

Procedure for Completing Your M.A. Thesis

Department of English and Linguistics • Purdue University Fort Wayne

To complete a thesis project, a student must follow a series of steps through a two semester sequence:

Semester I: planning and prospectus phase

1. Once the student has identified a **thesis topic**, the student must recruit a **thesis advisor**. The thesis advisor will chair the **thesis committee**.
 - a. The student and advisor will work together to recruit the two other members of the committee. (The Master of Arts thesis must be written under the direction of a committee consisting of one thesis advisor and two other members of the Purdue University Graduate School Faculty with expertise in the area(s) of the thesis topic. The thesis advisor must be a faculty member in the Department of English and Linguistics, while one of the other two committee members may be from another department, including departments on other campuses.)
 - b. Once the committee has been created, the student will notify the Director of Graduate Studies.
2. The student must submit to the department a 12-15 page **thesis prospectus**, setting forth the problem or question being investigated and describing the method and plan of research, including an **annotated working bibliography**.
 - a. Documentation shall follow the style of the most recent editions of *The MLA Style Manual* or *The MLA Manual for Writers of Research Papers*, or an appropriate substitute style manual. (Creative theses will normally include an outline, a description, and a plan, as well as a sample of the writer's work; if a bibliography is deemed inappropriate by the thesis advisor, a more extensive portfolio may be submitted.)
 - b. **The prospectus must be approved in writing by the chair of the thesis committee on an acceptance page similar to that used for the Master of Arts thesis itself (see the department office for a copy), and transmitted to the Director of Graduate Studies.**

Semester II: ENGL 69901 - writing and approval phase (3 credits)

3. Once the prospectus has been approved, the student must **register for ENGL 69901**, a three credit hour class. The thesis advisor shall be the instructor of record for the Master of Arts thesis.
4. During the preparation of the thesis, the student should consult regularly with the thesis advisor and share drafts with all the members of the thesis committee. No grade (other than "I" or "F") may be awarded for thesis credit until the thesis has been accepted for the Graduate School by the thesis committee. **Consult the Thesis Best Practices Guide**.
 - a. Once the committee has offered initial approval of the thesis, the student must prepare a final draft that meets Purdue University standards. See the "Formatting Guidelines and Deposit Procedures" as well as the required MLA template at: <https://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/research/thesis/templates.html> . Please note that this required Purdue electronic deposit process includes a deposit fee of \$90.00.
 - b. See **Submitting the Thesis: A Preparation and Formatting Guide** for specific directions for our department. (*These are subject to change, so consult with Kathryn Quill in the department office.*)
5. **Deadline:** The completed thesis (3 copies) with signed acceptance page (3 copies) must be in the office by the **Friday before the last week of class**. *Note: it is the student's responsibility to make sure that all committee members have signed the acceptance page.*