Master's Degree Policies

Final Examination

Some Plan C programs do not require a Final Examination. Refer to your program handbook for more information.

The final examination is an oral examination given to the supervisory committee in which the author of the master's paper, thesis, or culminating work demonstrates satisfactory command of both the focus area of their project and the broader field.

Notification of Scheduled Examination

At least 14 calendar days prior to the final examination date, the Notification of Scheduled Examination form must be approved by the student’s adviser and graduate program coordinator and filed with the Graduate College.

• If the form is not filed 14 calendar days prior, it will not be approved by the Graduate College.

Pre-examination Document Distribution

The master's paper, thesis, or other culminating work must be distributed to the committee members for review at least seven calendar days prior to the examination.

• If this seven (-day stipulation cannot be met, the student's committee holds the right to cancel the Final Examination. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Graduate College if their examination does not take place as scheduled and to complete a new Notification of Scheduled Examination.

Examination Attendee Policy

• If one supervisory committee member cannot participate in the final examination, the examination may be held; however, their absence is considered a “Disapproval” of the student's examination.
• If more than one supervisory committee member cannot participate in the final examination, the examination must be rescheduled.
• It is the student's responsibility to notify the Graduate College if their examination does not take place as scheduled and to complete a new Notification of Scheduled Examination.

Final Examination Outcomes

It is the student's responsibility to initiate the appropriate examination report, ensure all committee members sign it, and submit it to the Graduate College within 14 calendar days following the examination.

• If the form is not submitted within 14 calendar days, the examination is considered void and must be rescheduled.

The student must pass a final examination as part of earning the master's degree.

• A negative vote by two or more members of the student's committee will signify failure of the final examination.
• The student may repeat the examination only upon permission from a majority of the supervisory committee. The committee will set a date at least one month after the failed examination and a new Notification of Scheduled Examination must be submitted within the two-week deadline.
  • Exceptions to this time limit will be considered by the graduate dean upon presentation of written justification from the chair of the committee in consultation with the committee. Should the examination be failed twice, the student cannot continue in their graduate program.
  • The student will not be given a third examination except by recommendation of the examining committee, program administrator, and special approval of the Dean of the Graduate College following consultation with the Graduate Council.