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

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