesis supervisor each term they are enrolled. The Progress Reports are to be submitted to the Graduate Program Director at least 2 weeks before the end of term, so that an in-term grade can be processed. In-term grade will reflect the successful completion of milestones identified each semester. The Graduate Program Director is responsible for submitting in-term grade for all thesis students.

RECOMMENDED PROGRESS THROUGH THESIS STREAM

Year 1



Year 2



THESIS AND EXAMINATION

The thesis embodies the results of a research program and exposes students' work to scholarly criticism. It must represent a single body of work, with integrated material, and should not be solely a collection of published articles.

The thesis must be prepared and submitted in strict accordance with procedures outlined by the Yeats School of Graduate Studies and with the current regulations of the Library and Archives Canada. It is important to understand that the responsibility for formatting and submitting the correct format rests with the author.

Master of Nursing students must submit their thesis to the program administrator as an electronic PDF file. Please refer to Significant Dates for deadlines and times. Note the final date to clear outstanding graduation requirement. If you miss this date, you must register and pay fees for the term as you must be a current student when your thesis is submitted. To help prepare and submit your thesis in accordance with proper procedures, YSGS has developed a guide for graduate student use.

The Oral Examination will be assessed in terms of the candidates' ability to: 1) present their thesis work and 2) successfully **defend** all aspects of their study by providing clear and insightful answers to questions.

THESIS DEFENSE PROCEDURE

AT LEAST 4 WEEKS IN ADVANCE OF DEFENSE:

Thesis supervisor:

Submits the signed Thesis Approval Form

(www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/graduate/programs/nursing/forms/Thesis_Guidelines.pdf)

- Notifies the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Program Administrator of the student's intent to defend, providing names of supervisory committee, external examiner, date of defense, room location, and title of thesis
- Ensures the external examiner, who holds YSGS appointment, is secured

NOTE: External examiner must have YSGS Appointment and be knowledgeable about the content and/or research area pertaining to the thesis.

AT LEAST 3 WEEKS IN ADVANCE OF DEFENSE:

Student provides a copy of the thesis to all committee members, inclusive of chair and external examiner, in advance of defense (or mutually agreed upon date)

1. Thesis supervisor and/or student – arrange for projector, laptop, room, and/or teleconference phone to be booked

2. Examining committee (inclusive of the external examiner) is responsible for reading the thesis in its entirety, and coming prepared with examination questions developed in advance of the examination along with suggested edits to the thesis

****If any substantive gaps exist, such that the thesis is not defensible, the thesis supervisor should be notified in writing at least 72 hours prior to the examination date.**

ON THE DAY OF THE DEFENSE:

Thesis supervisor and/or student – set up room with all equipment at least an hour before defense

Responsibilities of the External Examiner, during the defense, include:

- Generate a list of exam examination questions in advance of the defense. Pose questions to student during defense
- Assessment of student's oral presentation
- Assessment of student's response to questions posed during the oral exam
- Active engagement in the deliberations following the oral exam

Role of the Chair of the Defense:

- The Chair is responsible for maintaining decorum during the examination, and ensuring that the student is given a fair and equitable assessment of their work. The examination is public, but the Chair has the authority to exclude persons whose conduct disturbs the examination. The Chair then presides over the deliberations of the Examining Committee but is a non-voting member, except in the case of a tie.

The Chair:

- Arrives at least 15 minutes before the oral exam
- Starts exam on time
 - Begins by ensuring all committee members have received and read the thesis
 - Confirms that the student is ready for the oral exam
 - Requests student and audience leave room in order for process to be discussed with the Examining Committee
 - Process: 20-minute presentation, review order, number of questions (2-3/ per examiner; with the External Examiner being permitted to ask 2-3 additional questions), and number of rounds of questions (typically 2 rounds)
 - Invites student and audience back into the room for the student's thesis presentation
 - Informs audience they cannot participate in the question period (oral exam) and to remain silent throughout the entire process
 - Initiates the question period (oral exam), starting with the External Examiner, and ending with the thesis supervisor
 - Takes notes throughout the oral exam on changes to be considered by the student and changes that must be made to the thesis to meet requirements

ACTUAL DEFENSE PROCESS:

- Oral presentation:
 - The examination begins with an oral presentation by the student using whatever aids are required to make an effective presentation. This presentation should be limited to no more than 20 minutes, with the focus being on the main contributions and conclusions of the work.
 - The Chair monitors the time for the presentation and, as needed, alerts the student to time remaining
- Oral exam (question period)
 - The Chair must ascertain that all of the questions from an absent Examination Committee member, should that be the case, are adequately presented by the delegate who may also pose any additional questions. If found to be appropriate or relevant, the Chair may ask questions that have been previously submitted to the committee by non-committee members in attendance.
- Once oral exam is completed, only the Examining Committee is present during deliberations. The student and the audience are requested to leave the room prior to the deliberations
- The Chair facilitates deliberations:
 - Requests decision re: oral presentation – satisfactory or unsatisfactory
 - Requests decision re: oral exam – accept paper with minor revisions, refer paper for major revisions, fail
 - Obtain signatures on ***Report of the Oral Examining Committee*** found on MN website
http://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/graduate/programs/nursing/forms/Report_of_the_Oral_Examining_Committee_Form.pdf
 - One copy of this report should immediately be given to the student, and a copy should be delivered to the Yeates School of Graduate Studies as soon as possible via the Graduate Program Administrator.
 - Reviews with the Examination Committee questions and areas for revisions
 - Decides if student meets criteria for Ryerson University's Blue and Gold award (to qualify, a student must have a minimum of an A-)
 - Invites student back into the room and reveals decision (typically the thesis supervisor is provided the opportunity to reveal the decision.... if it is positive)
 - Provides questions and areas for revision summary sheet to student and thesis supervisor
 - Submits ***Report of the Oral Examining Committee*** to Graduate Program Administrator
 - Ensures all copies of the written work, submitted for the examination, are returned to the student upon conclusion of the oral examination

NOTE:

- ✚ If an Examination Committee member does not appear for the defense, the Chair, in consultation with the thesis supervisor, can determine whether or not to proceed with the defense.
- ✚ If the External Examiner and/or Chair does not appear for the defense, the oral exam needs to be rescheduled.

In either circumstance, the Graduate Program Director and/or Graduate Program Administrator must be notified so an immediate follow-up can occur.

Information obtained from the YSGS GRADUATE ADMISSIONS AND STUDIES POLICY (Policy Number 142) has been used to create this document. For the full policy see <http://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/senate/policies/pol142.pdf>. YSGS MN Thesis Exam

MN THESIS APPROVAL FORM

Student's Name: _____

Date of Thesis Review Meeting: _____

Comments: _____

We have reviewed the student's MN thesis and had our questions answered. We approve the student's thesis and agree that the Program Director be notified about a potential External Examiner and to seek approval from YSGS to move forward to the defense. Copies are to go to Program Director, Student, and Members of the Supervisory Committee.

Supervisor

_____ Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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Supervisory Committee Members

_____ Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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_____ Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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_____ Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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_____ Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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MASTER OF NURSING THESIS DEFENSE TIMELINES

It is critical to map out the timelines for a thesis defense. There are several matters to be considered in scheduling the defense date and the best planning start-point is at the beginning of the term PRIOR to the term in which the student anticipates completing all of the program requirements for graduation. The final date to apply to schedule an oral defense is a **minimum of six weeks before the planned defense date**.

Thesis Defense Timeline Requirements	Planned Term of Oral Defense		
	Fall Completion	Winter Completion	Spring Completion
1. Final date to apply to schedule an Oral defense (Approx. 6 weeks before planned defense date)	Apply within the last two weeks of June	Apply within the last two weeks of October	Apply within the last two weeks of March
2. Final date to defend (approx. 4 weeks before the end of term)	Must defend by the end of the first week of August	Must defend by the end of the last week of November	Must defend by the end of the first week of April
3. Final Date to submit a revised draft version in pdf. format to program administrator for review to ensure thesis meets minimum formatting requirements for acceptance by YSGS	<p>For thesis formatting guidelines refer to the YSGS Thesis, MRP and dissertation Submission Requirements document: http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/currentstudents/academicmatters/dissertations.html Must allow a minimum time of two weeks prior to the final due date to clear outstanding graduation requirements and to allow the Graduate Program Administrator to review and approve formatting requirements related to the thesis.</p> <p>Refer to the Important Dates document found on the YSGS website to determine deadline: http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/currentstudents/calendarsanddates.html</p>		

4. Final Date to clear outstanding graduation requirements and submit approved version of thesis in .pdf format to the program administrator	<p>Refer to the Important Dates document found on the YSGS website to determine final date to clear outstanding graduation requirements: http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/currentstudents/calendarsanddates.html</p>
5. Final date to apply to graduate	<p>Refer to the Important Dates document found on the YSGS website – here is the link http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/currentstudents/calendarsanddates.html</p>
6. Convocation Dates	<p>Refer to the Convocation documents found on the Ryerson website: http://www.ryerson.ca/convocation/dates/index.html</p>