

RESIDENT MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

Research and Policy Master's Degree

**Personal Financial Planning Department
College of Human Environmental Sciences
University of Missouri**

Revised fall 2017

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Resident Research and Policy Master's Degree Program
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College of Human Environmental Sciences
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The **Research and Policy Master of Science** program is designed to develop skills in research and policy analysis. It requires a minimum of 30 hours of coursework that focuses on critical analysis of the interaction between households and the markets for labor, consumer goods, and financial products and services. Coursework culminates in a master's thesis. Graduates of this program typically seek employment in Extension, government, public policy institutes, or pursue a doctoral degree.

I. ADMISSION

A. Application Process

Applications for admission to the **Research and Policy Master's Degree Program** are considered by the department graduate faculty. The formal admission process begins when the student contacts the University of Missouri (MU) Office of Research and Graduate Studies to initiate the online admission process. Details regarding how to complete this process are found at <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/admissions/>.

The MU Office of Research and Graduate Studies forwards application materials to the department. Upon receiving an application, the department graduate faculty reviews the applicant's materials and determines whether the student will be accepted for advisement in the department graduate program.

Following acceptance by the department, the student is recommended for acceptance to the MU Office of Research and Graduate Studies. *Please note* that admission to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies following enrollment in another graduate program on the MU campus does not necessarily guarantee admission to the Personal Financial Planning Department.

B. Entrance Requirements

Applicants must file results of either the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) with the MU Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

Students who are non-native English speakers must provide proof of English language ability. More information can be found at <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/admissions/eligibility-process/international/language-requirements.php>.

C. Becoming a Degree Candidate

Applicants must meet all requirements to be a candidate for a graduate degree as established by the MU Office of Research and Graduate Studies *and* the Personal Financial Planning Department. Degree seeking applicants must:

1. Have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.
2. Present evidence of at least a 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) grade point average on the last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework for the baccalaureate degree or on prior graduate degree. The student's official transcripts from all post-secondary schools are required for consideration for admission.
3. Provide three letters of recommendation to the Personal Financial Planning Department (see <http://www.greexplorer.com/Recommendation-Letter.html> for links to sample letters of recommendation).
4. Provide a statement of personal and professional objectives (For detail on structure and content see <http://www.greexplorer.com/Personal-Statement.html>).

D. Probationary, Post-Baccalaureate Graduate Student Status:

At the discretion of the department graduate faculty, a student who does not meet the degree candidate requirements may be admitted on probation until the requirements are met. The department graduate faculty approves removal of the student from probation. The requirements for removal of probation will be identified in the acceptance letter, and may include any one or more of the following:

1. The student on probation must achieve a 3.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) in the first nine hours of graduate course work.
2. The student for whom English is the second language may be required to pass Intensive English courses as indicated by scores on the English Proficiency test administered by the MU English as a Second Language Program (ESLP). Course information can be found on the website for the Center for English Language Learning at <https://cellmu.missouri.edu/about/description-of-classes/>.
3. The student must complete appropriate undergraduate courses to rectify academic deficiencies identified at the time of application. Such coursework would be in addition to graduate course requirements for degree completion.
4. If relevant, the student must complete and submit improved scores for the GRE, GMAT, or TOEFL exam.

E. Non-Degree (Post-Baccalaureate) Students (NDS)

Under certain circumstances, a student may undertake graduate coursework before formal acceptance into the graduate program. More information can be found on the website for the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu>.

The NDS option:

1. Is for the student who has not yet selected a major program.
2. Allows a student to prepare for admission to a graduate degree program either at MU or elsewhere.
3. Allows a student to explore options, disciplines, or career enhancements.
4. Allows transition time between completion of a baccalaureate degree and initiation of a graduate degree.

II. ACADEMIC TIME LINE

The MU Office of Research and Graduate Studies provides a *Master's Time Line* related to campus wide requirements for all Master's students. Deadlines for meeting requirements as well as links to the necessary forms may be found at <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/graduation-requirements/masters-grad-requirements.php>.

Important milestones include the following:

- selecting an advisor
- developing and filing a plan of study
- completing requirements specified by that plan of study
- passing a comprehensive exam
- completing a master's thesis.

Although department faculty will advise and assist you in the preparing the necessary forms, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that all forms are on file in the Office of Research and Graduate Studies by the required deadline.

Please note—students receiving a department assistantship who fail to file their M1 and M3 forms by the deadline assigned by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies will have their assistantship suspended until the forms are filed.

III. SELECTING AN ADVISOR AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A. Advisor

Only faculty who are members of the MU Graduate Faculty can serve as an advisor to students enrolled in the resident master's degree program.

1. The department Director of Graduate Studies will act as the student's temporary advisor to assist the student in registering for coursework and

discussing various aspects of the graduate program.

2. During the first semester, the student should discuss their particular subject matter/career/potential research interest with graduate faculty members within the department to identify those whose expertise and interests are most compatible with their own. The advisor should be selected prior to completion of the first semester, and before the program of study is developed.

Department Graduate Faculty

Lu Fan, Ph.D., University of Georgia
Frances C. Lawrence, Ph.D., Florida State University
Abed Rabbani, Ph.D., University of Georgia
Deanna L. Sharpe, Ph.D., CFP®, Iowa State University
Rui Yao, Ph.D., CFP®, The Ohio State University

B. Advisory Committee for Research and Policy Master's Program

For students in the resident Research and Policy Master's program, the Advisory Committee is essential for planning and completing the Master's thesis. Committee members are to be selected in consultation with the student's permanent advisor, who also serves as the chair of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee will consist of at least 3 persons. Two members shall be from the department, and one member shall be from outside the department.

1. Members of the Advisory Committee should be consulted regularly during the development of the program of study as well as during the research for the Master's thesis.
2. Once the committee has been selected during the student's first semester of study, the student must file a **Request for Thesis Committee (M2)** (available at <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/forms-downloads/repository/m2.pdf>). The completed form is submitted to the department Director of Graduate Studies who will sign and forward to the MU Office of Research and Graduate Studies.
3. Change of an advisor or advisory committee member is sometimes necessary or desirable due to change in the membership of the faculty, student interest, or other developments. If a change is necessary, the student files a revised **M2** form.

IV. DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN OF STUDY

A master's degree program is an individualized plan of study. Programs vary somewhat with the interest, background, competencies, and goals of the student. Research is a significant component of the thesis master's degree at MU.

A. The Plan of Study

1. A plan of study should be developed with the advisor. It is in the best interest of the student if this is done before enrolling in their second semester.
2. All Master's students must file a *Program of Study for the Master's Degree (MI)* (available at <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/forms-downloads/repository/m1.pdf>) with the MU Office of Research and Graduate Studies *by the completion of their first semester of full-time residency*. Prior to filing, all master's students *must gain approval* for the plan of study from all members of their Advisory Committee and the department Director of Graduate Studies. This is facilitated by a meeting of the committee, though a meeting is not required.
3. If necessary, changes on the Program of Study can be requested by filing a *Plan of Study Substitution* form (available at <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/forms-downloads/repository/subform.pdf>).

B. Course Credit

1. Progress toward degree
 - a. Unless granted special permission from the Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Studies/Associate Provost for Advanced Studies, a student may enroll for a maximum of 16 credits during each regular semester or 9 credits for the summer semester. The typical enrollment is 9 credits for the fall and spring semesters and 3-6 credits for the summer session. The latter is an expectation for students that are on a teaching or research appointment or working twenty or more hours per week.
 - b. Students have a maximum period of 8 years to complete the Master's degree, from the time they first enroll to completion.
2. Applicants with a degree in another field may have to complete undergraduate prerequisites before becoming a candidate for a graduate degree in the Personal Financial Planning Department. These will be determined by the Departmental Faculty at the time of admission.
3. Graduate course credit does not insure that a course will be counted in a plan of study. The graduate courses must contribute to overall program direction. The members of the student's Advisory Committee will decide with the student which courses support this goal.
 - a. No graduate credit is given for courses 4999 and below.
 - b. A maximum of 40% of a student's minimum total credit hours may be allocated to problems, readings or research coursework.
 - c. Graduate students must be enrolled for course credit (even if only for research hours) when faculty time or facilities for research are being

used.

- d. Graduate students must be enrolled the semester the degree is conferred. If all work is complete, except the final oral examination, the student may enroll "for exam only".
4. **Cross-level courses:** Cross-level courses are courses that are listed at the 4000 (upper- division undergraduate) and the 7000 (graduate) level. In a cross-level course, graduate students enrolled in the 7000 level of the course will share elements of the class with undergraduates who are enrolled in the 4000 level of the course (typically the lecture and some or all of the course exams and assignments). ***In addition***, to earn graduate credit for the course, graduate students are required to complete additional coursework that is assigned and/or approved by the department's Director of Graduate Studies, the Department Chair, or their designees.
 5. **Correspondence credit:** Correspondence or extension course credit earned at any other campus is not accepted by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies. However, the Office of Research and Graduate Studies may accept up to eight hours of correspondence courses that are authorized for graduate credit and offered by MU's faculty through the Center for Independent Study. For more information on course requirements, see <http://gfs.missouri.edu/meetings-minutes/minutes/4-00.php>.
 6. **Transfer Credit:** A maximum of 20% of the number of credit hours required for a student's degree may be graduate credits transferred from another university, including another campus of the University of Missouri system upon the recommendation of the adviser, the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies. The Office of Research and Graduate Studies will make a final review of the transfer request to determine if the transfer credit meets the university's minimum guidelines. See <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/process/plan-of-study/masters.php> for more information.

C. Master's Degree Program - Specific Requirements

1. A minimum of 30 credit hours are required for the Research and Policy Master's degree with at least 15 credit hours at the 8000 level or above. The student must maintain a 3.0 GPA in all graduate courses to be in good standing. Frequently, the student is required to complete more than 30 hours to finish the degree depending on their background and academic goals.
2. Research and Policy Master of Science students must complete a research thesis. Up to six credit hours are earned for this portion of the degree by registering for **FINPLN 8090 Master's Thesis Research in Personal Financial Planning** under the name of the student's advisor. These hours can

be included in the required total of 30.

V. Course Requirements for Thesis Master of Science (minimum of 30 hours)

A sample program can be found in Appendix B. The sample is intended to serve as a guide and is not necessarily to be followed exactly. Programs presuppose adequate preparation at the undergraduate level. As previously indicated, if the student's background is inadequate, supporting courses will be recommended. This additional coursework may extend the total credits required for the degree. Examine the sample program to understand the role of supporting area classes.

Although substitutions may be possible, the core requirements for resident Master of Science degree programs in Personal Financial Planning include the following:

Personal Financial Planning (12 credit hours)

FINPLN 7387 Consumer and Household Economics II
FINPLN 8087 Seminar in Household Economics and Finance
FINPLN 8483 Family Economics
FINPLN 8488 Household Financial Decision Making

Research Methods (3 credit hours)

HDFS 8400 Research Methods OR
SOCIOL 8120 The Logic of Social Research

Economic Theory (3 - 6 credit hrs.)

ECONOM 7351 Intermediate Microeconomics
ECONOM 7353 Intermediate Macroeconomics

Statistics (6 - 9 credits)

ECONOM 7370 Quantitative Economics
ECONOM 7371 Introductory Econometrics
ECONOM 8472 Econometric Methods I
ECONOM 8473 Applied Econometrics
FINPLN 8450 Applied Research in Household Economics and Planning
SOCIOL 7120 Social Statistics
SOCIOL 8130 Advanced Social Statistics
STAT 7510 Applied Statistical Models I
STAT 8220 Applied Statistical Models II

Thesis Research Hours (3 to 6 credit hours)

FINPLN 8090 Master's Thesis Research in Personal Financial Planning

VI. Written Comprehensive Examination

Following completion of all coursework, a one-day written examination covering all aspects of the student's program must be successfully completed. The exam is given on the second Monday of November and April. For Thesis Master's candidates, examination questions are prepared by departmental faculty and non-departmental committee members and drawn from coursework in the student's program of study.

VII. Master of Science Research Requirement

All Master of Science candidates will conduct research resulting in a thesis that is directed by the student's advisor and approved by the Advisory Committee. To complete this requirement, students enroll in FINPLN 8090 Master's Thesis Research in Personal Financial Planning, conduct scholarly research, and present the results of the research as a written thesis.

Graduate students in the Resident Research and Policy Master's Degree Program are required to complete training in SAS, Stata and/or SPSS as early as possible in their program. This training is offered through the University of Missouri's Division of Information Technology (DoIT). More information about this training is available at <https://doit.missouri.edu/services/training/>.

A. Proposal development

1. The research thesis should be discussed with the advisor and/or committee members informally before a proposal is developed. The committee must have at least three members with one from outside the Personal Financial Planning Department. Preferably, the student initiates the scholarly inquiry as soon as possible in their degree program.
2. The following criteria will be useful in selecting a research topic: (1) it has potential for making a worthy contribution to the body of knowledge in the field, (2) the student has a strong interest in the topic and it is consistent with their career goals, and (3) the project is feasible given existing resource constraints.
3. In consultation with their advisor, the student develops a proposal based on a research question that the advisor and the Advisory Committee members approve. Some advisors prefer a rather extensive proposal which may become part of the thesis; other advisors prefer a shorter proposal. Students are encouraged to discuss the proposal prior to choosing an advisor.
4. The advisor should have ample time to review the proposal. Typically, the proposal will require more than one revision prior to submission to the Advisory Committee.
5. Once the proposal is prepared, it should be submitted to the student's Advisory Committee ***at least two weeks prior*** to the time the committee will meet to act upon the proposal.
6. The student and advisor should identify the specific outcomes they wish to come forth from the Advisory Committee meeting. The Committee should decide whether they prefer to read the thesis chapter by chapter or the entire

thesis before making possible recommendations for revision and final approval. Use of both approaches may work well if some committee members have expertise in only one or two chapter areas.

7. It is the advisor's responsibility to ensure that the proposal is editorially and intellectually sound. This may require that the student hire an editor or that other, non-committee, consultants be sought.

B. Conducting the Research

1. The advisor assumes the major responsibility for supervising the student in the research. The second and third readers should be consulted to the extent that each member has indicated his or her desire to participate as the thesis is being developed.
2. The student should discuss the preparation of a thesis outline with the advisor and/or committee members.
3. Once the thesis outline is approved, the student should schedule regular conferences with the advisor and present work in a readable form for deliberation. Again, it may be necessary to hire an editor to assist with the manuscript preparation. The Director of Graduate Studies maintains a list of potential editors for this purpose. The advisor is responsible for informing the student of this necessity.
4. The student should secure *Regulations and Guidelines for Dissertations and Theses* from the MU Office for Research and Graduate Studies to ensure proper formatting of the thesis. The Department uses the American Psychological Association guidelines for the format of footnotes, bibliographic entries, et cetera.

C. Completing the Thesis

1. The student assumes primary responsibility for development and completion of the thesis research. The advisor assumes major responsibility in guiding the student. The student submits the thesis to the advisor (first reader) and, after receiving their approval, to the second and third readers.
2. The advisor and the other readers make recommendations and work with the student to produce a final draft of the thesis. Students are encouraged to utilize the expertise of committee members.
3. Due to the nature of the research process, several revisions are typically needed to produce an acceptable thesis. The student is responsible for obtaining guidelines from the Office of Research and Graduate Studies and following them precisely.
4. The outside reader may choose to be consulted on a regular basis while the thesis is developed (a preferred option) or to only view the final draft. The

student should have the final draft to the outside reader approximately 6 - 8 weeks prior to the graduation date to allow ample time for feedback and revision.

5. When the thesis meets with the approval of the advisor, second reader, and the outside reader, the form, *Notification of Readiness for the Final Examination of the Thesis* is completed and the student hand carries the thesis and the completed form to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies ([Appendix D](#)).

In addition, the student must:

- a. Set the date and place for a public seminar and oral defense of the thesis research.
 - b. Have a quality draft copy of the printed thesis evaluated for format on, or before, the official deadline set by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.
 - c. Pay off any outstanding payments due to the University.
6. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Studies/Associate Provost for Advanced Studies approves the membership of the final examination committee and notifies the advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. Unless there is reason for a change, this committee consists of the advisory committee members.
 7. The student shall prepare a first draft of a paper based on the thesis, which is suitable for publication and/or presentation at a professional meeting. When this draft is completed and given to the advisor and the third reader has approved the thesis for the final oral examination, the examination may be scheduled.
 8. The deadline for submitting a thesis to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies for graduation at the end of a given semester is shortly after mid-semester. The oral examination can be scheduled after this period but at least two weeks prior to the end of the semester. ***The completed Report of the Master's Examining Committee form is due two weeks prior to commencement.***
 9. A bound copy of the thesis should be presented to the student's major professor, as well as the Department. Committee members should, at a minimum, be given a soft-bound copy of the final thesis.

D. Oral Exam

1. The final oral examination consists of two parts:
 - a. The exam is initiated with an oral presentation of the research project that is open to the University community. During the examination, the student is responsible for displaying a full understanding of their research. As the seminar is open to the University community, the

advertising of the seminar is the responsibility of the student and they are encouraged to disseminate the information to all interested University departments. The student invites the Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies of the College of Human Environmental Studies to the presentation.

- b. The final oral examination culminates following the seminar presentation with only the student and their committee. This examination can include material covered in the program of study, as well as the completed research. The student may wish to discuss the examination with their advisor to reduce anxiety and receive advice regarding preparation.
2. The student should distribute copies of the thesis to committee members at least two weeks in advance of the oral examination.
3. All Advisory Committee members must reach a consensus on the performance of the student at the conclusion of the oral examination. The result of this decision is reported to the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies of the College of Human Environmental Sciences and the Director of Graduate Studies of the Department of Personal Financial Planning, whose signature is required on the *Report of the Master's Degree Examining Committee*. This form is signed by all Advisory Committee members and must be submitted to the MU Office of Research and Graduate Studies by the date published by the Office for Research and Graduate Studies at <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/graduation-commencement/timeline-deadlines/>.
4. A page to be inserted into the original thesis indicating approval of the thesis by the examining committee is signed at the conclusion of the oral examination, or, if revision is needed, when the thesis is approved.
5. In the event of failure of the examination, remedial measures may be suggested by the Advisory Committee. Following an appropriate interval, another examination can be given.

E. Completion of Requirements for Graduation

1. The student should check with their advisor to determine that all incomplete grades have been satisfied.
2. Usually the Advisory Committee recommends suggested changes in the body of the thesis. These changes may necessitate some minor or major revisions. When the thesis has been corrected, duplicate copies should be made prior to returning the corrected copy to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies. The student should check to determine the deadline for returning the corrected thesis to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.
3. Hard cover bound copies of the thesis should be provided by the student to both the Department and the Advisor for reference purposes. Other committee members should be asked if they desire a bound copy. It is customary that a softbound copy, at a minimum, is provided to each member of the committee.
4. Graduate students, in consultation with their advisor, are encouraged to publish and/or present the results of the research at professional conferences. Since the graduate advisor served a major role in the guidance and development of the research project, it is appropriate that any research manuscript or presentation carry the name of the advisor as well as the student. Other members of the advisory committee or other graduate faculty who have contributed greatly to the final work should also be included.
5. If circumstances preclude refinement of a manuscript for publication based on the thesis research within a year of the student's completion of degree requirements, the advisor may initiate development of such a manuscript as the primary author and the student as second author.

VIII. Annual Review of Graduate Student Progress

A. Progress Toward Degree Completion

At the end of the first semester, all graduate students must start a [Graduate Student Progress System](#) (GSPS) record. GSPS is a Web-based reporting system where students document their progress toward degree completion. The GSPS User Guide provides steps for students on how to get started and troubleshooting tips. **The student's GSPS record must be updated annually.**

The student view of the Graduate Student Progress System has two work sections: information required by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies and other information that may be required by the degree program. **Students must complete GSPS sections required by both entities.** A bonus feature: students can use their GSPS records to create a custom CV or resume.

Either the student's advisor or the department Director of Graduate Studies will review students' GSPS reports to assess student progress toward degree completion. No later than the start of the subsequent semester, students will be provided with a written evaluation of progress and, if necessary, steps to take to attain, maintain, or regain

satisfactory progress.

B. For Students on Assistantships – Performance Evaluation

Faculty overseeing work of students on assistantships will provide such students a performance evaluation for work completed under the assistantship. If student performance is not satisfactory, then the student will be given a detailed written description of what aspects of performance must change. The student will have one semester to improve work performance or risk loss of the assistantship. Students who believe they have been treated unfairly may initiate an appeal to the Department Chair within one semester after receiving written notice that his or her assistantship work performance is not satisfactory.

Graduate students who are on appointment must report to their supervising faculty member one week prior to the beginning of the term of work and continue to work until semester grades are due. On occasion, a faculty member may negotiate to have work done during breaks between semesters, if work has been delayed or not completed during the semester. Notice of this intent is made clear to the student at the earliest possible notice. Appointments for MS students are to be no longer than two calendar years, except under special circumstances. Student concerns over workplace practices should be brought to the attention to the Department Chair in writing.

APPENDIX A: CHECK LIST FOR COMPLETION OF GRADUATE DEGREE

- ___ 1. Complete the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and request results be sent to the MU Office of Research and Graduate Studies and the Department of Personal Financial Planning. (Not required for Great Plains IDEA MS students.)
- ___ 2. Students for whom English is not the primary language must submit their TOEFL scores. The test should be taken 6-9 months before the opening session to which the student expects to enroll. The minimum score required by the department is 550. However, a score of 550 or greater does not guarantee admission.
- ___ 3. Complete application procedures by submitting a statement of professional goals, three letters of reference, application forms and transcript(s) to the department.
- ___ 4. Receive acceptance by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, the College of Human Environmental Sciences, and the Personal Financial Planning Department.
- ___ 5. Student is assigned a temporary advisor.
- ___ 6. Meet with graduate faculty to determine their areas of research interest.
- ___ 7. Select a permanent advisor prior to completing 15 hours of coursework, and select the advisory committee.
- ___ 8. Formulate plan of study in consultation with advisor.
- ___ 9. File the Program of Study for the Master's Degree form (M1) sometime between completing 12 hours of graduate credit and one semester prior to awarding of the degree. It is in the student's best interest to complete this form late in their first semester, or early in their second semester. This practice avoids unnecessary change formalities.
- ___ 10. Discuss thesis ideas with advisor and potential Advisory Committee, and complete Request for Thesis Committee form.
- ___ 11. Select and contact Advisory Committee Members (2 of the 3 must be members of the Graduate Faculty)
- ___ 12. Completes comprehensive written examination over all coursework in the program of study
- ___ 13. Develop proposal for research (creative project) in consultation with advisor.
- ___ 14. Seek approval of the research by the International Review Board, if applicable. More

information can be found at <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/professional-development/build-your-skills/research-and-analytical-skills/irb-rcr-train-online.php>.

- ___ 15. Plan and hold proposal meeting, if thesis degree candidate. Notify the Department Director of Graduate Studies of the research topic approved by the advisory committee.
- ___ 16. Complete research, working with Advisory Committee as appropriate.
- ___ 17. Develop a manuscript from the research to be submitted to the appropriate professional outlets. Submit a draft of the paper, suitable for presentation/publication to the advisor prior to scheduling the final oral examination.
- ___ 18. Secure from the MU Office of Research and Graduate Studies the Guidelines for Dissertations and Thesis, with the Report of the Master's Examining Committee form.
- ___ 19. Plans time and place for final oral examination with the Advisory Committee.
- ___ 20. Schedule and hold the final oral examination thesis defense after approval of the thesis by the third reader. The oral examination should be scheduled 6 weeks prior to the commencement date in order to participate in commencement
- ___ 21. Generate a 50-letter-and-space thesis title for the bound thesis, and prepare a 200-word thesis abstract prepared at the time of the final oral examination.
- ___ 22. Check with the advisor on incomplete grade reports (generally two weeks prior to commencement). The faculty member responsible for the course in which an incomplete was obtained will file a change of grade form with the Office of Research and Graduate Studies. These grades should be reported to the Department Director of Graduate Studies.
- ___ 23. Submit Report of the Master's Examining Committee form to the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies of the College of Human Environmental Studies.
- ___ 24. Makes a final check with the advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies and the MU Office of Research and Graduate Studies to assure that all requirements for graduation have been met.
- ___ 25. Arrange for participation in commencement activities if desired.
- ___ 26. Complete the required changes in the thesis and have it copied and bound.
- ___ 27. Submit the corrected original copy of the unbound thesis to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies and hard cover bound copies to the Advisor and the Department, as well as other committee members who desire a copy.

APPENDIX B: *Master's Thesis Time Schedule*

The time schedule outlined below is meant to serve as a guideline for graduate students working toward a master's degree. It is not meant to be an exact schedule that should be followed by everyone. There will be individual variations. However, it should be remembered that the Department maintains a policy that financial support is only committed for 2 years (M.S.) or 3 years (Ph.D.) The time may be 5 years if student enters with a B.A. or B.S. and works toward Ph.D. It is particularly important to realize that as you approach your thesis defense date, the timing of activities becomes crucial in order to meet the necessary deadlines. The dates used in this schedule are for example only. Check with the Office of Research and Graduate Studies for specific dates relevant to your graduation.

1st year

- Aug. - Dec. Take courses selected in consultation with temporary advisor. Meet faculty, select a permanent advisor, and interview other faculty for inclusion to the committee.
- Jan. – May Take courses, form an Advisory Committee, develop a thesis topic, and begin to focus your research. Complete Program of Study and Request of Thesis Committee forms and submit to Office of Research and Graduate Studies by end of second semester.
- May - Aug. Coursework may be taken.

2nd Year

- Aug. - Dec. Take courses, following the Plan of Study.
- Jan. – May Take courses, following the Plan of Study.
Complete comprehensive examination.
Have proposal meeting and conduct thesis research.
- July. Thesis given to third reader.
Final Oral Examination and Report of the Master's Examining Committee due to Office of Research and Graduate Studies.
- August Final version of thesis on bond paper due to Office of Research and Graduate Studies.
Commencement

APPENDIX C: *Other Options and Considerations*

1. Senior Dual Enrollment

- a. Undergraduate students at MU who intend to continue their graduate education and have a B average in the most recent 45 hours of credit and are within the last 15 hours of completing graduation requirements may dually enroll in up to 6 hours of graduate credit during their last undergraduate semester.
- b. To qualify for dual enrollment, a student must be accepted for graduate work by the department the student is entering. A copy of the student's transcript must be submitted to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies with the application.
- c. Dual Enrollment must be completed and approved by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies within one month after the start of fall or winter semester and within 3 weeks after the start of the summer session. Ideally, approval should be obtained prior to the beginning of the semester.

2. Credit Toward a Second Master's Degree:

It is possible to receive credit for up to a maximum of eight hours from a previous Master's program toward a second master's degree. However, the final decision depends on the shared consensus of the Advisory Committee, Director of Graduate Studies, and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

3. Financial Assistance

- a. Graduate students admitted to the program can apply for several departmental, college, and university level fellowships. Generally, the deadline for fellowship applications is February 1 for the following academic year. Check with appropriate offices for updated information.
- b. A student's advisor can seek research funding from the Margaret Mangel Research Catalyst Fund. The advisor should contact the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies of the College of Human Environmental Sciences for further details.
- c. The department has available both teaching and research assistantships. The student must make application and check occasionally with the Department Chair and the Director of Graduate Studies for availability of assistantships.
- d. Maintenance of an assistantship appointment is contingent upon satisfactory performance of responsibilities and satisfactory progress toward completion of a degree program. Normally, students who are placed on assistantship appointment may remain on academic year appointments through completion of their degree program with a usual limit of two years for the M.S. degree. Occasionally, summer appointments are available.