

### M.A. Non-Thesis Option

Students pursuing any of the M.A. curricula (general or specialized) may choose not to write a thesis. Students are urged to begin thinking about their research topic as they progress through their coursework. Students might choose the non-thesis option if they wish to consider the M.A. their terminal degree, but we encourage those students wishing to pursue the Ph.D. degree to follow the full thesis option.

Students choosing the non-thesis option should know the following:

1. They are expected to take 33 hours of coursework (rather than the 27 hours required under the thesis option). All other course requirements are the same as under the thesis option. This is a College requirement and cannot be waived by the Department.
2. The non-thesis research paper should be a research paper presenting original research, extended and enhanced to meet the standards of a conference paper presentation. These standards include a statement of the problem, questions or hypotheses raised by the problem, and original research on that problem and relevant questions. Conference papers are normally 20 to 40 pages in length and should address an important problem, reflect knowledge of the relevant literature as it pertains to the questions, and provide preliminary answers based on competent research to the questions raised by the problem.
3. The paper must be approved by a committee composed of the advisor and one additional faculty member. The committee is to be approved by the departmental Director of Graduate Studies.