

Specific Milestones

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

Area-specific specific milestones PHD IO

Please note that this document was prepared as a guideline to help you plan your time. Every project will be a little bit different. Be sure to work out a timeline in consultation with your advisor.

1. PhD Qualifying Exam

Timing: See details in PhD qualifying exam documents; this is completed by May of the 1st year (or by the end of the second term in the case that a student begins the program out of timeline).

2. Form PhD thesis committee

Forms signed with members of advisory committee

Timing: No later than the 10th week of the 2nd semester

3. Initial PhD 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

4. Draft of PhD 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.

5. Approval of PhD 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

6. Send proposal to committee members

Timing: 2 weeks prior to proposal meeting

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7. 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 should aim to have their proposal approved in the 4th or 5th semester; they must have their thesis proposal approved by the end of the 6th Ph.D. semester, at the latest .

8. Changes to proposal based on committee meeting; Resubmission of entire proposal, or just of required changes to committee members. Timing: May be anywhere from 1 – 4 weeks, depending on nature of changes

9. 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 PhD Thesis Proposal form has been signed by the PhD Thesis Advisor and the PhD Thesis Committee member and submitted to the Graduate Secretary. Timing: Students should aim to have their proposal approved in the 4th or 5th semester; they must have their thesis proposal approved by the end of the 6th Ph.D. semester, at the latest.

10. Submit ethics forms to REB

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

11. 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

12. 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 which require making changes to the approved procedures, such as limited access to participants or failed equipment. In these cases, all changes must be approved by 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

13. Data entry/Data cleaning

Before you can analyze your data, you need allow some time for data entry and/or data screening and cleaning

14. Data Analysis

Conduct proposed analyses

15. Updates to committee

Often it's a good idea to update your committee members once you know what your results are. This

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can be a meeting, an email, a document - depending on what your committee prefers.

16. Draft of PhD 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. Timing: Deadlines to be worked out with advisor

17. Approval of PhD 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

18. 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: Committee members get at least 3 weeks with the document.

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

Timing: 1-4 weeks, depending on the nature of the changes

20. Approval of PhD thesis by committee

The PhD Thesis Advisory Committee indicates that the student is ready for a Final Oral Examination by each signing the Evaluation of Draft of Thesis (after revisions have been made) and the Summary of Advice to Student

21. Student will be contacted by the Graduate Secretary to sign the Summary of Advice to Student form acknowledging receipt of comments regarding their thesis.

Timing: This process must begin a minimum of 7 weeks before the proposed Final Oral Examination is to take place.

22. The Chair of the Department selects the Chair of the Final Oral Examination 23. Committee and identifies the remaining 4 members of the committee.

24. The date of the Final Oral Examination is established and the External Examiner and other members of the Committee are given copies of the final draft of the PhD Thesis at least 28 days before the date of the Final Oral Examination.

25. Defense of Thesis

Timing: Normally students are expected to complete their PhD thesis within two years following approval of the proposal.

26. 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.

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