REQUIREMENTS FOR THE M.S. DEGREE

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Amherst

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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE M.S. DEGREE IN KINESIOLOGY

I. Admission

Faculty in the Department of Kinesiology have varied research interests. A prospective student MUST secure permission to work with a specific advisor PRIOR to acceptance into the program. Graduate advisors are listed in 4 general areas, although many professors work in more than one:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physiology</th>
<th>Physical Activity</th>
<th>Biomechanics</th>
<th>Movement Neuroscience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muscle, Molecular &amp; Cardiovascular Physiology, Energy Metabolism</td>
<td>Fitness, Wellness, Health, Physical Activity</td>
<td>Biomechanics</td>
<td>Motor Control, Neuroscience</td>
</tr>
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Sponsorship / Funding

Sponsorship indicates a commitment on the part of a faculty member to serve as academic advisor, and to provide research training and financial support to a student. Department policy is to accept only those students who can be supported through assistantships for teaching (TA) and/or research (RA). Graduate Assistantships (TA or RA) include a stipend during each semester, health insurance and a waiver of tuition and most fees. Normally, a student making satisfactory progress towards their M.S. degree would be supported with funding for two years. Although some funding is available for the summer term, graduate assistantships are not guaranteed for the summer term. Prior to admission, a prospective student should correspond (phone or e-mail) with a potential faculty advisor concerning possible sponsorship for the M.S. If prospective students inquire before submitting an application to the Graduate School, they should include a resume, a summary of previous relevant course work, research experience, and transcripts (if available). A face-to-face meeting with a prospective faculty advisor (on campus and/or meeting at a conference or other off campus site) is strongly encouraged.

Academic Deficiencies

The Department of Kinesiology requires Master’s students to be well rounded in basic areas within the field. If not present in their background preparation prior to admission, the student is required to address the following Academic Deficiencies within the M.S. program. Note that there are several UMass Kinesiology classes that can fulfill each of these deficiencies; the student and their advisor will decide which class is appropriate. When the deficiency is addressed with a 500 or 600 level class, the credits can be used towards the M.S. degree provided a grade of B or better is attained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptable UMass courses (Pick one in each deficient area)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Human Anatomy &amp; Physiology KIN 270, 272 [class(es) most appropriate for student's area]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Exercise Physiology KIN 470, 570, 585, 670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Biomechanics KIN 430, 530, 535, 597J</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Movement Neuroscience KIN 460, 560, 565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Physical Activity and Health KIN 440, 597G, 697PA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In some **rare** cases, academic deficiencies can instead be fulfilled through an independent study with a faculty member who teaches in that area. If there is doubt concerning a class taken at another school, a faculty member who teaches in the area will review the course syllabus to decide whether the class content meets requirements for competency.

**M.S. Thesis**
The M.S. thesis program as UMass consists of 32 total credits. The 32 credits is composed of 23 course work and 9 thesis research credit hours [KIN 698A Thesis Proposal (3 credits) and KIN 699 Master’s Thesis (6 credits)]. The advisor (chair) and at least 2 other UMass graduate faculty members comprise the thesis committee. A proposal presentation to the thesis committee is required. Upon completion of the thesis document, the student must successfully complete an oral defense of their thesis research.

**II. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER’S PROGRAM (32 total credits)**

**Overview of the requirements for M.S. Thesis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements (see text following table for more details)</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KIN 600</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIN 891 (Grad Seminar)</td>
<td>1 (x4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIN 500 level course #1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIN 500 level course #2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIN 500 – 800 level course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognate course outside of department</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other KIN 500 – 800 credit or 2nd cognate course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIN 698A (Thesis Proposal)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIN 699 (Thesis)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total credit hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Transfer credits (6 credits maximum). Some requirements may be satisfied by graduate courses that are transferred from earlier educational experiences. These graduate courses, taken at UMass or another institution, must not have been required for graduation from any other graduate or undergraduate program. All potential transfer credits must be approved by the Graduate Program Director (GPD) during the first year of the program. These credits may not be used to satisfy the 600-800 course level requirement.

**Note:** Required formal courses (KIN 500-800) should be 3 (or higher) credit courses. Journal club or independent study courses DO NOT count as formal course work.

**Progress evaluation:** At the beginning of each calendar year (January) the M.S. student will submit an Annual Progress Report to their advisor. The M.S. advisor will schedule a meeting with the student to review and evaluate the report, make suggestions for improvement, and evaluate progress toward the M.S. degree as Satisfactory, Marginal, or Unsatisfactory. The Annual Progress Report will then be sent to the GPD by the student’s advisor and will become a permanent record in the student’s folder.
In the event that an advisor feels that a student is making unsatisfactory progress towards their degree, the advisor will first speak with the student. Following that meeting, the advisor will fill out an “unsatisfactory progress report form.” On the form, the advisor will indicate what areas the student is not making progress in and will propose what corrective actions can be taken. This will be sent to the GPD and the student. The student, GPD, and advisor will then have a formal meeting to discuss what corrective actions can be taken and to determine a timeline for those actions to be completed. Once agreed upon, the student, advisor, and GPD will sign off on the action plan. At the end of the timeline, the student's progress will be reassessed and at that point, if they are still making unsatisfactory progress, they may be asked to leave the program.

III. SUGGESTED TIMELINE FOR THE M.S. PROGRAM

- By the end of the 2nd semester of 1st year, the student should develop a thesis topic in conjunction with their advisor, and begin to prepare a thesis proposal. The student, in consultation with their advisor, should identify the membership of their thesis committee. Potential committee members should be consulted concerning their interest and availability to serve. The committee should be formed before the thesis proposal; the student’s advisor should send an e-mail to the GPD with the names, affiliations and role (e.g. Chair, two Members) of the proposed committee. The GPD will submit the proposed committee to the Graduate School for approval.
- The student should register for thesis proposal credits (KIN 698A, 3 credits), normally in year 2. As part of the proposal preparation, an Informed Consent Document must be written and approved by the University-level Institutional Review Board, as appropriate. Be aware that this approval process may take considerable time (e.g., 3 to 6 weeks).
- The proposal must include Chapter I (Introduction), Chapter II (Literature Review), and Chapter III (Methods).
- Before the student commences work on the thesis, the proposal must be presented and approved by the thesis committee. The thesis proposal will be presented in an open forum where all graduate students and faculty from the department are invited to attend. At least two weeks prior to the proposal date, copies of the proposal document should be presented to the thesis committee. At the same time, a copy of the proposal document, a short abstract, and announcement flyer will be uploaded to Box.
- Except for preliminary pilot data, data collection (or secondary data collection with approval by committee) for the thesis should not begin until the thesis committee has approved the thesis proposal, unless approved by the advisor. Throughout the period when the data are being collected and analyzed, the student should keep the thesis committee informed of progress.
- When student is ready to propose, the student’s advisor needs to send an email notifying the GPD.
- Thesis credits (KIN699, 6 credits) should be taken at the appropriate time in consultation with the student’s advisor, and may be spread over two semesters.
- The final thesis will be presented in an open forum where all graduate students and faculty from the department are invited to attend. At least two weeks prior to the
proposal date, copies of the thesis document should be presented to the thesis committee.

• When student is ready to defend, the student’s advisor needs to send an email notifying the GPD.
• The student is required to upload a copy of the thesis proposal to Box two weeks prior to their defense.

**M.S degree checklist**

**Thesis Committee**

- * Advisor sends email to GPD appointing thesis committee (cc: Graduate Program Assistant)
- Graduate Program Assistant sends signed memo to Graduate School announcing thesis committee

**Thesis Proposal**

- * Advisor sends email to GPD that student is ready to propose at least 2 weeks before proposal date (cc: Graduate Program Assistant)
- Graduate Program Assistant sends student Room Reservation Form
- Student returns Room Reservation Form – Thesis proposal scheduled
- Flyer posted, emailed, and uploaded to Box as soon as the room has been reserved and the title of proposal is known
- Student uploads copy of proposal to Box
- * Advisor sends email to GPD that the proposal has been passed and that all edits to the proposal have been made (cc: Graduate Program Assistant)
- Student uploads final version of proposal to Box

**Thesis Defense**

*NOTE: It is department policy that students should defend their thesis at least 4 weeks before the final Graduate School deadline of when the Degree Eligibility Form is due. This form cannot be signed by GPD and Department Chair until defense has been passed, all corrections have been made to the thesis document and final version uploaded to ScholarWorks.*

- * Advisor sends email to GPD that the student is ready to defend at least 2 weeks prior to defense date (cc: Graduate Program Assistant)
- Graduate Program Assistant sends student Room Reservation Form (usually takes 1 – 2 weeks to process the request)
- Student returns Room Reservation Form – Thesis defense scheduled
- Flyer posted, emailed, and uploaded to Box as soon as the room has been reserved and the title of the thesis is known
- Student uploads copy of thesis to Box
• * Advisor sends email to GPD that the thesis defense has been passed and that all edits/revisions have been made (cc: Graduate Program Assistant)
• Graduate Program Assistant sends a signed memo to Graduate School that M.S. thesis defense was passed
• Student uploads final version of thesis to Box

Preparing for Graduation

• Student obtains signatures from thesis committee and turns in signed copy of thesis signature page to Graduate Program Assistant
• Graduate Program Assistant sends original signature page to Graduate School
• Student uploads thesis to ScholarWorks
• Student turns in completed MS Degree Checklist and unofficial transcripts to Graduate Program Assistant at least 2 weeks prior to Graduate School Deadline
• GPD conducts degree audit at least two weeks prior to graduation deadline
• Student turns in completed Master's Degree Eligibility Form for Thesis Students with signatures from Department Chair and GPD at least 1 week prior to graduation deadline.
  o NOTE: GPD and Department Chair cannot complete this form until final version of thesis is uploaded to ScholarWorks
• Student turns in binding receipt for thesis (2 copies required – advisor approved version) at least 1 week prior to Graduate School Deadline

* Indicates items that your advisor needs to do.

Graduate School Requirements

In addition to Kinesiology requirements, students must satisfy all Graduate School requirements. The University confers degrees three times a year (February, May and September) and sponsors one formal graduation ceremony held in late May. To apply for a February degree, all paperwork must be submitted to the Graduate School by mid-December; for a May degree, by mid-March; for a September degree, by the end of August. September degree recipients of a preceding year, February degree recipients, and May degree applicants are eligible to participate in the May graduation ceremony. [Contact the Graduate Student Service Center at the Graduate School for exact dates.] Other helpful resources are the Graduate School Handbook and Guidelines for Master’s Thesis and Doctoral Dissertations, both found online at the Graduate School web site http://www.umass.edu/gradschool.

For the Graduate School, all candidates must satisfy the following requirements:
• Complete all course work
• Submit Master’s Degree Eligibility Form signed by the student, the Graduate Program Director, and the Department Chair
• Thesis Committee appointed by the Graduate Dean (recommended by GPD)
• Thesis Proposal received by Graduate School
• Thesis Defense passed (Must be scheduled and passed with changes requested by the thesis committee made before deadline date)
• One signature page with original signatures must be given to The Graduate School. A copy of the signed signature page is given to the Kinesiology Graduate Program Assistant. Please check with the Graduate Student Service Center for up to date information on this new submission process.

Submission Dates for Graduation

Items due 2 weeks before Graduate School Deadline

1) Student submits a copy of his/her unofficial transcript to the front office

2) Student completes final degree checklist and submits checklist to front office. This can be found under Academic Forms on the UMass Kinesiology Graduate Program webpage: https://www.umass.edu/sphhs/kinesiology/graduate-programs/master-science-ms

Items due 1 week before Graduate School Deadline

1) An email from student’s advisor to GPD stating that student has completed all revisions to his/her thesis/project and have finished all requirements for degree
2) Student uploads final version of thesis to Box
3) Student uploads final version of thesis to ScholarWorks and email confirmation forwarded to Meredith mckern@umass.edu
4) Signature page with original signatures turned into front office
5) Student submits completed Degree Eligibility Form to front office
6) The department requires that students submit a receipt for two bound copies of their thesis. Most students use either Grey Seal Bindery or Amherst Copy & Designworks to get their work bound.

Example timeline

If the Graduate School deadline is April 10th (for May graduation) below is a breakdown of the dates that student must meet and the rationale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Items Due</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 13th</td>
<td>Last day to defend thesis.</td>
<td>It is department policy that graduate students must defend at least 4 weeks before the final Graduate School deadline (April 10th in this example). This gives students time to complete their final edits and revisions to their thesis. This deadline also gives students enough time to make final edits, upload the document to ScholarWorks and submit signature page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 27th</td>
<td>Items needed 2 weeks before Graduate school deadline (see above)</td>
<td>On this date, GPD will begin conducting degree audits for every student who will be graduating. This includes going through Degree Checklists and unofficial transcripts to confirm that the student has completed all degree requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
requirements and is indeed ready to graduate. If there are errors on the Degree Checklist or if there are missing pieces, the form will be sent back for revisions. This gives the Graduate Program Administrator a week to proof the documents and a week for the GPD to review the documents and sign off on them.

| April 3rd | Items needed 1 week before Graduate school deadline (see above) | This is to enable both the GPD and the Department chair enough time to sign the Degree Eligibility form and the student to submit all remaining documents. |