
MASTERS PROGRAM in ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

GUIDANCE FOR FACULTY ADVISORS

A**DVISORY COMMITTEE** Students will select an advisory committee that reflects their course of study and areas of interest. The Advisory Committee:

- must have at least two UO faculty of Assistant Professor rank or higher
- must have at least one member from the ENVS core faculty (does not have to be the chair)
- must be comprised of faculty representing at least two UO departments
- must have one advisor designated as the chair, who will grade Thesis/Project credits
- may allow community members to participate as appropriate, in addition to the minimum of two UO faculty
- will require the student to defend or present the Thesis/Project during the final term
- oversees all Thesis/Project work

C**COURSE PLAN** Because the ENVS Program is interdisciplinary and individualized, each student must submit a Course Plan which charts the student's program. See the information sheet titled *Course Plan Guidelines* for further information.

T**HESIS or PROJECT** To fulfill requirements for the Masters degree, each student must complete a Thesis or Terminal Project. The product must integrate the two concentration areas from the student's course plan. The student's Advisory Committee oversees all Thesis or Project work. The Committee Chair is responsible for grading the 12 required Thesis or Project credits.

Although both the Thesis and Project require a minimum of 12 credit hours of work, they are significantly different in both content and format. A thesis is an extended paper presenting independent and original research, which makes a contribution to the current body of knowledge in the field. A thesis adheres to a strict format, generally including five basic chapters or divisions. Theses must be typed to conform to Graduate School specifications as stated in the UO Style and Policy Manual for Theses and Dissertations (available free at the Graduate School or for a fee at the UO Bookstore).

A Terminal Project is a presentation that embodies the knowledge and skills acquired in studies for the degree. Unlike a Thesis, a Terminal Project has no set format. Subject to approval by the candidate's Advising Committee, the project may be in the form of a written, oral, or visual presentation. Students should discuss the possibilities with their advisors. Projects completed in the past by ENVS students have included a screenplay, various environmental curricula, a guide to environmental resource groups, and an ecological encyclopedia. A product must be submitted to the ENVS program in order for the degree to be granted.

The decision to do a Thesis versus a Terminal Project depends on several factors. The Thesis may be preferable for students planning to continue their higher education or planning to remain in an academic arena. It is also preferable if the advisors or the student want the research to be widely available, since the Thesis is presented to the University library and becomes available to scholars pursuing similar research. The Thesis is noted on the student's transcript and is thus acknowledged as a publication.

For students whose program has been planned with a specific job or job field in mind, a Terminal Project can serve as the opportunity to prepare a document or handbook that will be used in that field. For example, one student who planned to work as a coordinator for senior citizen recreational activities prepared an extensive handbook of senior camp activities as a Terminal Project. The flexibility in format and content for the Project allows a student to prepare something that may be more practical in nature than a Thesis.

Students must decide whether they will complete a Thesis or a Terminal Project BEFORE registering for Thesis or Project credit hours. Grades for Thesis or Project will remain *incompletes* until the student graduates.

During the first year, each student will work with his/her advisor to make a decision on the Thesis or Project topic. By the end of spring term, 1st year, the student will prepare and submit to his/her advisor for approval signature a **written proposal** that describes the topic and scope of the Thesis/Project. Obtaining this initial written agreement helps prevent confusion and possible disagreement later on as to what constitutes the completed product. A copy of the signed proposal must be submitted to the ENVS Graduate Coordinator. Preauthorization of registration for these credits cannot be granted until the approved proposal has been submitted.

?**QUESTIONS** Please contact the ENVS Graduate Coordinator, gaylaw@uoregon.edu or 541/346-5057.

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