

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Department of Health Sciences

Master of Science Degree Guidelines and Procedures

Students wishing to enroll in the M.S. degree program in the Department of Health Sciences must first be admitted as a graduate student as prescribed in the *Graduate Catalog*. Upon admission the student must follow these procedures:

Advisement

1. The department's graduate coordinator will assign entering master's students to an adviser. This adviser may serve as the portfolio/thesis committee chair, if desired. The adviser must be a member of the departmental graduate faculty.
2. The adviser will assist the student with the formation of a portfolio/thesis committee at the appropriate time.

Responsibilities of the Portfolio/Thesis Committee Chair

1. To approve the student's thesis topic if thesis option is chosen.
2. To guide the student through the preparation of the thesis or professional development portfolio.
3. To preside over the student's final oral presentation of a thesis or professional development portfolio.
4. To certify the final approval of the student's thesis or professional development portfolio.

Responsibilities of the Graduate Coordinator

1. To ensure that all graduate requirements have been met.
2. To provide documentation of departmental approval for graduation.

Comprehensive Examination

1. All students are required to take the comprehensive examination upon completion of all graduate level courses.
2. Students must notify the Graduate Coordinator *in writing*, by the end of the fourth week of the semester in which the examination is to be taken, of their intention to take the exam.
3. The comprehensive examination is administered on the second Saturday of November, April, and July, respectively. Specific dates will be announced.

Students Completing a Thesis

1. Students will work with a thesis committee consisting of the thesis committee chair and two additional department faculty members. These members must be members of the graduate faculty. This committee will advise the student on the development of his or her thesis.
2. The student and thesis committee chair will agree upon a thesis subject, and then, in consultation with the committee, the research design will be formulated and a prospectus developed.
3. The prospectus will include the first three chapters of the proposed thesis. The first chapter will be expected to include background (introduction to subject), statement of the problem, delineation of the problem (questions to be answered, relationships to be examined), limitations, and definitions. The second chapter will be concerned with related literature and the third chapter will include the approaches to be used in gathering the data and methods for analyzing quantitative and/or qualitative results from the data. This description of the first three chapters required for the prospectus is not intended to limit the master's committee in making various changes including deletions or additions of content when necessary, but it is provided to help maintain uniformity in the departmental process leading to completion of the thesis.
4. The thesis committee will hold a meeting with the candidate, at which time decisions will be made regarding the final form of the prospectus. It is expected that the committee chair will take primary responsibility in working with the student to make any required changes. When a student's thesis committee recommends changes in the prospectus, members of the committee will not sign forms showing approval of the prospectus until all of the corrections have actually been made.
5. Master's candidates will not gather data for their theses until final approval of the prospectus has been given by the thesis committee. **No data may be gathered without official approval granted by the University Institutional Review Board.**
6. Acceptance of the prospectus in its final form constitutes an agreement between the candidate and the thesis committee that the thesis will be acceptable, provided the candidate satisfactorily fulfills all terms outlined in the prospectus. Additionally, the candidate's

thesis is expected to reflect current developments related to the topic of study. Procedures used in pursuing the completion of the thesis must conform to the procedures in the prospectus, as approved by the committee.

7. Final oral presentation of the thesis must take place at least two weeks prior to the end of the fall or spring semester and one week prior to the end of the summer session. A notice will be sent by the master's committee chair informing the Department of Health Sciences faculty of the candidate's oral presentation of the thesis, to include: date, time and location. One copy of the proposed final draft of the thesis must be made available to all faculty at least one week prior to the oral presentation.
8. The candidate's thesis committee chair will preside over the oral presentation.
9. All graduate faculty and students will be invited to attend the oral presentation, and members of the candidate's thesis committee will be given the first opportunity to react to the thesis, followed by other faculty members and students.
10. A student will be recommended for the degree only if the members of the committee judge both the thesis and the performance at the final oral presentation to be satisfactory.
11. The student's thesis committee grants final approval of the thesis and may require whatever modifications or changes they agree are necessary before the thesis can be accepted.
12. An abstract of the thesis is required for **all** copies of the approved thesis.

Students Completing a Portfolio

1. Students will work with a portfolio committee consisting of the portfolio committee chair and two additional departmental faculty members. These members must be members of the graduate faculty and will advise the student on the construction of his or her portfolio document.
2. The student will meet with the portfolio committee to review the requirements for the portfolio. A determination of course work and life experiences to include in the portfolio, as well as structure of the document, will be made at this time.
3. As the student is preparing the document, he/she will meet regularly with each member of the portfolio committee, either as a group or individually, to assess progress toward completion and to deal with concerns which arise.
4. It is the duty of the student to assure portfolio committee members that the competencies which they claim to have developed from courses and professors have been, indeed, performed in those courses. The committee will verify inclusions in the portfolio through discussions with course instructors.

5. Final oral presentation of the portfolio must take place at least two weeks prior to the end of the fall or spring semester and one week prior to the end of the summer session. A notice will be sent by the committee chair informing the Department of Health Sciences faculty of the candidate's oral presentation of the portfolio, to include: date, time, and location. One copy of the proposed final draft of the portfolio must be made available to all faculty at least two weeks prior to the oral presentation.
6. The candidate's portfolio committee chair will preside over the oral presentation.
7. All graduate faculty and students will be invited to attend the oral presentation, and members of the candidate's portfolio committee will be given first opportunity to react to the portfolio, followed by other faculty and students.
8. A student will be recommended for the degree only if the members of the portfolio committee judge the portfolio and the performance at the final oral presentation to be satisfactory.
9. The student's portfolio committee grants final approval of the portfolio and may require whatever modifications or changes they agree are necessary before the portfolio can be accepted.

Deficiencies and Internship

Each candidate must show evidence of having completed course work in human diseases prior to degree completion. If an appropriate course has not been taken, the Graduate Coordinator may require the student to also take a course in microbiology prior to degree completion. A professional internship will be required for those candidates choosing the community health education emphasis if no field experience was obtained as an undergraduate or if the student has not had equivalent work experience.