

ESM M.S. or MEM Student Roadmap / Checklist

Disclaimer: This document was compiled by a successful graduate of ESM, and was provided for guidance only for future ESM students. Items are in general, not exact, order of completion. Links were accurate as of publication. Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) information is provided as a courtesy only. Contact OGS for current information and updates.

1. Apply to the program.
 - a. Obtain a graduate application package from the OGS:
http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/ogs_forms.php.
 - b. For further helpful information, visit the ESM website, <http://www.esr.pdx.edu> which also has application forms and a useful FAQ in the “Information for Applicants” section.
 - c. Contact potential advisors.
 - d. Submit the university application and the department application separately, as described in the application package.

2. Contact your faculty advisor assigned to you in your acceptance letter as soon as possible to plan your program. Faculty advisors that are assigned initially may either be the person with whom you ultimately work, or they may be a “gateway” advisor who helps you get oriented and find a final advisor in the program.

3. Attend the ESM department graduate orientation, typically at beginning of the fall term. Check the ESM website for details. The orientation may be scheduled prior to the start of classes, so check with the department well before the start of the term.

4. Determine all degree requirements concerning core courses, seminars, presentations, and defenses:
 - a. Refer to ESM website FAQ and “Information for Applicants”.
 - b. Choose core courses from those listed on the ESM website, in consultation with your faculty advisor. Please note that the listings are subject to change, and that it is also possible to petition for courses that are not on the listings to be included.
 - c. Choose an area of concentration and additional courses in consultation with your faculty advisor.
 - d. Complete a program of study indicating your planned courses. Obtain signatures from your adviser, the department chair, and the
 - e. Review the OGS Summary of Procedures for Master’s Degrees available on the OGS website, <http://gsr.pdx.edu>.
 - f. Note that graduate students may be required to present a poster at the annual research symposium. Consult with your adviser on requirements, and obtain poster information from the ESM department.

5. Construct a calendar of courses and work to be performed during your degree, including target dates for any conditions of acceptance to be removed, committee formation and defenses (note that while the department does not require a proposal defense, some individual advisors do). Consult the *Bulletin* from your acceptance year, the OGS website, and your faculty advisor to ensure the following:
 - a. That you register for the required number of units each term, depending on your program and whether or not you hold a graduate assistant position

- b. That you register for all required terms (you may be required to register for summer units in years when you are conducting research)
- c. That you form your committee and hold committee meetings within appropriate timeframes

6. Begin a literature search in your area of research interests and begin coursework.

7. Determine your thesis (M.S.) or project (MEM) emphasis and questions. For the M.S., consult with your faculty advisor on developing hypotheses and methods. For the MEM, consult with your advisor to identify an outside cooperator (community entity) with a project need and consult with the outside cooperator (community entity) on specifics of the project.

- a. If your research will involve human subjects (e.g., surveying opinions), draft your preliminary human subjects approval form as early as possible, because this process can take significant time.
- b. Review the human subjects approval requirements as early as possible: http://www.rsp.pdx.edu/compliance_human.php.

8. Complete course requirements.

- a. M.S. students: Register for ESR 503 thesis units using the “by arrangement” forms available in the ESM office. Consult with your adviser and the OGS regarding the number of units required.
- b. MEM students: Register for ESR 509 practicum (1 unit) in your first quarter, and ESR 506 project units in subsequent quarters to complete your project, units using the “by arrangement” forms available in the ESM office. Consult with your adviser and the OGS regarding the number of units required.

9. Form your oral examination committee. For M.S. students, this requires form GO-16M from the OGS.

- a. For MEM students, your outside coordinator (community entity) and two faculty members must agree to serve on your committee, but the OGS does not need to approve the committee.
- b. For M.S. students, your committee must be approved by the OGS. Approval can take 6 weeks or more, so plan accordingly.
 - Review the OGS requirements for committee members (e.g., appropriate department affiliation). If you must choose a committee member who does not meet all requirements but has specific expertise in your research area, you will need to obtain approval from the ESM department. Consult your faculty advisor on obtaining approval and justifying your choice, get approvals in writing, and submit a copy of any approvals together with the GO-16M form.
 - If you include a member of another institution (non PSU) on your committee, you must submit a CV for the proposed committee member with the GO-16M.
- c. If human subjects approval is required, you must submit a draft of the human subjects approval that will be submitted to the Human Subjects Research Review Committee together with your GO-16M.

10. Develop your research, and if required, write a proposal.

- a. Select your research site or sites, or in the case of human subjects, define your sample.
- b. Identify any research partners (e.g., granting agencies, other universities) in consultation with your faculty advisor.
- c. Develop sampling, test, or survey methods.
- d. Whether or not you need to write a proposal depends on your project. Consult with your faculty advisor regarding the need for a proposal and any associated reviews or meetings. For MEM students, consult with your faculty advisor and outside cooperator (community entity) regarding specifics.



11. Write your thesis or project.

- a. For M.S. students, OGS requirements are rigorous. Obtain a copy of the Thesis Guidelines before beginning serious work:
http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/ogs_thesis.php. Setting up the correct margins and font size before beginning the document will save time later.
- b. For M.S. students, when you have finished your thesis, take the OGS advice to have your thesis audited before you make the final copies. The OGS representative will measure your margins and review every page of your document for font size and formatting, and will alert you to any potential problems. Two-sided copies are OK for the audit, even though the final document must be printed single-sided.
- c. For MEM students, it is necessary that your project outcome and report satisfy your outside cooperator's (community entity's) needs as well as the faculty members on your committee. Make sure that you have a clear understanding of expectations for your final project and report from all your committee members. The diverse nature of MEM projects results in final products that vary from implemented, on-the-ground projects to in-depth reports. However, each student is required to prepare a report describing their project in detail. Your report must include, at a minimum, the following:
 - Cover page containing the project title, your name, and the date
 - An abstract
 - A problem statement or subject of the project
 - Background and importance of the issue
 - Methodology
 - Summary of results
 - Description of interaction with community partner
 - Appropriate attachments showing the final products of your work
 - Your report, excluding the attached final products, is expected to be at least 20 pages in length. Provide the report in the following formats: 1) Three copies of the project report, and 2) a PDF copy of the report.



12. Defend your thesis (M.S. students) / Present your project (MEM students).

- a. Prepare a draft of the thesis / project report and submit to your committee a minimum of two weeks before the defense. Your advisor should have an opportunity to review a draft and you should incorporate their comments before sending out to the full committee. The draft that you submit to your advisor and committee should be the best product that you can produce—no typos, complete bibliography, figures, abstract, table of contents, title page, etc.

- b. For MEM students, consult your committee for guidelines. Your project does not have to conform to OGS guidelines.
- c. For M.S. students, format the draft, if you have not done so already, according to the OGS thesis guidelines: http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/ogs_thesis.php. In the event that the committee approves the thesis at the defense, you will have minimal work to prepare the final document.
- d. For M.S. students, prepare a copy of the thesis approval page (described in the OGS dissertation guidelines) BEFORE the defense. Take this approval page to the OGS BEFORE making copies for signature at the defense. Have the OGS M.S. representative review this approval page IN PERSON to ensure that the title of the degree is correct, as well as all formatting. Correct any problems and take the corrected copy back to the OGS M.S. representative BEFORE making copies for signature at the defense. Obtain the correct title of your degree directly from the OGS, NOT from Banweb or any other source. When the approval page is correct according to the OGS, have four copies made on dissertation bond at one of the approved copy shops listed in the dissertation guidelines. In the event that your committee approves your thesis at the defense, you will have all copies ready for signature. (MEM project reports do not contain an approval page.)
- e. Schedule a conference room as noted earlier. Thesis defenses and project presentations are open to the public, so schedule a space that holds ~20 or so.
- f. Arrange refreshments if desired.
- g. Prepare a flier announcing the date, location, and topic of your thesis or project and provide an electronic and hard copy to the ESM office. The ESM office will send an email announcement of the thesis defense or project presentation to faculty and students and post the announcement outside the office. Post several copies in appropriate locations on campus.
- h. For M.S. students, check with the ESM department for formal announcement guidelines.
- i. For M.S. students, at the thesis defense, have four copies of the thesis approval page printed on dissertation bond to the defense, and the GO-17M. In the event that the committee approves the thesis, all signatures can be obtained at the defense.
- j. For MEM students, bring the GO-17M to your project presentation.
- k. When the defense or presentation is complete, take down the fliers you posted. It is also a nice touch to send thank you notes/emails to your committee.
- l. Provide final copies to the department. For MEM students, provide a digital copy in PDF format as noted above, along with any hard copies requested. For M.S. students, the OGS will provide the required hard copies. Provide a PDF file of your thesis to the ESM department.



13. Graduate!

- a. Submit a GO-12 form with your program approval by the first week of the term of graduation (verify the deadlines with the OGS).
- b. Submit the application for graduation “Application for Awarding of Master's or Doctoral Degree” by the deadline (the form and the deadline are available at the OGS website).
- c. Verify other requirements with your faculty advisor, the OGS, and the ESM department.

Resources and Information

- Understanding roles:
 - As an undergraduate, you likely worked most with your department. As a graduate student, you now will coordinate with the OGS in addition to your department.
 - The university and the ESM department must both accept you in order for you to participate in the ESM program.
 - The graduate student is responsible for identifying an advisor in the ESM department .
 - Your advisor is responsible for approving any course substitutions, and you may need to pursue other signatures as well. Typically, program coursework and substitutions must eventually be approved by the OGS as well. For students dealing with human subjects, you may wish to consult with your advisor regarding statistics offered by the Psychology, USP, or other departments, which emphasize statistical methods for social sciences and can broaden your faculty contacts and your knowledge base.
 - For M.S. students, your advisor and the ESM department officially suggest committee members, which must be approved by the OGS. This committee will approve your prospectus and your thesis. However, you, as the student, are responsible for developing relationships with faculty who may serve on your committee, and for collaborating with your advisor on committee member selection.
- Changing your program:
 - If you are already admitted to a graduate program and wish to change your program, you may need to apply to the university and the department again. For example, if you are enrolled in the M.S. program and wish to change to the Ph.D. program, you must submit a new application to the university, as well as to the department. Supporting documents such as transcripts that are already on file will not be requested again. (This information is advisory only—consult with the graduate office for specifics. MEM students wishing to change to the M.S. program may not need to apply again.)
 - Note that any graduate units taken at PSU may be eligible to be applied to any graduate degree if you change your program, as long as those units have not been applied toward any other awarded graduate degrees. For example, courses taken at the 500 level can be used toward a Ph.D. as long as they have not already been applied toward an awarded M.S. or MEM.
- Changing advisors:
 - If necessary, you may request a change of faculty advisor by consulting with the ESM department chair.
 - Before requesting a change, if you are experiencing difficulty, you may wish to consult the Ombuds office at <http://www.ombuds.pdx.edu>, or the Student Health and Counseling Center at <http://www.shac.pdx.edu>, for assistance. These resources can provide confidential information, mediation, stress management counseling, and more.
- Course substitutions:
 - Consult your advisor regarding any course substitutions you need to make (if, for example, a required course is not offered the term you need it).
 - Get all substitutions in writing. Check with the ESM office and the OGS for required forms.

- Try to enjoy yourself.
 - Although this is a challenging process, it is also exciting and rewarding. Develop relationships, learn to work independently, but seek assistance and support when you need it, and do your part to ensure that tasks are completed properly and on time, and you should have a wonderful experience with your program.