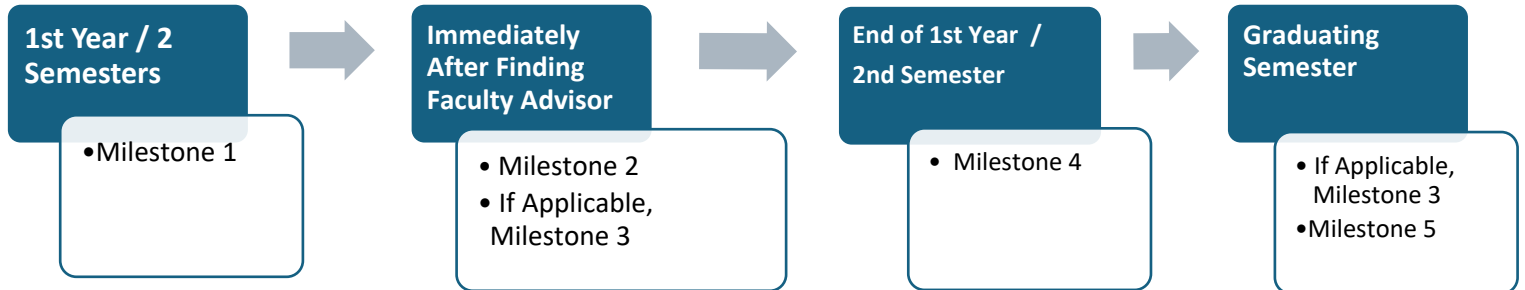




MS Thesis Timeline & Milestones



Milestone 1: Thesis Faculty Advisor Obtainment

Milestone 2: Submit Plan of Study (POS) to Graduate Program Advisor (GPA)

Milestone 3: Switch Student Record Officially to MS Thesis

(Based on Residency Status: In-State Resident or Out-of-State/International Non-Resident)

Milestone 4: Enroll in MCEN 6959: Master's Thesis Credits

Milestone 5: Thesis Submission, Defense, and Graduation



MS Thesis Student Acknowledgement

Student Name:

Student ID Number:

Student Residency Status (Resident* or Non-Resident):

*If resident, Please Complete Milestone 3 Immediately

Thesis Faculty Advisor Name:

Thesis Faculty Advisor CU Department:

MS Admit Term (Semester/Year; ex/ Fall 202_)

Expected Graduation Date (Semester/Year *)

*If your expected graduation date exceeds the 4-year time limit for the master's degree, please reach out to your Graduate Program Advisor (GPA)

Congratulations on your decision to pursue the MS Thesis Degree Program in Mechanical Engineering!

This progress report contains important information about the requirements for your MS Thesis Program. As you transition from the MS Professional Program to the MS Thesis Program, there are specific academic benchmarks and milestones you will need to meet in order to successfully complete your degree.

As a MS Thesis student, you must meet the milestones outlined in this document.

Signature at the bottom of this page notates that you have read through the entirety of this milestone progress report document, and you understand all requirements of you as an MS ME Thesis student. You are able to access this form throughout your time in the MS Thesis Program to refer to and keep track of your progress, along with your faculty thesis advisor.

At completion of every milestone, please initial at the bottom of each milestone page via this DocuSign form. At certain milestones, your Thesis Faculty Advisor and Graduate Program Advisor will also acknowledge your milestone completion and progress.

If you have any questions or concerns, reach out to the ME MS Graduate Program Advisor (GPA) with any questions.

MS Thesis Student Acknowledgement



Milestone Progress Report

Milestone 1: Thesis Faculty Advisor Obtainment

Before end of 1st year / 2 semesters

1. Finding a Thesis Faculty Advisor:

- a. On MS Application, can mark interest in MS Thesis along with naming interested- in ME Faculty under “Application Questions”
- b. To find ME Faculty’s research that aligns with your interests, review the following:
 - i. [Faculty Profiles](#)
 - ii. [Research Overview Slides](#)
 - iii. [Recorded Research Information Sessions](#)
- c. Only initiate direct faculty outreach after admitted to the MS Mechanical Engineering Program
 - i. When contacting faculty directly, we recommend that you provide the following:
 1. Resume and/or Curriculum Vitae
 2. Short Description of Research Experience, Research Interest Alignment, and Potential Contributions to their Lab
 3. Statement about Student Status (i.e., admitted, currently enrolled, etc.)
- d. Topics to Discuss with Potential Thesis Faculty Advisor:
 - i. Work and Commitment Expectations
 - ii. Funding
 - iii. Research Project Scope

2. While Searching for Thesis Faculty Advisor:

- a. Take MS Thesis required courses of MCEN 5020: Methods of Engineering Analysis and MCEN 5030: Introduction to Research in Fall semesters

3. Faculty Agreed to be Thesis Advisor:

- a. Student & Faculty Advisor Receive (Graduate Program Advisor Initiates) and Sign MS Thesis Milestone Progress Report via DocuSign

DATE COMPLETED:

MS Thesis Student Initials

MS Thesis Faculty Initials

Graduate Program Advisor Initials



Milestone 2: Submit Plan of Study (POS) to Graduate Program Advisor

Immediately after Finding Thesis Faculty Advisor

1. **Discuss potential classes with thesis faculty advisor**
 - a. Make sure they relate to your research and [meet the minimum degree graduation requirements \(also see below\)!](#)
2. **Plan of Study is flexible, but any changes require a new Plan of Study submitted to GPA**
3. **Submit Plan of Study to Graduate Program Advisor**
 - a. Can be submitted with GPA in an appointment
 - b. Submit Plan of Study via [DocuSign Form on ME Forms & Handbooks Website](#)
 - i. Student-Initiated and Submitted
 - ii. Faculty Advisor Endorses Plan of Study
 - iii. Final Signature of Graduate Program Advisor

MS Thesis Degree Requirements:

- **Cumulative GPA:** Must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above throughout the duration of the program to stay in good academic standing.
- **Credit Minimums:** Cumulative 30 credits with a grade of C or above in all courses. These credits should include:
 - a. Minimum 18 credits from the Mechanical Engineering department (MCEN)
 - b. 12 elective graduate credits (5000-level or above) that align with academic and research interests.
- **Core Courses:**
 - a. MCEN 5030: Introduction to Research (3 credits)
 - b. MCEN 5020: Methods of Engineering Analysis (3 credits)
 - c. MCEN 6959: Master's Thesis (6 credits)
 - i. Must enroll in 6 thesis credits (MCEN 6959) as part of thesis research and writing process. It is expected that while enrolled in these credits, research, lab work, and thesis defense preparation is occurring.
 - ii. Usually, students enroll in 3 thesis credits in last two semesters.
 - iii. Enrollment of these credits must be requested by student to the department prior to the add deadline of the requested semester. Information on how to request enrollment are announced via ME Graduate Student Resources Canvas

DATE COMPLETED:

MS Thesis Student Initials

MS Thesis Faculty Initials

Graduate Program Advisor Initials



Milestone 3: Switch Student Record Officially to MS Thesis

Depends on Residency Status:

- **In-State Resident:** **Immediately after Finding Faculty Advisor**
 - Notify Graduate Program Advisor by email immediately of your residency status
 - Please See Item 2b
- **Out-of-State / International Resident:** **Graduating Semester (same as Milestone 5)**
 - Notify Graduate Program Advisor by email at least two weeks before classes begin in your graduating semester
 - **Out-of-State:** Please See Item 2.c and 2.c.i below
 - **International:** Please See Item 2.c - 2.c.iii below
- **Graduate Program Advisor Submits Change of Program Form to Registrar's Office**

DATE COMPLETED:

MS Thesis Student Initials

Graduate Program Advisor Initials

1. Tuition Classification Changes Immediately for the Effective Term

- a. MS Thesis Students are classified under a different rate than MS Professional Students.
 - i. Tuition Classification changes to **"Graduate / Traditional" Tuition and Fee Rates** once their program is officially changes to the MS Thesis track.
- b. **In-State Resident** Thesis Graduate (Non-Professional / Traditional) Resident's Tuition is Cheaper than Professional Master's Tuition
 - i. A student can opt-out of this automatic switch by notifying the Graduate Program Advisor by email at time of receiving this milestone progress report.
 - ii. [See difference via the Tuition and Rate Sheets on the Bursar's Office website](#)
 1. Graduate In-State is MS Thesis In-State
 2. Professional Masters is MS Professional In-State Professional
- c. **Out-of-State/International Non-Resident** Thesis Graduate (Non-Professional / Traditional) Resident's Tuition is More Expensive than Professional Master's Tuition
 - i. **It is highly recommended that out-of-state, non-resident students petition for Colorado residency for their 2nd year / 3rd semester**
 1. To qualify to be classified as a Colorado resident for tuition purposes, a qualified individual must have been domiciled in Colorado for **at least 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the beginning of the semester for which resident status is sought**. For example, if you are petitioning residency for Fall 2028, you must have been domiciled in Colorado since August 2027.
 2. [Domicile and Residency Petition information can be found on the Office of the Registrar's Website](#)



Milestone 3: Switch Student Record Officially to MS Thesis (Cont.)

- ii. International Students on a non-immigrant F-1/J-1 Visa **cannot** petition for in-state residency for tuition classification purposes.
- iii. Since the tuition is more expensive for non-resident thesis (graduate / traditional tuition classification), the ME Graduate Program will cover the difference of cost between the Professional Masters and the Graduate Traditional Tuition Rate with a scholarship **if** the student can do the following:
 - 1. Submit a Response to the [MS Thesis Non-Resident Scholarship Form](#) by the stated deadline
 - a. Once student's program/track is officially changed to MS Thesis and student notifies Graduate Program Advisor by email of non-resident residency status, they will receive an email from the Graduate Program Advisor with the form link and deadline
 - 2. Must be enrolled in at least 1 credit of MCEN 6959: Master's Thesis Credits (see Milestone 4) for the semester they are requesting the scholarship for
 - 3. If an out-of-state non-resident, student must upload proof of failed/rejected petitions for Colorado residency to the form

2. Student Submit Master's Thesis Plan Form Submission

- a. Submit the Master's Thesis Plan Form to declare your MS Thesis plan with the Graduate School
 - i. [Form Information and Submission Link is on the Graduate School Website](#)

DATE COMPLETED:

MS Thesis Student Initials

Graduate Program Advisor Initials



Milestone 4: Enroll in MCEN 6959: Master's Thesis Credits

2nd year / 3rd semester

1. Request Enrollment via the [Thesis Hours Enrollment Request Form](#)

- a. Enrollment of credits and term submitted on form should match your POS
- b. If something has changed, need to submit new POS at same time that the enrollment request is submitted
 - i. Typically, students enroll in 3 credits in their last two semesters
 1. Example: Graduation in Spring 2030 so student would be enrolled in 3 credits of MCEN 6959 in Fall 2029 and Spring 2030
- c. Enrollment will also need to be requested for any future semester but this milestone is for the first semester that enrollment is requested

DATE COMPLETED:

MS Thesis Student Initials

Graduate Program Advisor Initials

• Notes:

- There is no relation to the number of credits requested/enrolled in with the hours spent in the lab working on the research and/or spent working on the thesis
 - An agreement on expected timeline should be set by faculty advisor and student
 - It is strongly recommended that you begin reviewing the information on the [Graduate School website on thesis formatting guidelines](#) and begin writing your thesis at this point in time, if not already done
 - Thesis Resources:
 - [Grad+ Writing Support](#)
 - Weekly Write-In Sessions
 - Writing Retreats
 - [Writing Center](#)
 - One-to-One Sessions
 - Workshops
- The final grade for MCEN 6959: Master's Thesis Credits are withheld until the thesis is completed and submitted by stated Graduate School deadlines
 - In progress (IP) grades are assigned during each semester until the defense is successfully completed and the final copy of the thesis is accepted by the examination committee, at which time the final grade for all thesis hours is submitted to the Graduate School by the GPA
- Recommended to give and receive feedback about performance with faculty advisor



Milestone 5: Thesis Submission, Defense, and Graduation

Graduating Semester

1. Request Enrollment via the [Thesis Hours Enrollment Request Form](#)

- a. Enrollment of credits and term submitted on form should match your POS
 - i. Must be enrolled in at least one credit of MCEN 6959: Master's Thesis Credits in graduating semester / to defend thesis
 1. **Exception to above Rule: "Grey Area" Graduation**
 - a. Occurs when a student thesis defense date is **after** one semester's MS defense deadline and **before** the next semester's **first day of classes**
 - i. Summer's first day of classes is first day of **Summer Session C**
 - ii. Ex/ Student missed the Nov. 2028 / Fall 2028 deadline to defend but defends on January 9, 2029 (1 week before first day of classes for Spring 2030)
 - b. **Do not have to be enrolled in courses for the grey area semester**
 - i. Graduating semester is the most near semester
 1. Ex/ Student is defending before Spring 2030 first day of classes: Graduating semester and year is Spring 2030
 - ii. Thesis **Submission** deadlines are the same as the most near semester
 1. Ex/ Student is defending before Spring 2030 first day of classes: Must submit thesis forms by the Spring 2030 Graduate School Deadlines
 - b. If something has changed, need to submit new POS at same time that the enrollment request is submitted
 - i. Typically, students enroll in 3 credits in their last two semesters
 1. Example: Graduation in Spring 2030 so student would be enrolled in 3 credits of MCEN 6959 in Fall 2029 and Spring 2030

DATE COMPLETED:

MS Thesis Student Initials

Graduate Program Advisor Initials



2. Review Defense and Graduation Forms, To-Do's, and Deadlines (See Item 3)

Beginning of Graduating Semester

- a. [All Thesis Defense Deadlines and Information can be found on the Graduate School Website](#)

- i. Make sure to look at the last day to defend for the semester that you are intending to graduate in

3. Submit Master's Examination Form Information to GPA

3-6 Weeks Before Thesis Defense Date

- a. Thesis Defense Committee Information:
 - i. Minimum 3 Members, including Thesis Faculty Advisor
 1. Minimum 2 Members must be an ME Faculty Member with a [Graduate Faculty Appointment](#)
 - ii. Ask Faculty Thesis Advisor for suggestions for you committee!
 - iii. **Note:** If you would like to have a non-CU Boulder committee member on your thesis defense committee, it can take up to 6 weeks for the committee member to be approved.
 1. You (or the proposed member) **must** email GPA **at least 6 weeks prior to defense date** with the proposed member's Curricula Vitae (not guaranteed to be approved)
- b. Fill out the below information:
 - i. Student ID number:
 - ii. Defense date and time
 - iii. Committee member first and last names
 - iv. Committee member email address
 - v. Committee member affiliation (CU department, etc.)
- c. Book thesis defense room / make virtual defense link
 - i. Ask ME Front Desk to help with booking a room

DATE COMPLETED:

MS Thesis Student Initials

Graduate Program Advisor Initials



4. Defend and Submit Thesis

1 Week Before Thesis Defense Date

- a. Send Thesis Document to Thesis Committee Members and GPA in email as an attachment or in a Google Drive Document

Day of Defense

- a. Master's Examination Form:
 - a. Submitted by GPA to Thesis Defense Committee
 - b. Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory Grade for Defense
- b. Thesis Final Grade Report:
 - a. Submitted by GPA to Thesis Faculty Advisor
 - b. Finalizes Grade for All Enrolled MCEN 6959: Master's Thesis Credits
- c. **Optional but Strongly Encouraged:**
 - a. Email thesis to Graduate School for a pre-check of the form as a PDF

1 Week Before Graduate School Thesis Submission Deadline

- a. Thesis Approval Form (TAF)
 - a. Complete the landing page with your name and the names and colorado.edu e-mail addresses of the committee chair and the one other committee member to sign. Both must sign electronically in advance of thesis submission.
 - b. When both the chair and committee member have signed and the form is complete, you will receive a pdf document with signatures via e-mail.
 - c. The TAF form must then be saved as a separate **single page** pdf and uploaded as a supplementary file along with your thesis/dissertation to UMI/Proquest by the submission deadline. Your submission is not considered complete without this supplementary file.
- b. Thesis Document
 - a. Submit Thesis as PDF, attaching the single page Thesis Approval Form (TAF) as a supplementary file along with your thesis/dissertation to UMI/Proquest by the submission deadline for Graduate School Approval

DATE COMPLETED:

MS Thesis Student Initials

MS Thesis Faculty Initials

Graduate Program Advisor Initials