Industrial Organizational Psychology Graduate Handbook - MA

2025-2026 Handbook

Introductory Remarks

Below, you will find important information outlining the requirements and timelines to complete the MA in Industrial-Organizational Psychology. For clarification, or if have any questions, on any of the information contained in this handbook, please contact the I-O Graduate Studies Committee Representative.

Area-specific Course Requirements MA IO

Students must register in UNIV*7510 (Full-time registration) or UNIV*7520 (Part-time registration) to activate registration each semester.

In semesters where no other courses are taken, students should enrol in UNIV*7500 (Research/Writing) so that the term appears on their transcript.

Students should register in PSYC*7050 Research Seminar in I-O Psychology (Brown Bag Presentations) each Fall and Winter.

For the MA program the following are required: *(For descriptions of the courses please see the* Graduate Program Calendar*)*

PSYC*6060 [0.50] Research Design and Statistics
PSYC*6380 [0.50] Psychological Applications of Multivariate Analysis
PSYC*6670 [0.50] Research Methods
PSYC*7080 [0.00] Consulting in Industrial/Organizational Psychology

MA students will take 2 of the following 3 Industrial Psychology content courses. The third course will be taken in the PhD.

PSYC*7010 [0.50] Recruitment and Selection: Methods and Outcomes
PSYC*7020 [0.50] Employee Performance
PSYC*7160 [0.50] Employee Development: Methods and Outcomes

MA students will take 2 of the following 3 Organizational Psychology content courses. The third course will be taken in the PhD.

PSYC*7030 [0.50] Work Attitudes and Behaviour
PSYC*7040 [0.50] Social Processes in the Workplace

PSYC*7190 [0.50] Work Motivation and Leadership

MA Thesis.

Note: PSYC7050 and PSYC7080 must be taken in fall and winter for all registered semesters throughout the degree.

Area-specific typical progress sequence MA IO

1. Form MA thesis committee
Forms signed with members of advisory committee Timing: no later than the 10th week of the 2nd semester

2. Initial MA committee meeting

After the committee is formed, it is recommended that the student, their Advisor, and the two committee members meet to discuss the expectations for that particular committee (e.g., does committee plan to have regular meetings, when does the student expect to have a proposal meeting, etc.) Timing: No later than the end of the 2nd semester

3. Drafts of MA proposal to advisor

Timing: There are actually many steps prior to this milestone – but they will vary with the project, the student and the advisor. You will need to work out an individual timeline with your advisor regarding the steps needed to get your proposal done. Most advisors will need at least 1 week to read any drafts, and most students will go through several drafts of each section of the proposal.

4. Approval of MA proposal by advisor

When the Advisor has deemed that the proposal is satisfactory, the Advisor will let the student know (via email) that the proposal is satisfactory and ready for submission to the Advisory Committee members for evaluation. Timing: Deadline to be worked out with advisor

5. Send proposal to committee members

Timing: 2 weeks prior to proposal meeting

6. Meeting with committee members to discuss proposal

The student must present a thesis proposal to the Advisory Committee and have this approved by that committee. At least one meeting between the Advisory Committee and the student must be held to discuss the thesis proposal and to work out changes necessary for an acceptable proposal. Approval of the thesis proposal entails consideration of the feasibility of the study in terms of time limitations, expenses, and availability of subjects, as well as its empirical, theoretical, and conceptual value. The proposal can only be approved once it meets the quality standard as outlined on the Criteria for Evaluation Proposals document. Timing: Students are expected to have their MA Thesis Proposal approved by the 8th week of the 3rd semester (approximately July 1)

7. Make changes to proposal based on committee meeting; Resubmission of entire proposal, or just of required changes to committee members; Committee approval of proposal

Students will not be permitted to proceed with the implementation of the study until the thesis proposal has been approved by the Committee and the Approval of MA Thesis Proposal form has been signed by the MA Thesis Advisor and the MA Thesis Committee member and submitted to the Graduate Secretary. Timing: May be anywhere from 1 – 4 weeks, depending on nature of changes . Students are required to have their MA Thesis Proposal approved by the end of the third semester.

8. Submit ethics forms to REB

In most cases, it is necessary to obtain the ethical approval before proceeding with a thesis study. The University of Guelph Human Subjects Committee must approve the project.
The REB generally provides a response (not necessarily approval) within 2 weeks

9. Respond to any changes required by ethics committee
The ethics committee may ask for changes to the ethics application – you need to respond to these requests before starting data collection. Timing: 1-2 weeks, depending on the nature of the changes

10. Data collection

Once the proposal is approved, students should have a firm understanding of how to proceed. Difficulties may arise during the data collection phase of the study that require making changes to the approved procedures, such as limited access to participants or failed equipment. A substantial change to the study requires a meeting of the Advisory Committee. Timing: You will need to discuss with your advisor how long this phase will take – it will depend on source of your data. You will likely run into timeline issues if your data collection goes later than March of your 5th semester

11. Data entry/Data cleaning

Before you can analyze your data, you need allow some time for data entry and/or data screening and cleaning. Timing: 1-2 weeks

12. Data Analysis

Conduct proposed analyses. Timing: Most students find that this stage takes around 2-4 weeks.

13. Updates to committee

Often it’s a good idea to update your committee members once you know what your results are. This can be a meeting, an email, a document - depending on what your committee prefers.

14. Drafts of MA thesis to advisor

During the preparation of the written thesis, the student should be receiving feedback from the Advisory Committee (what form that takes e.g., drafts, meetings, etc., will be up to each committee to determine). Have a carefully planned out timeline for this process, as it will likely take longer than you think, and you will run into timeline problems if you leave things to the end of the summer. Timing: Deadlines to be worked out with advisor

15. Approval of MA thesis by advisor

When the Advisor has deemed that the thesis is satisfactory, the Advisor will let the student know (via email) that the thesis is ready for submission to the Advisory Committee members for evaluation. Timing: Recommended by June 15

16. Thesis goes to committee members

ALL members of the student's Advisory Committee are to complete their own Evaluation of Draft of Thesis form (this form will almost always include suggested changes to thesis). Timing: Recommended you have thesis to Committee members by June 15. Committee members get at least 2 weeks with the document (until June 30).

17. Make changes to thesis based on committee members' feedback

Timing: 1-2 weeks, depending on the nature of the changes (July 7-15)

18. Hard copy of thesis goes to all examination committee members (give 1 hard copy to each person)

Timing: Provide a minimum of 2 weeks before the proposed defense (unless otherwise arranged with the Chair and members).

19. Defense of Thesis

Timing: Please be aware that arranging a defense takes the coordination of many people, which can result in delays even if your manuscript is ready. Please do not book vacation/other plans until this date is set.

20. Changes to thesis based on defense

Timing: Students typically require a week following the examination to make changes to their thesis and ensure that it follows the prescribed format. Occasionally this stage can take longer than 1 week. Please do not make plans (e.g., vacation) immediately following your defense.
21. Final version of thesis submitted after changes are approved

Advisory Committee Membership

See Chapter II, heading Student Program, subheading Establishment of the Advisory Committee

See also Chapter IV, heading Master's degree by Thesis subheading Advising.

See also Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Department Regulations.

Look for "Area-specific advisory committee membership" below CONTENTS for area-specific guidance if it exists.

Conflict with Advisor or Advisory Committee

See chapter III General information, heading Policy on Responsibilities of Advisors, Advisory Committees and Graduate Students and Graduate Student-Advisor Mediation Procedures, subheading Dispute Resolution Mechanisms (with flowchart)

See also Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Program Regulations

Look for "Area-specific conflict with advisory committee" below CONTENTS for area-specific guidance if it exists.

Transfer of advisors

See Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Program Regulations

Look for "Area-specific transfer of advisors" below CONTENTS for area-specific guidance if it exists.

Area-specific transfer of advisors IO MA

In those rare cases when a student has a conflict with their advisor and efforts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful, the following steps are suggested as a path to obtaining a new advisor.

1. The student should notify the I/O graduate studies coordinator who will assist the student in identifying a potential new advisor. In those cases where the advisor is also the I/O graduate studies coordinator, the student should contact the departmental graduate studies coordinator.

2. A new thesis advisory committee will be constituted under the direction of the newly appointed advisor. Normally, at least one of the members of the existing advisory committee will continue as a member of the new advisory committee. The decision to continue as an advisory committee member is at the discretion of the faculty member.

Thesis Proposal

See Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Program Regulations

Look for "Area-specific thesis proposal" below CONTENTS for area-specific guidance if it exists.

Area-specific Thesis Proposal MA IO

Every I/O MA student will be expected to submit a Proposal that contains the following sections:

1. Introduction

2. Method

3. Analyses and Proposed Results

4. Proposed Implications

All proposals will be reviewed against the following criteria.

INTRODUCTION

Comprehensively summarizes and references the relevant literature as it pertains to the thesis topic.

Critically points out the most relevant and important theories and empirical evidence to establish a clear purpose and contribution for the thesis.

Demonstrates an accurate and deep understanding of the research literature (the authors/ theorists would be in full agreement with their ideas or findings being summarized in this way).

Hypotheses are well substantiated and clearly follow from the literature review.

For the MA, the proposal introduction is comprehensive, whereas the final version of the MA thesis should be a length appropriate for a journal. That is, we intend for you have a manuscript ready to submit to a journal by the time you complete the Master's thesis. Because this requirement is unique to the I/O area, it may be necessary to inform any committee member who is outside of the I/O area about this requirement.

METHOD

Research design is clearly articulated and follows logically from the literature review.

The method allows for the optimal testing of the research hypotheses.

All relevant measures are described in detail and appropriate based on the subject matter of the thesis.

Drafts of all critical materials, as agreed upon by the committee, are included in the Method section or in an Appendix.

ANALYSES AND PROPOSED RESULTS

Proposed analyses are described in detail.

Predicted results are also presented (in tables or figures) to demonstrate a mastery of the underlying theory and proposed analyses.

Strengths and weaknesses of the research design and measurement are clearly articulated.

PROPOSED IMPLICATIONS

The implications, and importance, of the proposed findings for theory and practice are described in detail for the topic domain.

ORGANIZATION, CLARITY, AND FORMAT

Proposal is structured with a clear organization.

All aspects of the proposal are explored in a highly systematic and disciplined manner.

Appropriate elements of style are consistently used throughout (e.g., transition sentences between paragraphs, appropriate headings).

Sentences are clear and concise.

There are no grammatical errors.

There is consistent and accurate use of APA style.

Thesis Preparation

See Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Thesis

See also Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Program Regulations

Look for "Area-specific thesis preparation" below CONTENTS for area-specific guidance if it exists.

Area-specific thesis preparation MA IO

We encourage student to submit a final thesis that is ready for journal submission (Journal of Applied Psychology) and a length of approximately 8000 to 10,000 words (excluding tables, figures, references, appendices). You should also include your MA proposal as an appendix in your final thesis. Additionally, if you preregistered hypotheses, analyses, etc. those preregistration documents should also be included in an appendix.

Advisory Committee Approval of the Thesis and Submission to Examination Committee

See Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Thesis.

See also Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Program Regulations

Look for "Area-specific advisory committee approval" below CONTENTS for area-specific guidance if it exists.

Examination Committee Membership

See Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Thesis

See also Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Program Regulations

Look for "Area-specific examination committee membership" below CONTENTS for area-specific guidance if it exists.

Examination Committee Creation

See Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Program Regulations

Look for "Area-specific examination committee creation" below CONTENTS for area-specific guidance if it exists.

Thesis Public Lecture and Examination

See Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Thesis

See also Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Program Regulations

MA Examination Procedure

Introduction by the Chair - 5 minutes
Presentation of research findings/scholarly work by candidate - 30 minutes (maximum)
Public Question Period - Audience -10 minutes
Break - 5 minutes (members of the public are free to leave)
Examination Period (questions only from examiners) - 1 hour and 40 minutes

Ordering of Questions by the Examination Committee:
There will be two rounds of questions by the Committee. The questioning by the Committee will be in the following order:

1) Member of the Graduate Faculty (not on the Advisory Committee)
2) Member of the Advisory Committee
3) Advisor or second member of the Advisory Committee

Suggested time allotted to examination committee members:
Graduate Faculty (Round 1: 15 minutes, Round 2: 10 minutes)
Advisory Committee Member (Round 1: 15 minutes, Round 2: 10 minutes)
Advisor/Advisory Committee Member (Round 1: 15 minutes, Round 2: 10 minutes)

Deliberation (in camera) - 25 minutes

Look for "Area-specific thesis public lecture" below CONTENTS for area-specific guidance if it exists.

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