DEFENDING THE MS THESIS DURING COVID-19

- This MS Thesis Checklist is for students defending their thesis online during COVID-19. Defending online via Zoom may be new to you. Please see MS or PhD Defense - Zoom Tips to take steps for ensuring a successful defense.
- If you plan to defend your thesis this quarter, please contact your primary MS advisor, via email, for assistance.
- M.S. students are encouraged to thoroughly review the Thesis Guidelines for M.S. Students (detailed version of all the steps required). Some steps have changed due to reduced in-person presence on campus; please read below for updates.

1. PRE-GRADUATING QUARTER

☐ Identify a research advisor

☐ Enroll in 12 units of 299 with your research advisor via EASy

  - Students can conduct research in any Jacobs School of Eng. Dept: BENG, CSE, ECE, MAE NANO, SE.
  - If you obtained a research position outside of JSOE, such as SIO, PHYS, or BIO, please contact your primary MS advisor for assistance.
  - Make sure you have 12 units of 299 completed or in progress before your defense. Students can divide this up however they would like. Most students take 4 units of research for 3 quarters.

☐ Secure a committee of 3 tenured/tenure-track faculty members

  - This includes your Chair (as one of the members)
  - At least 2 of the committee members must be ECE faculty, one of which must be your Chair
  - If your Chair is NOT in ECE, then you MUST have an ECE co-chair, and find one additional member from ECE to complete your committee
  - You can take a look at the JSOE Faculty Profiles in order to track down potential faculty to conduct research with and/or serve on your committee.
  - Take a look at the Graduate Division Committee Membership Table to ensure that you are abiding by the membership rules.
2. **Graduating Quarter**

☐ Students will receive an email about submitting [ECE MS graduation paperwork](#). You will need to submit it by the deadline listed on the website. Please make sure that your Degree Audit Report (DARs) reflects the correct capstone requirement (Plan 1).

  - If the incorrect capstone plan is being reflected onto the audit, please contact your **primary ECE MS Advisor** so that your DARs can be modified accordingly.

☐ **By Friday of Week 2, the latest.** Email your 1) thesis committee members, 2) date of defense, and 3) title of defense to your **primary MS Advisor** so that they can input it onto the Thesis Committee form.

You are responsible for setting up the [Zoom meeting](#); please make sure you know how to use Zoom 1 week before your defense so you can troubleshoot as needed. Test with a friend or colleague. You may also contact your MS Advisor if you would like to schedule a room in the Jacobs Hall for your thesis defense.

☐ Schedule your **preliminary thesis appointment** with the Graduate Division via Zoom (appointment should be 2 weeks before defense). Make sure you have emailed your primary MS Advisor about your defense date and committee. Your primary MS Advisor will file this and get it approved before GD will see you for a preliminary appointment.

  - Upload your rough draft thesis (a draft that is 95% or more complete) to the Graduate Division website (they will explain where to upload it).

☐ You will not be submitting the Final Report Form (FRF) and therefore do not need to fill any form or gather any signatures. Your primary Advisor will complete this a few days before your thesis defense date.

☐ **Defend Thesis (Week 9-10).** Once you pass, your Chair will be asked for the result of your defense, prompting the MS Advisor to take care of the remaining paperwork.

☐ Your Final Report Form will be submitted online by your primary MS Advisor. You will be charged for the $25 thesis fee by the Cashier’s Office on your TritonLink account. Please monitor your billing account to pay the fee by the deadline. If you do not pay the fee by the deadline, you will be charged a late fee.

☐ Schedule your **final-thesis appointment** with the Graduate Division via Zoom. (The appointment should be within 1-2 weeks after defense but this needs to be before the last day of your quarter)

  - Upload your final draft thesis to the Graduate Division website (they will explain where to upload it).
3. **Frequently Asked Questions:**

1. **How is the thesis defense organized?**
   
a. The student defending the thesis is responsible for organizing the date and time that all committee members are available to defend. The student is also responsible for setting up the zoom video call and sharing the link with the committee.

2. **How long should the thesis defense be?**
   
a. Your thesis should be 2 hours total - 1 hour of you presenting and 1 hour of questions and feedback from your committee. Be sure to check in with your Chair about this; sometimes they may alter this structure, but for the most part it should be relatively the same.

3. **If I am planning on submitting my thesis which has been published as a paper, what do I need to do?**
   
a. Students should be referring to the [manual](#). There is a "Using Published Material" section – you should carefully review pages 42-47. Graduate Division (GD) will also discuss it with you during the preliminary appointment; students should still schedule appointments using the online calendar and GD will send Zoom links for the meetings.

4. **If I am planning on publishing a paper after submitting my thesis, what do I need to do?**
   
a. Students should be referring to the [manual](#). There is a "Using Published Material" section – you should carefully review pages 42-47. Graduate Division (GD) will also discuss it with you during the preliminary appointment; students should still schedule appointments with GD using the online calendar and GD will send Zoom links for the meetings.

5. **Can I find examples on thesis papers that have been submitted?**
   
a. Yes, please take a look at the [UCSD Library Database](#) to search for previously published thesis papers. Note that you must be connected to the [UCSD VPN](#) to access the page.

6. **I am planning on doing the MS Thesis. Should I still take the MS Comprehensive Exam?**
   
a. If you plan to do the thesis, we highly encourage you to still take the [ECE MS comprehensive exam](#) in the case you do not pursue the thesis. Many times students change their minds about pursuing the thesis and we’d rather you have taken the comprehensive exam when offered than to not have taken it at all and wanting to graduate. In the end, the decision is up to you. If you plan on doing the thesis, please email your primary MS Advisor by the end of your first year.

4. **MS Thesis Defense Sample Timeline:**

![MS Thesis Defense Sample Timeline](#)