

## Somewhat Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: How many times can you take 500A/B and 299T?**

**A:** In the sequence of courses, you would generally take 500A, then 500B, and then 299T. You may repeat 299T twice. If, after that time, you still have not completed the thesis or project, you will need to re-take 500A, and start the sequence over again. University policy allows one repeat of this sequence without penalty.

**Q: How am I graded for 500A/B and 299T?**

**A:** The sequence of course work is EDLP 500A, followed by EDLP 500B, and then EDLP 299T. You must receive satisfactory progress (RP) in order to move on to the next. The "RP" grade will be converted to a letter grade upon completion of the thesis or project. The "RP" grade is good for 2 years; essentially that means that once you have been granted the "RP," you have 2 years to convert it to a grade. After that, it converts to a No Credit ("NC") and you must repeat the course for which no credit is granted.

**Q: Can I take time off while working on my thesis or project?**

**A:** According to official University policy, you cannot take any time off once you begin working on your thesis or project. After your first enrollment in 500A, you must be continuously enrolled through to graduation.

**Q: What about the format requirements for the thesis or project?**

**A:** The requirements are pretty much the same for both, with few differences. Primarily, the difference between the thesis and the project is the inclusion of the Format Approval page that requires the signature of the Graduate Coordinator. That page is ONLY required for the thesis. It should NOT be included in the project.

EDLP utilizes APA formatting for the thesis and project to address format issues not addressed by the University. The Office of Graduate Studies provides a Formatting Workshop to help students navigate the University's requirements. If you are completing a thesis, you are required to complete a Formatting Workshop. The schedule can be found on the OGS website. The workshop is also available online. You are required to provide proof of completion; a certificate will be provided to you at the end of the workshop. Online, you can print the certificate once you have completed the workshop.

APA 6 (the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association) was recently released. As we transition toward apply the APA 6 standards to theses and projects, you will need to work with your advisor to determine what is applicable. For the Spring 2010 semester, we will accept the use of APA 5.

**Q: Given the "new" format of thesis/project work, how will the process work?**

**A:** There really is no "new" format. The only change that has been made -- in response to severe budget reductions at the University -- is the ratio of faculty advisor to students. In years past, typically, resources were allocated to support one faculty advisor for every two (2) MA students. This year, resources will only allow us to provide one faculty advisor for every five (5) MA students. In reality, that means that your advisor will be individually overseeing and advising at least 15 students, in addition to his or her teaching load. What that means is that you will have to be very clear and upfront with your advisor about your individual advising needs. Some faculty will choose to work with

students in small groups rather than individually, because of the numbers. It is left to each faculty advisor to determine how best to work with the students under his or her supervision.

So the short answer is that there has not been any change to the process.

**Q: Can I enroll on Continuous Enrollment?**

**A:** Graduate students can lose classification status if they do not maintain continuous enrollment in the University throughout the thesis/project process. Continuous Enrollment holds that place for students. The Department's criteria for being granted Continuous Enrollment status are:

- *Demonstrate that you have completed 95% of the thesis/project process.*  
That essentially means that you should have nothing left to do on your thesis or project except final formatting/revisions, and signatures. Your advisor must certify that such is that case by signing off on your application for Continuous Enrollment. The application is submitted to the Graduate Coordinator for final approval.
- *Demonstrate that you can complete your thesis project within the first 2 weeks of the semester for which Continuous Enrollment may be granted.*  
The Graduate Coordinator will identify the deadline date for each semester. If you are granted Continuous Enrollment, and do not meet the criteria, you will be required to enroll for another full semester, in order to graduate.

If you and your advisor agree that you can meet those two criteria, you may apply for Continuous Enrollment status.

In certain extreme circumstances, Continuous Enrollment may be granted to ensure that you can complete the thesis/project process without a break in enrollment. For example, if you became horribly ill, and needed to take some time away from the work, you could apply for Continuous Enrollment status to ensure that you maintain continuous enrollment, and do not have to reapply to the University in order to finish your degree. Consult with your advisor to discuss any circumstances that you think may necessitate such intervention.

**Q: What is the difference between a thesis and a project?**

**A:** Technically, you shouldn't be asking that question now! By now, you should have already decided which you plan to do. But for the sake of reference, here is how each is defined in the University catalog:

- *Thesis*  
A thesis is the written product of the systematic study of a significant problem. It clearly identifies the problem; states the major assumptions; explains the significance of the undertaking; sets forth the sources for, and methods of gathering, information; analyzes the data; and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished product must evidence originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, clarity of purpose, and accurate and thorough documentation.
- *Project*  
A project is a significant undertaking of a pursuit appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It must evidence originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. It must be described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the project's significance, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation.

In both cases, department-specific requirements also apply. For EDLP, primarily, both a thesis and a project require:

- The final product to be a written document that includes an Abstract
- A thorough review of the professional literature
- Collection and analysis of data from living subjects