

**PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE EXAMINATIONS
FOR THE GRADUATE PROGRAM OF MOLECULAR SCIENCE
IN THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
RYERSON UNIVERSITY**

May 2008

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GRADUATE PROGRAM OF MOLECULAR SCIENCE

Scheduling of Examinations

A thesis is ready for examination when a final draft has been read and approved by the student's supervisory committee. When a supervisor wishes to schedule an examination, s/he should **recommend to the Program Director** the appointment of a **Thesis Examining Committee**.

The **Program Director** shall inform the Dean regarding the composition of the Master's Thesis Examining Committee.

When the committee is appointed the **Supervisor will set the examination date** and will ensure that all the members on the committee are available before the recommendation is forwarded to the Program Director.

The **Program Director** will copy the **Program Office** with the '*Examination Recommendation & Scheduling Form*'. This form is available online from the Molecular Science Program website's FORMS page at:

www.ryerson.ca/graduate/programs/molecular_science/molecularscience.forms.html

The **student** is responsible for delivering a hard copy of the thesis to each of the examiners 3 weeks prior to the exam. The Chair's or the designator's copy can be delivered to the program office (1 Dundas West, 11th Floor) - please note only hard copy is acceptable.

Nomination of Examination Committee Members

At least six weeks before the date set for the examination, the student's **Supervisory Committee**, after consultation with the student, will **recommend to the Program Director** the appointment of a **Thesis Examining Committee**. The **Program Director** shall inform **the Dean** of his/her **recommendation** regarding the composition of the Master's Thesis Examining Committee.

Examination Committee

Required members of a Master's Thesis Examining Committee. The Program Director (or his designate) will chair the oral examination as a non-voting chair.

1. **Chair** (the Program Director or designate);
2. **Member** (Thesis Supervisor **and if applicable**, Co-supervisor);
3. **Member** (within the Molecular Science Program);
4. **Member** (within the Molecular Science Program/within the School of Graduate Studies)

Note: Where there are co-supervisors, one vote shall be shared by the two

Note: External examiners are not required for Master's Thesis Examinations. However, the Dean may appoint an expert professional in the field of the thesis to serve as an additional member (external examiner) of the Examining Committee.

Role of the Chair

1. The Chair is responsible for the proper conduct of the examination.
2. The examination is public, but the Chair has the authority to exclude persons whose conduct disturbs the examination.
3. The Chair then presides over the deliberations of the Examining committee but is a **non-voting member, except in the case of a tie.**

Quorum

1. A quorum is normally three voting members and must include the supervisor(s). If there are extenuating circumstances, the Dean may approve a quorum of 2 voting members plus the Chair.
2. Any member of the committee that cannot attend the defense must submit a written report to the Chair at least one week before the defense. The Chair will then appoint a delegate, who cannot be an existing member of the committee, to carry the absent member's report to the examination. No more than two members may be absent from the defense. The supervisor(s) must attend the defense. If any committee member is absent, and has not been replaced by a delegate, the examination may proceed only with the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies or his/her delegate. A delegate has the status of a committee member, and their vote substitutes for that of the absent member.

Submission of Thesis

Following the successful examination and completion of all corrections or revisions, the candidate will prepare at least two copies or equivalent of the approved Master's thesis and at least three copies of equivalent of the approved dissertation for submissions. The candidate will submit to the School of Graduate Studies these copies of the approved thesis or dissertation, along with verification in writing by the candidate's Supervisor and the Program Director, that all required corrections or revisions have been made. The School of Graduate Studies will supply information regarding binding. These copies ¹ will be disposed as follows:

Program – one hard copy (double-sided)

Ryerson Library – one hard copy (double-sided)

(Optional for Master's) National Library of Canada - One hard copy (single-sided) or an electronic copy (pdf).

The title page of the thesis ² will read as follows:

¹ **4.2 Number of Copies Required for the Master's Thesis** in the 'School of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures Handbook, 2008' pg. 58

² **6.9 Sample of Title Page** in the 'School of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures Handbook, 2008' pg. 62

(TITLE OF THE THESIS)

by

(Full name of the author, including
past degrees, location, date)

A thesis

presented to Ryerson University

in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master

in the Program of

Molecular Science

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, (year)

© (name of Author) (year)

If a student fails to submit the required copies of the final corrected thesis for binding to the School of Graduate Studies or the supervisor's verification is not received by the deadline³, the student will be registered in another term and will be responsible for paying the program fees for that term.

The Examination

1) Before the candidate enters:

- The Chair confirms that a quorum of the Examination Committee is present.
- The Chair confirms that each member of the Committee has sufficient knowledge of the thesis to form a judgment as to its acceptability.
- The Chair confirms that the candidate has completed all departmental coursework requirements.
- The Chair reminds the Committee that the examination covers both the thesis and the oral defense.

2) Presentation

- The Chair admits the candidate and invites the candidate to provide an oral presentation of the thesis using whatever aids are required to make an effective presentation. This presentation should be limited to no more than 20 minutes, with the focus being on the main contributions and conclusions of the work.

3) Questions (which follow the oral presentation)

- The Chair gives priority to questions from members of the committee. If there is an external examiner, the external examiner's questions are presented first followed by those of the committee, with those of the supervisor last.
- The Chair must ascertain that all of the questions from an absent committee member have been adequately presented by the delegate who may also pose any additional questions deemed necessary.
- The Chair should ensure that it is the candidate and not the supervisor or thesis committee member who answers questions. The Chair should not allow discussion between the committee members until after the candidate has withdrawn.

4) Deliberations

- Only the Examining Committee will be present during deliberations.
- If the external examiner is absent, the deliberations commence by having the Chair of the Committee read the external examiner's full report of the thesis.
- If the external examiner is present, there is no need for the examiner's full report to be read. It is left to the external examiner to refer to the written report.
- Acceptance of the thesis will be based on a vote by the committee.

5) Decisions

The decision of the examining committee shall be by vote and shall be based on the thesis and on the candidate's ability to defend it. The *Report of the Oral Examining*

³ note the School of Graduate Studies 'Significant Dates' found online at: www.ryerson.ca/graduate/dates/

Committee should be completed and signed by the members of the committee, one copy should immediately be given to the student, and a copy should be delivered to the School of Graduate Studies as soon as possible. The following decisions are open to the examining committee:

Oral Examination:

- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory

Written Thesis:

- Accept
Any minor revisions ranging from typographical errors to specified insertions or deletions that do not radically modify the development/argument of the paper shall be clearly specified in writing and the student's Supervisor shall ensure that they are made. When the Supervisor confirms that the changes have been made, the examination requirement has been met.
- Major Revision
Detailed reasons for referring the paper for major revision ranging from re-writing a large part of a chapter to including additional work will be supplied in writing by the Chair of the examining committee to the Dean, the Program Director and the candidate within one week following the oral examination. The examining committee must give final approval to the major revisions by reconvening the examination or by consultation. In the event of a decision to reconvene the examination, the Examination Committee must decide the approximate date for the reconvening of the examination. The time between the adjourned examination and the reconvened examination should be as short as circumstances will permit and in no case shall exceed one term. As soon as the Committee has determined the approximate date, the Program will advise the candidate of this in writing, with a copy to the department. At the reconvened examination, no new Committee members shall be added, except for necessary replacements. It is the obligation of the examiners to attend this examination.
- Fail
Detailed reasons for the decision will be supplied in writing by the Chair of the examining committee to the Dean, the Program Director, and the candidate within one week following the oral examination.

NOTES:

A copy of the original thesis shall be retained for the Committee's reference in the Program Office until the candidate is recommended for the degree.

Return of Material to The School of Graduate Studies

The Examination Committee Chair is responsible for seeing that supporting documentations: the completed *Report of the Oral Examining Committee* and *Faculty/Supervisor Verification for*

Corrections Completion forms are returned to the Molecular Science Program Office, School of Graduate Studies.

Recommendation for Governor-General's Gold Medal for Academic Excellence

The Chair of the Examining Committee must determine whether the Committee wishes to recommend the candidate for a Medal for Academic Excellence. The criteria for recommending the student for the award include:

- i) normally a minimum overall grade point average of at least 3.67 in course work;
- ii) the Examining Committee, or its equivalent in the case of research essays/research projects, considers the thesis to be of publishable quality;
- iii) Practicum work (where applicable) is categorized as outstanding by the practicum supervisor.

The Chair must record a recommendation from the Committee that the thesis/project is of publishable quality. This nomination will be forwarded to the Scholarship and Awards Committee for the program.