

# Master's Thesis Proposal & Defense

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## Thesis Proposal:

When following a graduate program leading to the master's degree with thesis option, the student is expected to meet with faculty members in the department to discuss possible thesis topics and select a thesis advisor. Normally, the thesis advisor is from among the full-time professorial faculty of the department/program or from another department/program in the university. In interdisciplinary programs, the thesis advisor is from an appropriate program at the university.

The student is expected to select a research topic in consultation with the thesis advisor and prepare a thesis proposal by the end of the second regular term. The proposal must clearly state the problem addressed and the proposed contributions. The thesis proposal should also state the thesis objectives, scope of work with relevant literature, research methodology and expected results. A Thesis Committee is formed by the thesis advisor and the student in coordination with the chairperson/director of the unit according to the following conditions:

Thesis Committee should normally consist of at least three members of professorial rank chaired by the thesis advisor.

- In case a co-advisor is also a member of the thesis committee, then the thesis committee should consist of at least four members of professorial rank chaired by the thesis advisor.
- In departments/programs, normally at least two members of professorial rank of the Thesis Committee must be members of the student's department. The remaining member(s) can be from other departments at AUB or from an institution other than AUB.
- In case the thesis advisor is from another department at AUB, the chairperson will consult with the chairperson of the department to which the thesis advisor belongs.
- In interdisciplinary programs, the members of the Thesis Committee should be drawn from full-time faculty members at AUB. Normally at least two members of professorial rank must be from the departments involved in the program.

The Thesis Committee must be approved by the chairperson/director of the student's department/program. The student must submit the thesis proposal to the committee and secure its approval. The committee members will evaluate the proposal in consultation with the thesis advisor.

The student will submit the thesis proposal online at this link:

<https://epetitions.aub.edu.lb/ords/f?p=101:101>. The thesis advisor and all the members of the Thesis Committee will put their decisions online. The student should indicate if the proposed research involves human subject research or animal related research and seek approval/confirmation or exemption of the Institutional Review Board and/or Animal Care Committee.

Once approved, the Dean's Office forwards the thesis proposal with the names of the Thesis Committee members to the faculty/school Graduate Studies Committee for its approval.

Once accepted, the concerned parties will receive an email of this.

It is the student's responsibility, in coordination with the thesis advisor, to keep members of the Thesis Committee informed on the progress of her/his work and seek their input.

## Continuous Thesis Registration

Once a student registers for her/his thesis, s/he pays a thesis fee that allows her/ him to register up to three additional terms without paying. Although the additional registrations are paid for, the student must still register for the thesis on AUBsis each time. In addition, the student is expected to register consecutively without skipping any regular term. Not registering for the thesis without an approved Leave of Absence (hereafter referred to as an "unexcused absence") throughout subsequent terms will cause the student to forfeit the registration due her/him for each term of unexcused absence. Exceptions must be addressed through a petition for approval by the advisor, department chairperson, faculty/school Graduate Studies Committee, and the Graduate Council. The below table shows examples of how unexcused absences lead to payment for additional thesis registrations once the three additional terms are exhausted by registrations or unexcused absences.

Number of Absences <sup>1</sup>	1st Thesis term		3 Additional terms			Paying term 1
	Regular term 1	Regular term 2	Regular term 3	Regular term 4	Regular term 5	
1	Pay & Register	Unexcused Absence	Register & No Payment	Register & No Payment	Pay & Register	
2	Pay & Register	Unexcused Absence	Unexcused Absence	Register & No Payment	Pay & Register	
3	Pay & Register	Unexcused Absence	Unexcused Absence	Unexcused Absence	Pay & Register	

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## Thesis Format

An AUB-approved thesis manual is available on the university Libraries webpage. The manual provides the style guide for all theses prepared by AUB students, and application of its instructions is mandatory for all theses-dependent degrees. Theses not conforming to the publication style outlined in the thesis manual are not accepted by the university. Students are welcome to visit the Archives and Special Collections, Jafet Library, any time during the term.

For all matters not discussed in the Thesis Manual, theses must follow the form and style outlined in the latest edition of K.L. Turabian, *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University of Chicago Press), or any other style specified by the department or program, provided the style conforms to the Thesis Manual.

Students graduating in the Summer term must be registered during that term (see section below on Thesis Defense). Students who carry out thesis work during the Summer term are expected to register for the thesis. Not registering during the Summer term after having started thesis work should only take place if the student will not be using AUB facilities/services for research and will not be receiving thesis advising during that term.

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## Thesis Defense

A student is not allowed to defend her/his thesis unless s/he has passed the comprehensive examination. In order to defend the thesis, the student must be registered for the thesis in the session in which the student expects to graduate.

The thesis defense is open to the public and must be carried out no later than the dates specified on page 69.

The final draft of the thesis shall be submitted to each member of the Thesis Committee at least two weeks before the date of the thesis defense. The thesis defense shall be announced at least two weeks in advance. The total time allocated for the thesis defense should allow for answering all questions and should not normally exceed 120 minutes.

The thesis defense session is normally chaired by the thesis advisor, and the student will be notified of the final decision by the Thesis Committee immediately after completion of the Thesis Committee deliberations.

Pass (P) or Fail (F) is reported for the combined thesis and thesis defense. If Fail (F) is reported, the student may resubmit the thesis and defend it after a period of at least three months. Failure on the second attempt results in discontinuation of the graduate work. If the thesis work involves human subject research or animal related research, the Thesis Committee must forward to the department chair a copy of the approval/ confirmation or exemption letter of the Institutional Review Board and/or Animal Care Committee.

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## Deposit of the Project/Thesis in the Library

After passing the project/thesis defense examination, the student is required to deposit copies of the thesis in the library: The Jafet Memorial Library requires one hard copy of the master's project/thesis from students at all faculties. The student should also provide the relevant library with a soft copy of the thesis saved as a PDF (Portable Document Format) file. A library receipt must be delivered to the Office of the Registrar before the student is awarded the degree. The Registrar shall ensure that all names of students recommended to the Senate for award of the master's degree in the thesis option have submitted their thesis copy to the library. The student should sign a release form indicating whether or not the library is authorized to supply copies of the thesis/ project to other libraries or to individuals. The non-authorization option is valid for a period of three years only, after which copies of the project/thesis are supplied upon request.

Link to Thesis Deadlines: <https://www.aub.edu.lb/graduatecouncil/Pages/thesisdeadlines.aspx>