

Program Milestones and Details

Thesis Advisor and Committee

In consultation with their Thesis Advisor, students should select a Thesis Committee by the beginning of the fall of the second year. This is especially important for students who wish to graduate in two years. The Thesis Committee, consisting of the faculty mentor/chair and two (in exceptional cases, three) other faculty members, is responsible for advising and directing the thesis. The Chair and at least one other member of the committee must be members of the art history tenured and tenure-track faculty and should be appropriate advisors for the topic chosen. Adjunct, visiting faculty members, lecturers, and other professionals may serve on a committee with the approval of the director of the School of Art and the Graduate College and may, again with approval, co-chair a committee together with a member of the tenured/tenure track art history faculty. Committee members should also be people who have worked with the student, preferably in class. The existing thesis committee, the director of the School of Art, and the dean of the Graduate College must approve both the makeup of the thesis committee and any changes to this committee.

Thesis Proposal

In preparation for the MA thesis, students will write a thesis proposal, consisting of about 10 pages plus an extensive bibliography. The proposal should explain the main question/thesis the student will develop in the MA thesis and include the following:

- statement of the thesis topic
- comprehensive literature review
- discussion of the theoretical and methodological approach
- clear explanation of the contribution the student hopes to make to the field with a plan for future research
- narrative outline (chapter by chapter) of the thesis
- bibliography of materials both already read and to be consulted

Students will register for research credit hours (ARS 592) in order to complete the thesis proposal and will work closely with their Thesis Chair. Once the Thesis Chair approves the thesis proposal, the student will submit it to the Thesis Committee for approval. After the committee's acceptance of the proposal (usually at thesis proposal meeting), the student submits the proposal, which includes a title page signed by the committee members, to the Graduate Coordinator and registers for thesis hours (599).

Thesis

Under the guidance of the Thesis Committee, students will write a master's thesis demonstrating significant research abilities and methodological approaches.

To forestall unwanted delay in the degree program, it is recommended that the thesis be of such a nature that it can be completed within a year. The master's thesis can be written in the form of a research essay for publication. The recommended length of the thesis text is 40-60 pages, plus a table of contents, additional

endnotes, images, appendices, illustrations, and a bibliography beyond the text. A student may register for thesis hours and write the thesis while taking coursework, provided that the requirements are met (successful completion of the foreign language exam and the thesis proposal). Six and only six credits of ARS 599 Thesis are required to graduate.

Where appropriate, a student is encouraged to make use of a research topic already developed in courses or seminars taken during previous semesters. It is recommended that the student consult theses submitted to the department in previous years, as recommended by the student's Thesis Chair; all theses are found at the digital repository (repository.asu.edu). In matters of format, the student must follow the regulations set out in the Format Manual, copies of which are available from the Graduate College (graduate.asu.edu/formatmanual). Problems of format not covered by the Format Manual will be resolved by the thesis committee. In most cases, The Chicago Manual of Style or another manual listed in the Format Manual is recommended. Students, notably those writing Pre-Columbian and Native American Indian theses, may use the social science style (see The Chicago Manual of Style and American Antiquity style sheets, both available on the web). Students are directed to consult the Graduate College website for deadlines to be met in submission of the thesis for format review along with critical information regarding thesis preparation: graduate.asu.edu/completing-your-degree/format.

Oral Defense of the Thesis

As part of the degree requirements, students are required to hold a public defense of the thesis on an ASU campus in conformity with Graduate College guidelines. The student and committee chair (or one co-chair) must be physically present at the defense. If a committee member is to be absent, consult the Graduate College's Absent Member Procedures graduate.asu.edu/sites/default/files/absent-committee-member-procedures.pdf. The committee should be consulted during the progress of the thesis and given a number of weeks to read the thesis before the defense. The amount of time is determined by the individual committee members (3-4 weeks is reasonable).

The defense usually consists of the following: a presentation by the student of about 30 minutes, followed by questions from the Thesis Committee, and then audience questions, if time permits and the Chair wishes to do so. The candidate then leaves the room while the committee deliberates; the committee then informs the student of the decision, either passing or failing the oral defense.

The thesis can pass with no revisions, minor revisions, or major revisions. In the case of the latter, the revised parts are submitted to the chair, and other committee members only if deemed appropriate. The student schedules the thesis defense through MyASU at least 10 working days in advance of the defense date and, after determining the availability of the committee members, reserves the room for the defense. The announcement of the thesis defense with date, time, and room number, accompanied by an abstract of the thesis, the student's name and thesis title, and the names of the committee members, is distributed to the art history faculty and students before the meeting.