



Graduate College

Checklist for Master's Students Thesis Candidates

This checklist describes steps you must take to complete your master's program. Normally, these steps occur sequentially; however, some may occur concurrently. We suggest you "check off" and date each step as you complete it.

For additional information, consult NAU's [Academic Catalog](#) or your adviser. We encourage you to visit the Graduate College [Thesis and Dissertation website](#) which provides detailed information about preparing your electronic dissertation (referred to as an ETD).

_____ **1. Admission to Regular Status.**

If you were admitted with provisional status, complete the provisions of your admission as soon as possible. Your department will notify the Graduate College when you have completed these provisions so your admission can be changed to regular status.

_____ **2. Meet with your adviser and develop your program of study.**

Determine the courses you are required to take, and whether any previous graduate work will transfer into your program. Because of uncertainties surrounding course offerings, you may want to complete a tentative version of your program of study. By your third semester, you should file your program of study with your academic department and/or adviser.

_____ **3. Submit the Petition for Transfer Credit form, if applicable.**

If you wish to request transfer credit for graduate coursework completed at another university, submit a Petition for Transfer Credit to your adviser for approval. The petition will be forwarded to the Graduate College. If an official transcript is not on file with the Graduate College, you must request that one be sent to the NAU Graduate College. Your adviser may need a course description/syllabus to make a determination if the course is eligible for transfer.

If you plan to complete graduate coursework at another university during your master's program at NAU, submit a course description and syllabus to your adviser for approval before enrolling in the course.

The regulations pertaining to transfer credit can be found in NAU's [Academic Catalog](#).

_____ **4. Select your master's committee by the end of your first year.**

In consultation with your adviser, select your thesis committee. Submit your request in the format and style required by your department for approval.

_____ **5. Complete your coursework and begin your thesis research.**

If your department requires a thesis prospectus hearing, work with your adviser to schedule the hearing. Meet with your adviser several weeks in advance of the date set for your hearing. As you complete your coursework, keep the following Graduate College requirements in mind:

Formal Coursework:

You must complete at least 18 hours of formal course work, that is, courses other than such individualized studies as independent studies, directed readings, and research. No 400-level courses may be used toward this 18-hour formal course work requirement.

Time Limit:

You must complete all requirements for your master's degree within a six-year period. If you take courses from other institutions and transfer them to your program at NAU, they must also be taken within the six-year time limit.

Continuous Enrollment:

When you begin working on a master's thesis (699), you are expected to enroll in thesis credits each semester from the time you begin this work until completion of degree. You must register for a minimum of one unit each fall and spring semester. If you are using research or other university facilities, and/or the professional time of faculty members, you should enroll for at least three units.

_____ **6. Apply for graduation.**

You must submit an **Application for Graduation** to the Graduate College during the semester *prior* to the semester in which you plan to complete your degree requirements. The graduation [application deadlines](#) can be found on the Graduate College website.

_____ **7. Submit your thesis electronically to the ETD coordinator at (etd@nau.edu) for format review.**

Please read all instructions carefully and provide all required information.

Submit your document in the first two or three months of the semester you expect to graduate. This should be done prior to your oral defense. See the **ETD Format Checklist** for specific information about the university's format requirements. Expect the format check to take at least five to ten business days. Be aware that the format editor does not review dissertations during the last two weeks of each semester or during the period between semesters.

_____ **8. Schedule the oral defense of your thesis.**

Schedule your oral defense as required by your department. Be aware that the defense copy of your thesis must be (essentially) in its final form when you submit it to your committee; only minor changes and corrections should be necessary after the defense.

At your defense your committee will sign the **Final Oral Examination: Thesis or Dissertation Defense – Part 1** (Pass/Fail Form) and the Thesis Chair will submit it to the Graduate College within 48 hours of your defense. The form submitted must be the original, and signed in blue ink.

_____ **9. After you successfully defend your dissertation and make all the revisions required by your committee, your committee chair will complete the Verification of Final Thesis/Dissertation Document—Part 2, verifying that all requirements specified during the oral examination have been met and that the thesis or dissertation is in its final form and ready for publishing. This verification form be submitted to the Graduate College by the Committee Chair and will not be accepted if submitted by a student.**

_____ **10. Submit the corrected final copy of your thesis to the [NAU ETD website](#).**

After successfully defending your thesis and making all the revisions required by your committee and thesis chair, submit your final electronic copy to the NAU ETD website for approval and acceptance by the ETD Coordinator. Your thesis should not be submitted prior to the semester in which you plan to graduate. You will receive an email stating that your document has been approved. Retain a copy of the email as confirmation of submission. **This submission must be made NO LATER than two days prior to the graduation date.** If you are unable to complete your document during the semester in which you defend, you must register for at least one hour of thesis credit (699) each semester after your defense until you submit your final copy electronically to the NAU ETD website. If you do not submit your final copy within six months of the date of your defense, your defense shall be declared invalid and must be repeated. For detailed instructions about

submitting your final copies, see the information provided on the Graduate College [Thesis and Dissertation website](#)

11. Participate in commencement ceremonies.

You are invited to participate in university commencement ceremonies, which are held in December and May. A delay in submitting your final copies will not prevent you from participating, but most students who participate should have passed their defense.

Information on graduation can be found on the [NAU graduation web site](#).

Once you've applied for graduation, your degree will be awarded at the end of the semester in which you complete all degree requirements. You should receive your diploma in the mail approximately eight weeks later.