

Master's Project Process by semester

5,6 Courses Five - Six

- Attend your individual **advising session** with GLS Director or Assistant Director.
- Be thinking about the type of project you would like to do. **Plan your last few courses** in such a way as to develop the knowledge, skills and/or faculty connections you will need for your project.
- Attend the required **Master's Project Planning Session** (held January, June and September) to learn project requirements in detail.

7,8 Courses Seven - Eight

- Focus your project ideas further, and begin developing your **central question**.
- Secure a commitment from your **faculty supervisor**.
- Schedule and attend a **bibliographic consultation** about your project with a Duke research librarian.
- Secure **Human Subjects pre-approval** for any research involving humans.

9 Course Nine -- *proposal semester*

- **Draft your proposal** in consultation with your supervisor.
- Attend a **Proposal Workshop** to get feedback on your proposal; continue to draft your proposal (optional).
- Schedule and attend your **Proposal Meeting** (you, your supervisor, and GLS) by the semester deadline, in order to get a sense of the final form of your project and proposal; continue to draft the proposal.
- **Submit your proposal** to the GLS office by the semester deadline.
- Once your proposed project is approved, begin work by **planning your project semester** with your supervisor. If not approved, rethink your proposed project.

10 Course Ten -- *project semester*

- Submit the **Application to Graduate** form at beginning of semester.
- Call or email the GLS office during the first days of the semester to **schedule your master's examination**. Offer several dates when you and your supervisor will be available.
- Attend both sessions of the **LS850 Proseminar**.
- **Work on your project** following the plan of goals, deadlines and meetings you worked out with your supervisor.
 - **At least 10 days before your scheduled master's examination...**
 - Your supervisor must confirm in writing that you have met all expectations for the project, and are ready for the examination; **and**
 - You must submit a copy of your project that needs no more than minor edits to the GLS office for distribution to the master's committee.
 - **1-3 days before your examination**, your master's committee will decide if you are ready based upon the version you submitted; if not, your examination will be rescheduled for the following semester.
- Attend the **master's examination**.
- Within two weeks of your master's examination, **submit the final corrected version** of the project.
- Assuming all other requirements are met, **graduate!**

Timetable Part A: Project Prerequisites (courses 5-8)

Course 5 -- Attend Your Course Five Personal Advising Session. Consult with the GLS director or assistant director about your overall progress in the program and your master's project ideas.

Course 6 -- Attend the Master's Project Planning Session. (Formerly known as the Final Project Proposal Workshop.) This session, which discusses Project and proposal requirements in detail, is held in January, June and September. See the **GLS Calendar** (<http://liberalstudies.duke.edu/calendar.php>) for the next scheduled workshop session.

- You are responsible for attending this session *before* your seventh course in the program.
- You cannot submit your project proposal until you have attended this required session.

Course 8 -- Determine Your Project Supervisor and Topic. Consult with the GLS Director to discuss your topic and choice of supervisor. We strongly recommend that you work in a field in which you have already done academic work; you are welcome to amplify a research paper from one of your courses. Your supervisor can be any Graduate School faculty member with appropriate expertise, but we strongly recommend that you work with someone you have worked with before.

- Projects must be interdisciplinary and must be based in or include written analysis.
- Your supervisor must be approved by the GLS Director before you can proceed.

Course 8 -- Schedule and Attend a Bibliographic Consultation. Consult at least one Duke research librarian (http://library.duke.edu/about/directory/subject_librarians.html) who specializes in a field pertinent to your project in order to learn more about available resources and how to find them. You may choose to supplement the bibliographic knowledge of your supervisor by consulting with a research librarian in the same field, or you may choose to complement it by consulting with a research librarian in another field that will be important in your interdisciplinary project.

Course 8 -- Secure Human Subjects Approval. If you are planning to use human subjects in your research, you must obtain the approval of the Human Subjects Committee (<https://ors.duke.edu/research-with-human-subjects>) of the Institutional Review Board, Office of Research Support, before submitting your proposal. The document certifying that your project is approved or waived should be attached to your proposal when submitted to the MALS office. ***Any research conducted without approval or prior to approval cannot be used in the project.***

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Course 8 -- Determine Your Central Question and Method; Draft Proposal. Determine a central question (or, for a creative project, a goal or issue), and then determine the best method for answering that question. In consultation with your supervisor, write a draft of your proposal that conforms to the master's project proposal format.

Timetable Part B: The Project Proposal (course 9)

Course 9 -- Attend the Proposal Writing Workshop (optional). At this workshop (held February, June & October), you can get advice from both peers and the GLS writing consultant to make sure your master's project proposal is workable and makes sense to others. You are also free to consult with the writing consultant at any time during your proposal and project process.

Course 9 -- Schedule and Attend Your Proposal Meeting. Contact the GLS Program Assistant (684-3222) to schedule a meeting in the GLS Office with your supervisor and the GLS director or assistant director to discuss your Project. It is your responsibility to find out your supervisor's availability and to inform your supervisor about the time and place of the Proposal Meeting. ***Please submit a draft of your proposal 24 hours before the meeting.***

Proposal Meeting Deadlines

- Summer project the 2nd Friday in March
- Fall project the 2nd Friday in June
- Spring project the 2nd Friday in October

Course 9 -- Submit Your Proposal. After the Proposal Meeting, you will be working with either the GLS director or the writing consultant to draft a final version of your proposal. Once you have done so, submit it to the GLS office as a MS Word document.

Proposal Submission Deadlines

- Summer project last Friday in March
- Fall project last Friday in June
- Spring project last Friday in October

Course 9 -- Attain Project Approval. Once the GLS advisory committee has met (usually about three weeks after the deadline), we will inform you of their decision.

- When your Project is approved, you will be given a PIN which will allow you to change your registration from Continuation to Master's Project Colloquium (LS850). Begin work on your project at any time after approval.
- If your proposed project is not initially approved, rethink and refocus your proposal, paying particular attention to articulating a brief, clear central question and workable method within the three-page maximum.

Course 9 -- Plan Your Master's Project Semester. If you have not already done so, set up a regular meeting time with your faculty supervisor for the project semester. We strongly suggest that you plan to meet with your supervisor at least every two weeks to discuss your research and ideas.

Work with your faculty supervisor to develop a realistic research and writing plan that results in a full first draft within the first nine weeks of the semester, and a good final draft at least ten days before your master's examination. Think carefully about how to best break up daunting writing tasks into shorter, more manageable chapters, sections or subsections. If you plan to work with the GLS writing consultant, share this schedule with the consultant.

Part C: The Master's Project Colloquium Semester (course 10)

First Week of Semester -- Apply to Graduate. In order to graduate, you must notify the Graduate School by submitting your Apply to Graduate form through your DukeHub account by the deadlines found [here on The Graduate School's website](#).

You do not need to list your master's project title. In the box that says "*If you are pursuing a non-thesis master's program, please describe other academic exercise to be completed in lieu of master's thesis,*" write in "MALS Master's Project." Your "real" exam committee will not appear on the form so don't panic if you don't see your supervisor's name.

Note: If you have filed the form in a previous semester, you must do so again in order to graduate in a subsequent semester. There is no penalty for submitting the form in a semester in which you do not graduate. However, you cannot graduate if you have not filled out this form before the deadline.

First Week of Semester -- Schedule Your Master's Examination. The Master's examination is the final, formal academic event of the MALS degree program. It occurs when the three members of your examining committee (your supervisor as first reader, the GLS director or assistant director as second reader, and a third reader for whom we arrange) meet with you to discuss your work and make their evaluation. It is the student's responsibility to find out the supervisor's availability and arrange this meeting with the GLS office; students should call the GLS office as early in the semester as possible to schedule this meeting in order to secure a favorable time toward the end of the semester. Estimate a date by which you can reasonably complete a good final draft of your project. Schedule your master's examination ten days or more after this date.

Twice During the Semester -- Attend the GLS Proseminar. This represents the classroom component of LS850 (Master's Project Colloquium). Attendance at these two sessions per semester is **required** for any semester in which you are working on your project. Come prepared to discuss issues in producing your master's project, to support your fellow master's project students, and to receive support and advice. Prepare a sample of your work in progress to read at the second session.

Throughout the Semester -- Follow the Schedule You Worked Out With Your Supervisor. Keep the following broad parameters in mind:

By Week 2-3:

Begin writing. Submit sections of your written work to your supervisor for feedback.

By Week 8-9:

Submit a first draft of the entire project to your supervisor. Allow time over the next month to develop and refine the project with your supervisor.

By Week 10-12:

Submit the final draft of your project to your supervisor. The project should, at this stage, need only minor corrections. When your supervisor has approved the project and notified the GLS director, your master's examination can proceed. Submit the completed draft to the GLS office at least ten days before your master's examination.

Work with the GLS writing consultant as needed. You can consult with the writing consultant, by email and/or in person, on anything from brainstorming to argumentation to grammar.

In order to proceed with the master's examination, your faculty supervisor must indicate that your master's project is complete. This can be done via email to the director, at which time the GLS office will confirm the date of your master's examination. If your supervisor feels you have not yet successfully completed your project by the end of the semester, you will have to wait until the next semester to graduate.

At Least 10 Days Before the Master's Examination -- your supervisor should submit a statement to the GLS office for distribution to the examining committee that does the following:

- Confirms that your project is ready for the examination; and
- Briefly explains how this project meets the requirements of the degree.

At Least 10 Days Before the Master's Examination -- Submit the Penultimate Draft. Submit a good copy of your master's project as an MS Word document to dukeglsl@duke.edu for distribution to your examining committee. This penultimate draft should be finished, except for minor editorial changes that your supervisor or the director may suggest. It should follow the GLS master's project format. ***Your master's examination cannot proceed as scheduled*** unless you meet this deadline. ***Last-minute efforts by students who have failed to work closely with their supervisors throughout the semester will not be considered.***

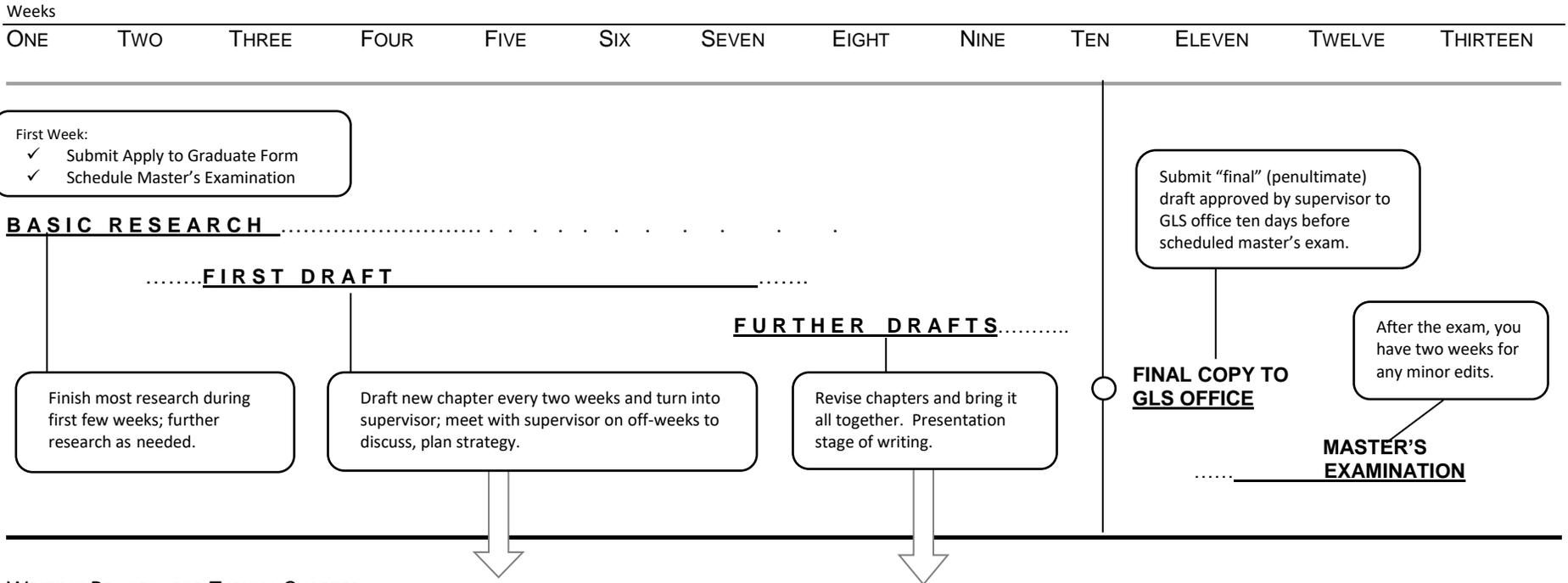
1-3 Days Before the Scheduled Examination -- the examining committee members will confer by email in order to confirm that it is appropriate to proceed with the examination. If they find that your project meets appropriate standards, the master's examination will take place as scheduled. If not, the examination will be rescheduled to the following semester. This is not a defense, but an opportunity to share with others your intellectual journey and the work that it produced. At the master's examination, your supervisor will sign the card that says you have completed degree requirements for graduation.

Two Weeks (14 Days) After the Master's Examination -- Submit the Final, Corrected Version. After your master's examination, faculty committee members will give you any corrections. Once you have completed all corrections, make sure that the project meets all requirements of the Master's Project Format, then convert your entire project to a pdf document. Submit your revised master's project to the dukeglsl@duke.edu within 14 days of your master's examination. GLS master's projects are archived on a site dedicated to the program on DukeSpace through the Perkins Library (<http://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/>). Any non-written (e.g., artistic, video, audio, web-based) components of your project may be archived under the care of the Duke University Archivist in the Rubenstein Library's Archive for Documentary Arts.

MASTER'S PROJECT PREREQUISITE/PROPOSAL TIMELINE

COURSES/SEMESTERS						
FIVE	SIX	SEVEN	EIGHT	NINE	TEN	
Individual Advising Session	Master's Project Planning Session (January, June or September)	Determine your central question				Project Semester... (see next timeline)
	Think about master's project topics, methods	Secure a faculty supervisor ; draft proposal in consultation with supervisor				
Plan your remaining courses in order to develop knowledge, skills and faculty relationships needed for your project		Arrange for bibliographic consult with research librarian				
		Secure Human Subjects approval or waiver (if appropriate)				
	Think about potential supervisors			Attend Proposal Workshop (optional)		
	Develop your central question			Attend Proposal Meeting <i>by deadline</i>		
				Submit Proposal <i>by deadline</i>		

MASTER'S PROJECT SEMESTER TIMELINE – ASSUMING BEST CASE SCENARIO: MASTER'S EXAM IN WEEK 13



WRITING PROCESS FOR TYPICAL CHAPTER

Question: What is the question which this chapter seeks to answer?

Invention: What are my ideas about this question?
Which are most useful – and which aren't needed?

Arrangement: What is the relationship of these ideas?
Are similar ideas grouped together?
Which ideas will I foreground as the major building blocks of my argument -- and which will be background, context, minor points or supporting evidence?
How does the relationship of major ideas reveal my argument (the answer to my question)?

Presentation/
Drafting:

How can I best lead my reader through this chapter?
Is its argument (claims and support) clear at the beginning of the chapter (thesis statement)?
Are the chapter's relationship to what went before and its place in my total argument clear?
Does the beginning of each unit of discourse (chapter, section, subsection and paragraph) direct my reader?
Are my claims and support clear?

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