Master of Architecture Thesis Procedures   2017-2018

The UW Graduate School policy on thesis states, "the master's thesis should be evidence of the graduate student's ability to carry out independent investigation and to present the results in clear and systematic form." In preparing an MArch thesis the student demonstrates expertise in the field of architecture through a systematic, critical approach to architectural design. The Department of Architecture offers two separate but equivalent ways for students to undertake their thesis investigations: the studio option and the independent option. Students should choose the option that best achieves their goals and relates to their working methods.

Master's Thesis — Studio Option: The studio option for the master's thesis involves a student-selected architectural design project. Students work on their projects over two quarters, first in *Arch 595: Thesis Research and Preparation*, then in *Arch 700: Master's Thesis*. Students pursuing the thesis studio option work under the advisement of Department of Architecture faculty assigned to them in Arch 595 (one advisor) and Arch 700 (two advisors). As prerequisites for graduation, students present their final designs publicly at the end of autumn quarter and submit the thesis document to the Graduate School. The thesis document generally includes data generated in the research and preparation course, documentation of the thesis project, and summary conclusions.

Master's Thesis — Independent Option: The independent option for the master's thesis is intended for students who wish to pursue thesis projects that are best undertaken with an independent thesis committee. Reasons for selecting this option include the subject matter or research method suggesting direct collaboration with one or more members of the faculty, the project necessitating extensive travel, or requiring more time than the thesis studio option allows. The independent option provides students with an opportunity to undertake focused investigation – research or design – on an architectural topic of their choosing. Students pursuing this option work independently with a thesis committee consisting of at least two members of the Department of Architecture faculty: the faculty mentor and one or more additional faculty. One member of the thesis committee must also be a member of the graduate faculty of the university. (see Attachments B and C) Registration for *Arch 700: Master's Thesis* requires the preparation of a thesis proposal in *Arch 599: Thesis Preparation*, an independent study under the supervision of the faculty mentor. This proposal must be approved by all members of the thesis committee before the student may register for Arch 700. As prerequisites for graduation, students present the results of their thesis investigations publicly at the end of autumn quarter and submit the thesis document to the Graduate School. (More detailed guidelines for the independent option can be found in "Master of Architecture Independent Thesis Option Guidelines.")

Academic Credits: Both options involve 9 credits of *Arch 700: Master's Thesis*, preceded by 4 credits of preparatory research, for a total of 13 credits.

Choosing a Thesis Option

General Notes
- Both options include preparatory research and submission of a thesis proposal, which must be approved before the student can register for *Arch 700: Master's Thesis*.
- An independent option thesis can be either research-based or design-based.
- For a student to pursue the independent option, a faculty mentor must concur that the proposed thesis project is more suitable to that option than to the studio option.
- Although there are recommended limitations to the kinds of buildings that are undertaken in the studio option (see Attachment A) these are meant to be flexible enough to allow students to pursue their own goals. If students can justify variations to the recommended criteria, exceptions to building type, size, scope, and so on may be allowed.
- All Master of Architecture candidates must submit a thesis document for approval by the Graduate School in order to receive the degree.

Issues to consider
Process
- Studio option. In Arch 595 the student works with the course instructor to develop a clear conceptual position and thesis statement, a well-researched building program, and all relevant background analysis – including literature review, case studies, and site documentation. Toward the end of the Arch 595 course each student also develops an initial schematic design. The student then continues to refine the project and develop the schematic design independently over summer quarter. In the subsequent thesis studio, during autumn quarter, the student works in consultation with thesis studio faculty and invited guests during regular studio hours. The studio faculty arrange mid reviews, verify the students' readiness to present the final thesis project, work with the department to arrange final reviews, and approve the thesis document before the student submits it to the Graduate School
- Independent option. In Arch 599 the student works with the faculty mentor to develop a thesis proposal that includes a clearly articulated thesis statement supported by a literature review and exposition of a theoretical framework. In Arch 700, the methods for testing the thesis statement can utilize research or design; in either case, the findings inform the theoretical framework. Students arrange all meetings with the thesis committee, which is responsible for verifying student progress and readiness to present at the final review. Students present their work formally at a public defense arranged by the department and submit the thesis document, with committee approval, to the Graduate School.

Product
- Both thesis options involve two major products. The first is to develop a design and/or research-based project whose mode of presentation is in the form of drawings, models, and other graphic media presented in a public forum. The second is the preparation of a thesis document that presents the design and supporting research to the Graduate School. For the Studio option, the required documentation involves collation of data from *Arch 595: Thesis Research and Preparation*, photographic documentation of presentation materials, and summary conclusions. For the Independent option, the thesis document will include a problem statement, theoretical framework, review of the literature, research or design methods, documentation and analysis of findings (including design outcomes if applicable), and a concluding statement on how the findings inform the problem and the theoretical framework.

Faculty-student relationship
- Studio option. The *Arch 595: Thesis Research and Preparation* faculty and *Arch 700: Thesis Studio* faculty act as critics and advisors to the research and design process. Meetings are structured and on a pre-determined schedule.
- Independent option. Students seek out faculty with specific interests related to the subject of the thesis investigation to act as mentors. These faculty comprise the thesis committee and work with the student by mutual agreement at student-scheduled times appropriate to the project.

Evaluation
- Studio option. The thesis studio faculty determine whether the building design, public presentation, and thesis documentation meet departmental and university standards.
- Independent option. The thesis committee determines whether the research, public presentation, and thesis document meet departmental and university standards.

Procedure: Students use the Thesis Option Form to declare their choice of thesis option and proposed course of study late in the winter quarter of year two in the MArch program. Thesis preparation occurs during spring quarter, thesis during autumn quarter. Students must petition to undertake thesis outside of this schedule.

Studio Option
- Students electing the studio option on the Thesis Option Form submit a brief description of the design project they intend to pursue.
- Students who choose the studio option will be placed in Arch 595 with faculty appropriate to the project proposed. The final product for Arch 595 is a thesis proposal and preliminary design that must be approved by the Arch 595 faculty and thesis studio faculty, as well as the department's graduate program coordinator.
- Students continue design, presentation and final documentation of the project in Arch 700 during autumn quarter. Documents must be approved and signed by all thesis studio faculty before submission to the Graduate School.
- Students who do not present their projects in the autumn quarter must do so in the winter quarter under the guidance of a committee appointed by the department.

Independent Option
- Students electing the independent option on the Thesis Option Form submit a preliminary thesis statement for the proposed project, identify the areas of literature they intend to investigate in forming a theoretical framework, and specify whether they plan to carry out a research or design thesis. Students who chose the independent option must secure the signature of at least two committee members on the Thesis Option Form before submitting it to the department (see attached schedule). The Graduate Program Coordinator of the department helps to assure that faculty are not over-committed to thesis committees (no faculty member may mentor more than two theses per year, nor participate on more than 3 thesis supervisory committees).
- Students who are not able to secure the signature of an Architecture graduate faculty member by the submission deadline must then enroll in the thesis studio option.
- The faculty mentor acts as the principal advisor for Arch 599. The final product of Arch 599 is a fully-developed thesis proposal which must be signed by all thesis committee members and the department's Graduate Program Coordinator.
- Students prepare the thesis document while enrolled in Arch 700. All members of the thesis committee must sign the document before submission to the Graduate School.

Attachment A: The Independent Thesis Committee

1. The thesis committee is expected to give responsible advice, guidance and assistance to a graduate student working for an advanced degree at the University of Washington, and to evaluate the student's performance and assure that it meets the academic standards of the university.
2. Students electing to undertake an independent option for the master's thesis must seek out faculty who have expertise in the topic they intend to investigate. Accordingly, they must define a topic as a precursor to organizing a Thesis Committee.
3. The Thesis Committee must consist of two members of the faculty of the Department of Architecture. With the agreement of the Faculty Mentor, however, a third member can be added (who need not be on the Department faculty). Contributions of other university faculty and/or professionals to the thesis study who are not committee members should be appropriately recognized by acknowledging their contributions in the thesis presentation and document.
4. The chairperson of the Thesis Committee must be a voting member of the Department of Architecture faculty and a member of the University of Washington graduate faculty (see Attachment C)
5. The Faculty Mentor is preferably also the chairperson of the Thesis Committee. In cases where the Faculty Mentor is not a member of the graduate faculty, the second member of the committee must be on the Graduate Faculty and serves as the titular chair of the Thesis Committee.
6. Committee members representing the Department of Architecture must hold a departmental appointment during the proposed period of the thesis study. Those members who do not serve as chairperson may hold part-time or adjunct faculty positions.
7. Service on committees is at the discretion of individual faculty. However, no faculty member may act as Faculty Mentor on more than two thesis committees per year. Further, no faculty member may serve on more than three thesis committees per year (including committees on which the faculty member serves as Faculty Mentor). The Graduate Program Coordinator of the Department will help assure that faculty are not over-committed to service on thesis committees.
8. As a matter of courtesy, names and titles of all Thesis Committee members should appear in an acknowledgments section of the thesis document. To assure accuracy, review the proposed acknowledgement section with committee members prior to publication.

Attachment B: Department of Architecture Faculty

Faculty in **bold** are eligible to chair thesis committees, others on this list can serve as the primary faculty mentor as long as a second committee member listed in bold here agrees to act as the official chair (for signing the application to graduate and the final thesis document).

Faculty whose primary appointment is in the Department of Architecture

Alex T. Anderson	ARCH	Design; Representation; History and theory of modern architecture and decorative arts
Steve Badanes	ARCH	Sustainable building technology; Public art; Community based design/build
Ann Marie Borys	ARCH	Design; Architectural history and theory
Heather Burpee	ARCH	High Performance Design, Health Design, Research
Peter Cohan	ARCH	Design; Building technology; Scandinavian architecture
Rob Corser	ARCH	Collaborative design; Construction systems; Strategies for deployable and sustainable structures
Jennifer Dee	ARCH	Design; History and theory of architecture
Katrina Deines*****	ARCH	Design; History/theory; Local/rural/agricultural issues; International topics, especially Italy
Elizabeth Golden	ARCH	Design; Urban issues; Materials; Building technology
Kimo Griggs	ARCH	Design; Design Strategy; Digital design and fabrication technologies; Making; Materials
Dean Heerwagen	ARCH	Environmental controls (active & passive); Sustainable technologies
Judith Heerwagen[†]	ARCH	Biophilic design; Psychosocial space
Nicole Huber	ARCH	Urban restructuring; Urban representation using photography, film and digital media; Metaphor in architectural and urbanistic discourse
Ann Huppert	ARCH	History and theory of architecture and urbanism; Representation; Italian Architecture
Robert Hutchison[†]	ARCH	Design; Urban Issues; Housing & Public Space; Narrative & Representation; Architectural installations
Louisa Iarocci	ARCH	History and Theory; Utilitarian architecture; Post-Industrial landscapes; Visual culture; Gender
Mehlika Inanici	ARCH	Computational lighting design and analysis; Daylighting; Building performance simulation; Performance based design workflows
Brian Johnson	ARCH	Computing in architectural design; 3D modeling and rendering; Web-based collaboration and communication
Susan Jones[†]	ARCH	Design; Conceptual and Tectonic Ideas of Making Space
Joel Loveland*	ARCH	Sustainability; Daylighting; Energy conservation; Architecture of the Landscape; Design; Research
Brian McLaren	ARCH	History and theory of architecture and urbanism; Modernism; Fascism; Postcolonial studies; Islamic architecture; Italy, Africa and the Middle East
Chris Meek	ARCH	Design; Daylighting; Electric lighting; Energy conservation; Sustainability; Existing building performance; Energy modeling.
Kathryn Rogers Merlino	ARCH	Design; Vernacular and Domestic Architecture; American/European architectural history
David Miller	ARCH	Design; Design development
Galen Minah	ARCH	Design Process; Design; Professional practice; Color theory; Color in architecture and urban design
Richard Mohler	ARCH	Architectural and Urban Design; Land Use, Housing, Transportation and Public Open Space; Advocacy and Civic Engagement

Robert Mugerauer	ARCH	Sustainability; Impact of information technology; Values, social and cultural factors in design and planning; Theory and current research methods
Jim Nicholls	ARCH	Furniture design; Public art; Tectonics; Design-build
Jeffrey Ochsner	ARCH	History; Preservation design; Urban design; Monuments and memorials; Northwest architecture; Arts and Crafts
Ken Oshima	ARCH	Design; History; Japanese/Asian architecture & urbanism
Robert Peña	ARCH	Design; Ecological design; High performance buildings
Vikramaditya Prakash	ARCH	Cultural theory; Non-Western, Asian, Indian architecture; Postcolonial studies; Le Corbusier; Modernism; Fashion and architecture
Gundula Proksch	ARCH	Design; Architectural representation; Urban agriculture, Landscape architecture, Urbanism, Urban landscapes, Designing with living systems
Michael Pyatok*	ARCH	Design; Affordable housing for lower income communities - urban and suburban regions
Kate Simonen	ARCH	Low carbon construction; Structures; Performance based design; Mass timber; Resilience
Tyler Sprague	ARCH	Structures; Architectural History; materials
David Strauss[†]	ARCH	Theory of public space; Design; Building and renovation

Faculty who hold a JOINT appointment in the Department of Architecture, but whose primary appointment is in a department other than Architecture

Meredith Clausen	ARTH	History; Contemporary architecture; Ethics; Criticism; Architecture and urbanism in Paris
Anne Vernez-Moudon*	URBDP	Urban design; City form and neighborhood studies for active travel and health

Faculty who hold an ADJUNCT appointment in the Department of Architecture, but whose primary appointment is in a department other than Architecture

Daniel Abramson	URBDP	Urban design; Socio-spatial inquiry; Cross-cultural dimensions of design
Manish Chalana	URBDP	Historic preservation planning; International planning and development; and Urban policy
Julie Johnson	L ARCH	Community design; Urban parks; Children's outdoor learning and play environments.
Nancy Rottle	L ARCH	Ecological health; Culturally meaningful design
Thaisa Way	L ARCH	Landscape architecture design; History of landscape architecture

* Emeritus faculty who are currently active in the department
[†] Affiliate faculty