

# THE MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE THESIS

## Thesis Preparation - *Directed Research or Pre-thesis Independent Study*

To qualify to do a Thesis, a student must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

### *2-year MArch Program*

Students in the 2-year Master of Architecture program are required to complete a Directed Research Studio (7-credits) or a Pre-thesis Independent Study in their third semester of the program in order to do a thesis. In addition, we recommend that you enroll in ARC 616 – Research Methods while doing Directed Research or Pre-Thesis Independent Study.

### *3.5-year MArch Program*

Students in the 3.5-year Master of Architecture program are required to complete a Pre-thesis Independent Study in their sixth semester of the program in order to do a thesis.

#### Requirements:

1. **Select a Topic and Thesis Committee:** A student begins by selecting a Thesis topic that complements his or her interests and abilities. The student next recruits one member of the graduate faculty with an appointment in the Architecture Department to be the Chairperson and at least one other faculty member with an appointment in the School of Architecture & Planning or any other Department to be a Member of the student's Thesis Committee. The student then works with his or her Thesis Committee, meeting once a week, to develop the thesis project.
2. **Thesis Abstract:** The student must submit to the Department of Architecture a Thesis Abstract by the sixth week of the semester.
3. **Midterm Review:** The student must organize a midterm review and invite their thesis committee as well as two faculty members.
4. **Thesis Proposal Review:** For the final review the prospective thesis student presents a Thesis Proposal that consists of the Thesis Abstract, together with preliminary research conducted during the pre-thesis semester, the first three sections of the Thesis Documentation (see next page—2.A.i, ii, &iii), and examples of past work that demonstrate his/her preparation and ability to successfully complete a thesis. The review jury should consist of the student's Thesis Committee and at least two additional faculty members. These additional faculty members serve as advisors to the Thesis Committee and do not have voting rights with respect to the Thesis Proposal. An evaluation will be made by the Thesis Committee regarding the viability of pursuing a thesis.
5. **Thesis Intention:** Students must submit a Thesis Intention form to the Department of Architecture one year prior to the thesis year.
6. **Application for Candidacy:** Students must complete an Application to Candidacy form and submit it to the Architecture Department the semester before officially commencing the Thesis.

## Thesis Requirements

A student must successfully pass a thesis proposal review before s/he can be permitted to do a Thesis. S/he must also maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

#### Requirements:

1. **Thesis Progress Reviews.** Thesis students will be reviewed at least twice in the course of their thesis semester. The jury will consist of the Thesis Committee and at least two additional faculty members. These additional faculty members serve as advisors to the Thesis Committee and do not have voting rights with respect to the progress of the Thesis. These reviews will occur in the 5th, 10<sup>th</sup> week of the

semester. At the second review (10th week) students will be evaluated by the Thesis Committee as follows:

- *PASS*: This indicates that the student has a well-articulated thesis and a project that is developed to a point where very few changes are needed. This student is ready to begin final production and may proceed without conditions toward the final public presentation.
- *PROVISIONAL PASS*: This indicates that the student has a well articulated thesis but still needs time to develop certain aspects of his/her project. The student is expected to represent the project in 2 weeks time for approval to participate in the final public presentation. Depending on the circumstances, students with Provisional Pass grades may request an extension or defer their final public presentation to the following semester.
- *FAIL*: This indicates that the student lacks a coherent thesis and will not be allowed to continue his/her Thesis. The student will be required to return to UB the following semester and take a final studio course in order to graduate.

2. **Thesis Documentation.** Each student's thesis work must be documented as a bound print volume (provided to the architecture department) and as an electronic submission (provided online to the Graduate School). Students should reference the Graduate School's Electronic Thesis & Dissertation (ETD) Submission guidelines (<http://www.grad.buffalo.edu/etd/>) for information about required parts of the documentation, its physical specifications and style manual options.

A. Content. The content of the thesis documentation must include:

- i. a discussion of the thesis issue/problem and its significance
- ii. a review of the salient literature and design precedents
- iii. a discussion of the methods/procedures of inquiry and analysis employed
- iv. a discussion of the relevant results/findings from that inquiry and analysis
- v. a presentation of the application of those results/findings to the thesis issue/problem
- vi. a concluding critical assessment of the strengths and limitations of the completed thesis

B. Deadlines.

- i. Items 1-3 in the list above are to be completed by the end of classes of the prethesis semester and submitted together with the Thesis Proposal to the Thesis Committee.
- ii. The completed thesis documentation must be electronically submitted to the Graduate School by the following deadlines:
  - February Conferral: Friday before first day of spring semester classes
  - June Conferral: Last day of spring semester final exams
  - September Conferral: Friday before first day of fall semester classes
- iii. Students must submit a final draft of their thesis documentation to their Thesis Committee for review and comment no later than one week prior to the deadlines listed above. The Thesis Committee chair will then communicate the revisions required for the committee to sign-off on the thesis documentation and the deadline by which these revisions need to be submitted to the thesis chair for subsequent review.
- iv. The required M-form signed by all members of the student's Thesis Committee and a receipt for having the committee-approved thesis documentation bound must be submitted to the architecture department two days before the aforementioned documentation submission deadlines.
- v. A student whose thesis documentation is submitted after these deadlines will have his or her degree conferral deferred until the next applicable conferral date.