

## Thesis Proposal Approval Guidelines

### Goal:

Approval of the thesis proposal by the thesis committee is mandatory in the School of Nursing Graduate Program. The process for the thesis proposal approval allows students to demonstrate mastery and ownership of the thesis topic, contribution to nursing knowledge as well as relevance, rigour and feasibility of the proposed methodology based on the level of graduate studies (PhD versus MScN). There is no credit allocation for the thesis proposal approval.

### Timeline:

The approval process takes place:

a) For the Masters':

- By the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> term or at the latest by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> term for the full time MScN; and
- By the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> term for the part-time MScN;

b) For the PhD: -

- By the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> term or at the latest by the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> term, and after successful completion of the comprehensive examination (by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> term).

### Content of the thesis proposal:

The thesis proposal consists of the following elements: 1) an introduction including the goal, the objectives, the research questions, a clear statement of the problem, and the potential contribution to the advancement of nursing knowledge; 2) a thorough review of the literature; 3) a theoretical framework; 4) the methodology and rationale including the proposed study design, eligibility criteria, procedures, and data analysis and; 5) a list of references and appendices including the required documents, if relevant, for a research ethics board application. For planning a thesis by article(s), the proposal methodology can be written as a series of methodologies.

### Role of the thesis committee members:

- The thesis committee members provide support and guidance during the student's planning and development process of the thesis proposal.
- The student's thesis committee also acts as the School of Nursing evaluation body responsible for approving the thesis proposal.

### Procedure:\*

- The thesis supervisor(s) establishes the readiness of the student to present the written thesis proposal for approval.
- Once the proposal is completed, the student sends copies to each member of the thesis committee.
- The members of the committee have up to 4 weeks to read and evaluate the written proposal. The evaluation pertains to the quality of the elements presented by the student to demonstrate understanding of the topic and its contribution to nursing knowledge as well as relevance, rigour

and feasibility of the proposed methodology and adequacy based on the level of graduate studies (PhD or MScN).

- The thesis supervisor and the student meet with the committee. The purpose of the meeting is to give the student an opportunity to present their search proposal and to seek approval of this proposal (with or without modifications).
- The committee will make one of the three following potential decisions regarding the approval of the proposed thesis.
  - 1) Proposal accepted (minors changes may be suggested);
  - 2) Approved in principle but requested revisions must be submitted to the Thesis Committee members for final approval;
  - 3) Not acceptable as is (the student must revise, resubmit and complete the thesis proposal approval process over again). The student may only complete the thesis approval process one more time after receiving a “not acceptable” rating.
- At the end of the process, the student and the thesis committee members must sign the **Thesis Proposal Approval form**. Required changes will be noted or appended on this form. The Thesis Proposal Approval form with all required signatures is submitted for approval via a service request under "*Thesis proposal*" in uoZone.

\*There is some variance to the approval process. Some committees may have the student present the proposal orally before the proposal is written to get approval for the plan. Some committees, after being given time to examine the proposal, may request an informal ‘proposal defence’ where they can discuss their feedback as a committee with the student. For thesis by article(s), some committees may approve the Part I of the proposal and then Part II of the proposal (often after Part I results can inform the development of Part II of the proposal).

**For more information:**

[Guidelines for Thesis Process](#)

[Monograph Thesis and Thesis by Article\(s\) - Regulations](#)