

Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice
Thesis to M.A. Task List
Revised 09/2021

Below is a task list to help you go from thesis proposal to graduation. Please note the forms required at each step. Some forms are submitted to the department (**these are in red, and go to 325 Smith Hall**) and others are submitted to the Graduate College (**these are in green, and go to 234 Hullahen Hall**). All forms may be found at the following site: <https://www.soc.udel.edu/graduate-program/graduate-program-policies>. Also, as you approach your final semester/graduation, please be aware of the university deadlines for submitting your thesis and application for graduation. A list of these dates can be found on the Graduate College page: <https://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/grad/current-students/academic-support/steps-to-graduation>. If you are continuing on to the Ph.D. program please follow the additional guidelines at the end of the task list.

1. Decide on a topic and choose a committee

- You must have a total of 3 committee members, including a Chairperson who is a member of the faculty of the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice and two additional members (one of whom may be from an outside department).

FORMS:

To the department:

- **Supervisory Committee Form** (emailed to the Graduate Director and Department Secretary)

2. Scheduling your thesis proposal defense

- An MA thesis proposal defense is optional, but highly recommended. This is an opportunity for you to receive helpful feedback and advice, and to work through any potential problems, with your committee. It also helps protect a student from being asked to do extensive new data collection / analysis at the final defense stage. If you proceed with a proposal defense, then the following steps apply:
 - Work with your committee to determine when you will be ready to defend. Your committee may require paper copies and will probably want you to make revisions before scheduling the defense; sometimes this is left to the Chair's discretion.
 - Once your committee agrees you are ready to defend, find a date/time that works for everyone (including outside members who may have to phone in).
 - Email the Department Secretary (Deanna) to make sure the conference room (321 Smith) is available during your scheduled time.

FORMS:

To the department (10 DAYS BEFORE DEFENSE DATE):

- **Defense Notification Form** (emailed to Graduate Director and Department Secretary)
- A copy of your thesis proposal (this needs to be submitted to the Department regardless of whether you schedule a thesis proposal defense)

3. Thesis proposal defense

- Arrive early to set up any technology (powerpoint, conference call or Zoom for outside members).
- Your committee chair will be responsible for notifying the graduate director that you have passed.
- **You must give the Department Secretary a copy of your thesis proposal (if you haven't already done so) that includes a signature page, signed by all members of your committee.**

4. Writing your thesis

- Human Subjects/IRB Approval
 - Does your research require IRB approval? You need to have an approved thesis proposal BEFORE submitting an IRB proposal. Determine what type of approval your project may need by visiting the Research Office website: <http://www.udel.edu/research/preparing/humansub-protocolreview.html>
 - Have you completed Human Subjects Training? Some students complete this during the course of other research or in a class. If you have not completed it, you may attend an in-person training or an online training. See the Research website for more information: <http://www.udel.edu/research/training/>
 - If your research requires IRB approval, you will need to complete a proposal to submit to the review board; they are due a week or two prior to the actual meeting. The proposals are completed online (www.irbnet.org). You will need to set up an account. There are forms to download and a place for you to upload documents. You will find more information about what needs to be included in your proposal (such as consent forms, questions, data storage, etc.) You and your committee chair will need to sign off on this.
 - Make sure to check the research calendar for a list of IRB meetings. Proposals that require a full board review are only heard once a month. If your proposal requires a full board review, you may have to appear in person with your advisor at the review. Others are approved on an on-going basis. You may be asked to make revisions or answer questions about your proposal. You cannot start data collection without this approval.
 - IRB approval needs to be renewed every year while you are still collecting or actively using the data. You will receive automatic email reminders 60 and 30 days prior to expiration.
- Format
 - Use the UD Thesis/Dissertation Templates and Guidelines to make sure you are formatting the document properly. These tools can be found on the Graduate College page: <https://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/grad/current-students/academic-support/steps-to-graduation/>
- Plan ahead!
 - When do you want to graduate? Make sure you pay attention to the university deadlines for submitting your thesis in order to graduate. This is often one month prior to the end of the semester. See <http://www.udel.edu/gradoffice/polproc/steps.html>

- You will also need to take into account any revisions to your thesis. You should allow for at least a few weeks to complete revisions and any formatting that needs to be done before you can submit it to the university.

FORMS:

To the research office (if needed):

- Online submission of IRB proposal through www.irbnet.org

To the Graduate College:

- [Application for Advanced Degree](https://www.udel.edu/content/dam/udelImages/grad-college/graduate-college-pdfs/Application%20for%20Advanced%20Degree.pdf)
[https://www.udel.edu/content/dam/udelImages/grad-college/graduate-college-pdfs/Application for Advanced Degree.pdf](https://www.udel.edu/content/dam/udelImages/grad-college/graduate-college-pdfs/Application%20for%20Advanced%20Degree.pdf)

**Please note that you have to apply for graduation at the beginning of the semester you plan to graduate. This may happen before or after you defend your thesis depending on when you pass your defense.

5. Scheduling your thesis defense

- You CANNOT defend your thesis until all your M.A. course work has been COMPLETED.
- Work with your committee to determine when you will be ready to defend.
- Discuss the guidelines for your defense (time limit, power point, time for questions, etc.).
- Once your committee agrees you are ready to defend, find a date/time that works for everyone (including outside members who may have to phone in).
- Email the Department Secretary (Deanna) to make sure the conference room (321 Smith) is available during your scheduled time. Some students also defend at one of the research centers if they (or their committee members) are currently working there. Check with the appropriate person at each center to schedule a room.
- Make sure to provide your committee with a final version (some prefer bound copies) before your defense.

FORMS:

To the department (10 DAYS BEFORE DEFENSE DATE):

- [Defense Notification Form \(emailed to Graduate Director and Department Secretary\)](#)
- [A copy of your Thesis](#)

6. Defending your thesis

- Arrive early to set up any technology (powerpoint, conference call for outside members)
- Have a copy of your thesis available for any specific questions/comments
- Have someone take notes for you about questions, comments, and revisions. It is easy for you to be distracted when responding to your committee. Having someone take notes will be very helpful when making your final edits.
- On the day of your defense you will want to have paperwork with you for your chair to sign once you have passed. **Some chairs may want to wait to sign this until you have completed all revisions. Just make sure that is completed by the university deadline (about 1 month before the end of the semester).

FORMS:

To the graduate office:

- **Signature pages:** The University requires 3 original copies of the first signature page that appears in your thesis (see UD thesis template for guidelines) <http://www1.udel.edu/topics/udthesis/gradstudents-word.html> . These must be printed on 25% cotton bond paper. It is helpful to get these all signed at the defense to avoid tracking the thesis chair and the department chair down later.
- Email Eileen Burget (eburget@udel.edu) at the Graduate College to approve the signature pages before getting them signed in order to avoid having to get them signed more than once.

7. After you have defended

- Complete revisions requested by committee. The time you will have to complete revisions will depend on when you plan to graduate, so make sure to be aware of deadlines.
- **SCHEDULE A MEETING** with the Graduate College to submit your thesis and final paperwork. Please visit the website for more details about what to bring. <http://www.udel.edu/gradoffice/polproc/steps.html>
- **SUBMIT** the following to the **Dean's Office** (Dean of Arts & Sciences, 4 Kent Way)
 - A copy of your thesis
 - THREE signed originals of your first signature pages (on 25% cotton bond)
- **SUBMIT** the following to the **Graduate College:**
 - A PDF copy of your thesis to grad-docs@art-sci.udel.edu
 - Instructions on this and how to check to make sure your fonts are embedded can be found on the Graduate College page <http://www.udel.edu/gradoffice/polproc/steps.html>
 - The three original and SIGNED first signature pages (signed by the committee chair, department chair, and dean)
 - Three original Title Pages
 - Three original Abstracts

Note Signature pages and other papers submitted to the Graduate College need to be printed on 25% cotton bond paper
- **SUBMIT** to the **department:**
 - A bound copy of the final version of your thesis

8. CELEBRATE!!!

If You Are Continuing on to the Ph.D. Program (see Graduate Program Policy Handbook)

1. Successfully complete all M.A. requirements

- Includes all course work, passing Thesis defense, and submitting application for advanced degree (completed in steps above).

2. Submit a dossier to the Graduate Policy Committee

This Includes:

- Your Curriculum Vita describing: past academic achievement and activities (including TA, RA, or fellowship awards).
- A letter detailing your reasons for obtaining the Ph.D. in Sociology or Criminology; and an outline of your intended course of study (including both substance of course work as well as an expected schedule for completion of course work, exams, proposals and dissertation defense).
- Three letters of recommendation, one of which shall be a letter from the Master's thesis advisor evaluating past graduate performance and future potential for doctoral work.

This dossier should be submitted by the same deadline that the MA thesis is due to the Graduate College, depending on the semester in which you plan to graduate (deadlines available on the Graduate College webpage provided above). The GPC will consider the request as soon as possible. You may register for Ph.D. courses while awaiting a decision on acceptance into the program.

Normally, the minimum GPA in all graduate course work should be a 3.5 but the Graduate Policy Committee may evaluate the GPA in light of other criteria such as course difficulty. Passage of the Master's thesis is also required.

The application must be approved by the GPC.

FORMS:

To the Graduate College:

- **Change in Status Form** <https://www.udel.edu/content/dam/udelImages/grad-college/graduate-college-pdfs/Change-of-Major-Concentration-Degree.pdf>