

Program and University of Nebraska Policies for the Master’s Thesis

Community and Regional Planning 899

Effective September 2014

(Approved by the Community and Regional Planning Program Graduate Committee, September 2014)

These policies pertain to the Master’s Thesis completion track (UNL Graduate Studies “Option I”) for the Master of Community and Regional Planning (MCRP) degree at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

I. Credit Hours, Registration, and Grading

- A. A maximum of six credit hours for the master’s thesis, CRPL 899, is permitted for inclusion in the 48 credit hours required for the Master of Community and Regional Planning degree. Even though one may register for more than six master’s thesis credit hours, only six are allowed for fulfillment of degree requirements.
- B. Thesis credit hours may be distributed across more than one semester. Students should register for thesis credit hours only in the semesters during which they intend to work on the thesis. Students are entitled to seek thesis advising from faculty advisors only if they register for thesis credit hours. If students are not registered for thesis credit hours, advising takes place entirely at the discretion of the faculty advisors.
- C. Completion of the master’s thesis, including the oral examination, must occur as the final required component of all course work in the student’s program of study for the MCRP degree.
- D. Grading for the six required CRPL 899 credit hours is on pas/no-pass basis only. Prior to completion of all CRPL 899 credit hours in the semester when the oral examination is scheduled, increments of CRPL 899 credit hours registered in previous semesters will be graded Incomplete (“I”) until the semester in which the oral examination is scheduled.

II. Master’s Thesis Faculty Advisory Committee

- A. Each thesis student must have a faculty advisory committee consisting of at least three University of Nebraska faculty members, all of whom constitute the voting members of the committee.
- B. At least two members of each faculty advisory committee, one of whom must serve as chair of the committee, shall be members of the faculty of the Community and Regional Planning Program.
- C. Student requests for individual faculty members to serve as thesis advisory committee chairs or committee members will be considered and accommodated when possible, but equitable distribution of faculty workloads may necessitate assignment of faculty to thesis advisory committees.

III. Thesis Format

- A. All materials submitting for review by the thesis advisory committee chair and committee members must be computer-generated text and graphics.
- B. The recommended style manual for MCRP theses is Kate L. Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Latest Edition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press).
- C. The thesis document must be prepared in accordance with the latest information posted on the UNL Office of Graduate Studies website, detailed in a clickable box, “Preparing a Thesis or Dissertation,” which shows on the “Master’s Degree Milestones” component of the website.

IV. Thesis Oral Examination, Scheduling, and Deadlines

- A. A final oral examination must occur at the conclusion of each student's thesis work.
- B. The student is responsible for scheduling the final oral examination. This is accomplished by submitting a Graduate Studies "Final Examination Report" form, approved by the student's thesis advisory committee chair and the Community and Regional Planning Graduate Committee chair, to the Office of Graduate Studies before the deadline noted on the Graduate studies website. The "Final Examination Report" form specifies the time and place of the final oral examination and will be approved for submission to the Office of Graduate Studies only under the following conditions:
 1. The student and the faculty advisory committee chair and members must agree that they can and will be present at the scheduled oral examination time. (The feasibility of completing the thesis during the summer may depend upon availability of thesis advisory committee members for the oral examination.)
 2. The "Final Examination Report" form must be approved by the student's thesis advisory committee chair and the Community and Regional Planning Graduate Committee chair and submitted to the UNL Office of Graduate Studies no later than four weeks (during the academic year)/three weeks (during the summer sessions) prior to the desired final oral examination date. *The student's thesis advisory committee chair and the Community and Regional Planning Program Graduate Committee chair will approve this form for submission to the UNL Office of Graduate Studies only when a full master's thesis draft (including all chapters with complete text, footnotes, graphics, bibliography, page numbers, appendices, etc.) has been received and approved as an acceptable draft by the thesis advisory committee chair.* The last possible date for scheduling the final oral examination for each semester and for the summer sessions is set by the UNL Office of Graduate Studies.
- C. Copies for the final master's thesis (the document upon which the oral examination will be based) must be distributed to all members of the thesis advisory committee at least two weeks (during the academic year)/one week (during summer sessions) prior to the scheduled oral examination. *Failure to satisfy this deadline for distribution of final master's thesis copies to members of the student's thesis advisory committee will result in cancellation, by the Community and Regional Planning Program Graduate Committee chair, of the scheduled oral examination.* The format (printed or digital) of the copies distributed to advisory committee members is to be determined by each of the committee members. A copy of the thesis and abstract also must be presented to the Office of Graduate Studies for approval of format, type of print, etc., no later than two weeks (one week in summer) prior to the date of the final oral examination.
- D. Successful completion of the master's thesis requires affirmative votes of at least two of the three faculty members on the thesis advisory committee.
- E. Any changes to the master's thesis required by the faculty advisory committee following the oral examination must be completed no later than the deadline established by the UNL Office of Graduate Studies for the submission of finished thesis documents for the term in which the student wishes to graduate. The chair of the faculty advisory committee will hold the "Final Examination Report" form until the student satisfactorily completes all required changes. After changes are made in the thesis document, a PDF copy of the final thesis document also must be sent as an email attachment to the Master's Specialist in the Office of Graduate Studies for final approval of formatting.
- F. After approval of final formatting of the thesis document, the student uploads the entire thesis document to the University Library's Digital Commons.
- G. The signed "Final Examination Report" form is submitted to Graduate Studies, along with one paper copy of the thesis abstract (for Graduate Studies) and one paper copy of the abstract and title page (for the University Library). Also, a printed confirmation of uploading the thesis to the Digital Commons (sent to the student via email) must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies.