**Recommended Timeline:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Form Submitted</th>
<th>Required Forms/Documents:</th>
<th>Recommended Timeline</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Initial Faculty Adviser assigned by QERM program</td>
<td>Autumn Quarter – Year 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Identify Research Adviser &amp; Year 2 funding</td>
<td>Spring Quarter – Year 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>QERM Qualifying Examination</td>
<td>End of Spring Quarter – Year 1</td>
<td>Not required for M.S. but recommended if student plans to pursue QERM Ph.D. May also postpone until end of Year 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Request to Establish M.S. Supervisory Committee form <strong>Brief</strong> narrative of proposed research (no more than 1 page)</td>
<td>Autumn Quarter – Year 2 (typically after a research topic has been established)</td>
<td>QERM GPC reviews and approves composition of committee. First committee meeting should be held within 2 weeks after approved by QERM GPC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan of Study Toward M.S. Degree form</td>
<td>Autumn Quarter - Year 2</td>
<td>Complete at first committee meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of Human and Animal Subjects for UW Graduate Student Theses and Dissertations form</td>
<td>Autumn Quarter - Year 2</td>
<td>Complete at first committee meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s Supervisory Committee Meeting Documentation form</td>
<td>Autumn Quarter - Year 2 and at every subsequent committee meeting</td>
<td>Complete at first committee meeting and all subsequent committee meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s Thesis Proposal form Copy of Thesis Proposal</td>
<td>Winter Quarter – Year 2</td>
<td>Certifies that the supervisory committee has approved the student’s thesis proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Request for M.S. Final Examination form</td>
<td>Winter or Spring Quarter – Year 3</td>
<td>Certifies that the supervisory committee has read an entire near-to-final draft of the master’s thesis and concurs that the student is ready to sit for the final examination. Must be submitted a minimum of 2 weeks prior to final exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Online Graduate School Request for Final Examination</td>
<td>Winter or Spring Quarter – Year 3</td>
<td>Must be completed in addition to the Request for M.S. Final Examination form. Student completes online form found at: <a href="http://www.grad.washington.edu/mygrad/student.htm">http://www.grad.washington.edu/mygrad/student.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generated by Grad School</td>
<td>Warrant for Master’s Degree form</td>
<td>Submitted after Final Exam (form generated by Graduate School – signed form returned to QERM program following final exam)</td>
<td>Certifies whether or not a student has been approved for graduation following final examination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s Thesis</td>
<td>Submit by end of the quarter in which degree requirements are completed (including Final Examination) or by the deadline specified in the Graduate Registration Waiver Fee.</td>
<td>2 copies – Graduate School 1 copy – QERM library 1 copy – Supervisory Committee Chair (check with chair)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Unless otherwise noted, all completed forms should c/o Joanne Besch, QERM Student Services Office, Loew Hall 304, Box 352182*
**Initial Faculty Adviser:**

Students entering the program are assigned an initial faculty adviser who serves as a faculty contact. This professor answers any general questions about the program or the University. If appropriate, this initial adviser may serve as the student’s research adviser assist in identifying faculty who can supervise the student’s research.

**Research Adviser/Supervisory Committee Chair:**

The student should decide upon a research adviser by the end of the fourth quarter of study (Autumn Quarter – Year 2). It is the research adviser’s responsibility to act as chair of the master’s supervisory committee and assist the student in selecting classes, designing a research program, and making contacts with professionals within and outside the University of Washington.

**Formation of the Master’s Supervisory Committee:**

As soon as appropriate (typically after a research topic is established – Autumn Quarter, Year 2) the chair, in consultation with the student, establishes a supervisory committee, consisting of two to four members. The chair and at least one-half of the total membership must be members of the Graduate Faculty (see Graduate School Memorandum No. 13). At least two members must also be QERM faculty. The supervisory committee will provide expertise and depth in areas related to the student’s research. The student should rely primarily on the committee chairperson and secondarily on the other committee members for professional guidance.

**Approval of Master’s Supervisory Committee:**

A Request to Establish M.S. Supervisory Committee form must be submitted to the QERM Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) prior to the first committee meeting. This request should include a brief synopsis of the intended thesis topic and names of proposed committee members. This information is reviewed by the GPC for suitability of faculty balance in relation to the selected topic. After receiving approval from the GPC the student may proceed with scheduling the first committee meeting.

**First Committee Meeting:**

After approval of the supervisory committee by the GPC, the committee should meet with the student within two weeks to decide on the student’s program of study. The student is responsible for arranging all necessary meetings and furnishing required forms.

The first meeting will deal primarily with a definition of course requirements. The following paperwork must be completed at the first meeting:

1. **Plan of Study Toward the M.S. Degree form:** This form must be completed by the student and committee chair and approved by all committee members at the time of the first meeting. This is an agreement made between the student and the supervisory committee about what coursework will be required to complete the master’s degree. It includes the core required courses as well as any other courses the committee feels are necessary to give the student the required background in his/her area of interest. This form is also used to request waivers of core courses.

2. **Use of Human and Animal Subjects for UW Graduate Student Theses and Dissertations form:** This form must be completed by the student and committee chair.

3. **Supervisory Committee Meeting Documentation form:** The chair records the results of all meetings, including date of the meeting, committee members present, decisions and accomplishments. It is the responsibility of the student to provide the appropriate form. This form should also be completed after all subsequent supervisory committee meetings.

All three forms are forwarded to the QERM Student Services Office (Loew Hall 304, Box 352182) for review by the Graduate Program Coordinator and placed in the student’s file.
Subsequent Committee Meetings:

The committee should meet regularly to review the student's progress and thesis proposal. The student can request additional committee meetings whenever he or she feels the need for such consultation.

Master’s Thesis Proposal:

The student must select a thesis research topic and develop it in consultation with his or her research adviser. The research project should be designed for completion, together with other program requirements, within a two- to three-year period. The master's thesis should provide evidence of the student's ability to carry out independent investigations and to present the results in a clear and systematic form.

Submission of Thesis Proposal:

A student is expected to submit a thesis proposal to their supervisory committee before the end of the 5th quarter of study (Winter Quarter – Year 2) and before beginning substantive thesis research. The proposal provides evidence to the committee of the student’s readiness to carry out the research, and also clarifies the expectations of both the student and committee as to the final content of the thesis.

The objective of a thesis proposal is to ensure a definite plan for the work to be done. Once approved by the supervisory committee it becomes an informal contract between the student and the committee. In addition, a proposal serves as:

- A basis for discussions between student and committee regarding experimental design, data analysis, and focus of the coursework; and
- A clear statement of the amount of effort anticipated to produce an acceptable thesis.

While the thesis proposal serves as an agreement between student and committee, both parties also must recognize that flexibility is needed to include later changes as experiments may fail and new opportunities may arise.

Thesis Proposal Format:

The thesis research proposal should follow the general features of a research proposal. A typical format is as follows:

- **Introduction**: General background, importance of the subject area; literature review.
- **Objective(s)**: A concise statement of the purpose or objective of the project; this should flow logically from the introduction and be short and specific.
- **Methods**: General plans, specific methods, sampling or experimental design, duration, and projected procedure for data analysis; these methods should be appropriate for directly addressing the purpose or objective.
- **Results**: Results of theoretical investigations, experiments, field sampling, computer simulations, data analyses, etc., should be clearly stated.
- **Interpretation**: How will the results be interpreted? There should be explicitly stated inferences that would be drawn from all outcomes; outcomes that cannot be interpreted imply imprecise objectives or inappropriate methods.
- **Significance**: Why is this investigation justified? What is the scientific or practical contribution? For a dissertation proposal especially, the case eventually must be made that the results will be a significant contribution to knowledge, regardless of the experimental or observational outcomes.
- **Timeline/Workplan**: The timeline helps to assess whether the proposed research is feasible as planned and establishes milestones. Periods when there are activities which could slow progress should be highlighted when accounted for when selecting milestones. The timeline should also indicate when likely outputs (e.g., scientific paper and reports) will be produced.
The length of the written proposal should be the minimum needed to do the job. For a master’s thesis proposal, 8-10 pages including references would be appropriate. The intent is to write the proposal early in the degree program. If written too late, it will begin to resemble the thesis in size and scope, and its primary purpose will be lost.

Thesis Proposal Approval Form:

The committee certifies that they have reviewed and approved the student’s thesis proposal by signing the Master’s Thesis Proposal form. A copy of the form and thesis proposal should be forwarded to the QERM Student Services Office (304 Loew Hall, Box 352182).

Request for M.S. Final Examination:

The student must submit a complete, near-to-final draft of the thesis, which has been reviewed and approved by the committee chair, to all members of his or her committee at least four weeks prior to the Final Examination. After reading the draft, the supervisory committee signs off on the Request for Final Examination form. Completion of this form verifies that your committee has read an entire near-to-final draft of your thesis and concurs that you are ready to sit for your final examination. The final draft of the thesis takes place after the final examination, incorporating changes suggested by the committee.

Master’s Degree Request:

In addition to the Request for Final Examination form completed by the supervisory committee, the student must submit the online Graduate School Master’s Degree Request within the first two weeks of the quarter in which he or she expects to complete the degree requirements. Students are strongly encouraged to apply for the master’s degree on the Web. Additional information on completing the Master’s Degree Request can be found at:

The filing of the application is the responsibility of the student. When the application is submitted the student’s record will be reviewed by the Graduate School to determine that all requirements have been met. If the application is approved, the Graduate School will forward a warrant for the Final Examination to the QERM program during the fourth week of the quarter. Completion includes presentation of a public seminar on the subject of the research and the submission of the thesis to the Graduate School.

Students must be registered as a graduate student and complete a minimum of two credits during the quarter in which degree requirements are met and the degree is conferred.

If requirements for the master’s degree are not completed during the quarter of the initial application, the Master’s Degree Request will become void and the student must complete a new request during the first two weeks of the quarter in which the degree program is to be completed.

Final Examination:

The student, in consultation with the chair of the student’s supervisory committee, arranges the time and place of the Final Examination. The student is responsible for ensuring that the complete, near-to-final draft of the thesis is available to committee members with adequate time for review before the examination takes place (at least four weeks). The student reports on his or her research at a public seminar that is followed by a private oral examination by the supervisory committee. The seminar and oral examination are generally scheduled consecutively on the same day.

The student arranges the date and time with supervisory committee members and then notifies the QERM graduate program assistant (GPA) who will assist with reserving a conference room and publicizing the public seminar. It is recommended that students schedule their final exam at least 4 weeks in advance of the date, but no less than two and a half weeks before the end of the quarter.

Results of the Final Examination must be reported to the Graduate School by returning the signed Request for Master’s Degree form to the Graduate School no later than the last day of the quarter (defined as the last day of exams) in which the student expects to receive the degree. A minimum of two committee members must be
present for the Final Examination to take place, although all members of the supervisory committee must certify the results. If the examination is not satisfactory, the committee may recommend to the Dean of the Graduate School that the student be allowed to take another examination after an interval of study.

Any corrections of the thesis are completed after the Final Examination. Two copies of the approved thesis must be submitted to the Graduate School no later than the last day of the quarter in which the degree is to be conferred. If the examination is not satisfactory, the committee may recommend to the Dean of the Graduate School that the student be allowed to take another examination after an interval of study.

Graduate Registration Waiver Fee:

The $250 Graduate Registration Waiver Fee is an optional fee paid in lieu of registration. It is available to qualifying students for a 2 week period directly following the quarter in which all Graduate School and graduate program degree requirements are met. Qualifying students who pay this fee will graduate in the quarter following the fee payment period. Note: This option may have an effect on the grace period for student loans becoming due; students should check with their lenders for registration requirements before utilizing this option in lieu of registration.

Eligibility

- Master’s students who did not submit a Master’s degree request prior to the request deadline for the quarter in which all degree requirements were completed
- Students who completed all degree requirements but needed additional time to format the thesis or dissertation (project papers are not included)

(Revised: October 2010)