

Department of Environmental and Technological Studies

Graduate Student Handbook

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Preface

The Department of Environmental and Technological Studies Graduate Student Handbook is intended to be a guide for graduate students, advisors and graduate committee members within the ETS graduate program. It gives an overview of general information, requirements, procedures and expectations. The handbook is not intended to replace any requirements or policies in place at the St. Cloud State University or the School of Graduate Studies. For more details regarding requirements, policies, forms, deadlines, fees, etc., graduate students, advisors and graduate committee members should refer to the School of Graduate Studies website and the Graduate Bulletin.

Master of Science Degree in Environmental and Technological Studies

The Environmental and Technological Studies (ETS) graduate program fosters environmental and technological literacy and prepares graduate students to integrate the interconnections of science, technology, society and the environment through research and assessment. The Master of Science degree in the ETS department is designed for working professionals and traditional students to advance their academic and technological knowledge for personal and professional development. The ETS graduate program offers the flexibility and convenience of day, evening and online classes, as well as summer workshops.

Graduate students in ETS graduate program may choose to complete their Master of Science degree with either a thesis (plan A) or a professional portfolio (plan C). The thesis option enables a graduate student to conduct in-depth research on a unique topic or problem. It may also prepare the graduate student for advanced doctoral study. The portfolio option enables a graduate student to construct a highly organized professional portfolio. It may also prepare the graduate student for professional certification, such as Career and Technical Education licensure.

A graduate student pursuing a Master of Science degree in ETS graduate program may select an area of emphasis in environmental studies, technology studies or technology education. After selecting an area of emphasis, the graduate student then selects the research track or the technology education track in his or her program of graduate study. The research track is designed to allow the graduate student to obtain the necessary skills to conduct applied research and to become involved in environmental and/or technological assessment. The technology education track prepares the graduate student for a profession in teaching environmental and/or technology instruction at the 5-12 level or technical college level. However, the technology education track in itself will not provide licensure for secondary school technology education teaching.

Application to ETS Graduate Program

Prospective students wishing to pursue a Master of Science degree in the ETS department must first apply through the School of Graduate Studies. After the prospective student's application has been received by the School of Graduate Studies and if all minimum admission requirements have been met, the application is then forwarded to the graduate coordinator in the ETS department for consideration. If a prospective student's application is accepted by the ETS department, an advisor within the department will be assigned to the graduate student. The advisor will determine if additional undergraduate work or special conditions of admission will be required. The 'Advisor and Graduate Committee' section contains more information regarding departmental advisors.

Please refer to the School of Graduate Studies website for more information on admission requirements and deadlines.

Non-Degree Seeking Student Status

Students may take up to six (6) graduate credits as a non-degree seeking student while not formally admitted to the ETS graduate program. Taking courses as a non-degree seeking student does not ensure future admission to the ETS graduate program. Furthermore, students not formally admitted to the ETS graduate program cannot submit a program of graduate study or propose a thesis study or portfolio design. Without an approved program of graduate study, there is no guarantee that courses taken as a non-degree seeking student will be used within the ETS graduate program if the student is eventually accepted into the program. Only six (6) credits earned at St. Cloud State University prior to formal admission to the ETS graduate program are eligible to be used within the program.

Non-degree seeking students are also not officially admitted to St. Cloud State University and therefore are ineligible for financial aid, graduate assistantships and scholarships. However, non-degree seeking students are subject to all St. Cloud State University academic regulations and policies.

Please refer to the Office of Records and Registration website and the Graduate Bulletin for more information regarding non-degree seeking student status and application procedures.

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate students formally admitted to a graduate program at St. Cloud State University are eligible for graduate assistantships. Graduate assistants typically have a 20 hour a week work assignment, receive a tuition waiver for eight (8) credits of graduate course work per semester and a yearly stipend (excluding summer and intersession).

The ETS department generally has one graduate assistantship position assigned to the department each year by the School of Graduate Studies. The ETS graduate assistant is primarily responsible for

departmental administrative tasks and is not assigned as a research or teaching assistant. Applications for the ETS assistantship position may be submitted to the ETS graduate coordinator at anytime, however, the applications are only retained for one (1) calendar year. The ETS assistantship is awarded by August of each year.

Once a graduate student has received an assistantship in the ETS department, he or she is subject to semester review and reappointment by the graduate coordinator, chairperson or supervisor. The graduate assistant is eligible to retain the assistantship for a total of five (5) semesters (excluding summer and intersession) providing that the assistantship position remains funded.

Please see the School of Graduate Studies website for open graduate assistantship positions and application procedures.

Advisor and Graduate Committee

Each graduate student is assigned an advisor when his or her application to the ETS graduate program is accepted. The graduate student should meet with his or her advisor as early as possible to discuss goals and area(s) of interest, program of graduate study and other opportunities. If the graduate student wishes to be reassigned to another advisor, it is the responsibility of the graduate student to obtain a **Request for Change of Graduate Program Advisor Form** from the School of Graduate Studies, complete the form and submit it to the proposed advisor, ETS graduate coordinator and graduate dean for approval.

After meeting with his or her advisor, the graduate student will organize a graduate committee. The duties of the graduate committee include attending committee meetings, providing their expertise in the area of study and reviewing the graduate student's thesis or portfolio. Furthermore, graduate committee members may also supply resources, such as equipment, instrumentation and laboratory space, to the graduate student.

The graduate committee is made up of a minimum of three (3) St. Cloud State University graduate faculty. At least two (2) committee members must be graduate faculty from within the ETS department and at least one (1) member must be graduate faculty from a St. Cloud State University academic department other than the ETS department. Of the committee members from the ETS department, one will serve as the chairperson. The graduate student's advisor typically serves as the chairperson of the graduate committee.

The graduate student may request more than three (3) committee members. Additional committee members may be St. Cloud State University graduate faculty, faculty from other universities and/or professional members of outside organizations. If the graduate student wishes to add additional committee members from other universities or organizations, the graduate student and advisor must request permission from the graduate dean.

Culminating Project Options

The ETS graduate program offers two culminating project options: thesis option (plan A) and portfolio option (plan C). The thesis option enables a graduate student to conduct in-depth research on a unique problem. It may also prepare the graduate student for advanced doctoral study. The portfolio option enables a graduate student to construct a highly organized professional portfolio. It may also prepare the graduate student for professional certification, such as Career and Technical Education licensure. The portfolio option in the ETS graduate program is primarily designed for those in educational fields. Graduate students in other fields interested in pursuing the portfolio option should first consult their advisor.

If a graduate student wishes to change culminating project options after his or her **Proposed Semester Program of Graduate Study Form** has been submitted, the graduate student must obtain a **Petition Form** from the School of Graduate Studies, complete the form and submit it to his or her advisor and the graduate dean for approval.

Culminating Project Funding

There may be occasions when monies may be available through the graduate student's advisor, committee or department which may be used to fund graduate student culminating projects, however, this is rare. If this funding is not available, it is the graduate student's responsibility to fund all work during his or her graduate program. The following outlines some funding alternatives for graduate students.

- Graduate Student Research Funds. Application for Graduate Student Research Funds are accepted by the School of Graduate School three (3) times a year. Requests up to \$500 can be made. Please see the School of Graduate Studies website for application requirements and deadlines.
- Student Research Funds. Application for Student Research Funds are accepted by the Office of Sponsored Programs two (2) times a year. Requests up to \$1500 can be made. Please see the Office of Sponsored Programs website for application requirements and deadlines.
- Graduate Assistantships. While a graduate assistantship does not directly fund culminating projects, it does waive eight (8) credits of graduate course work per semester and provides an annual stipend. Please see the School of Graduate Studies website for open graduate assistantship positions and the application procedure.

Program of Graduate Study

The program of graduate study is sometimes referred to as the plan of study. The graduate student's program of study outlines all courses to be taken during his or her graduate program, and includes core courses, track courses, elective courses and any accepted transfer graduate credits. The graduate student and his or her advisor will work together to create the program of graduate study. It is recommended that the program of graduate study also be submitted to the graduate student's committee for input, however, this step is not required.

Once the program of graduate study has been agreed upon, the **Proposed Semester Program of Graduate Study Form** must be completed and submitted to the School of Graduate Studies for the graduate dean's approval. If the graduate student wishes to amend his or her program of graduate study, the graduate student must obtain a **Petition Form** from the School of Graduate Studies, complete the form and submit it to his or her advisor and the graduate dean for approval.

Thesis option (plan A) program of graduate study requirements

A minimum of 30 credits of graduate course work is required for the thesis option (plan A) in the ETS graduate program. Requirements for the thesis option program of graduate study include:

- 9 credits of core courses (ETS 601, ETS 604, ETS 668 or approved substitutions).
- 6 credits of track courses (ETS 670, ETS 671 or approved substitutions for the research track or ETS 650, ETS 673 or approve substitutions for the technology education track).
- 6 credits of thesis (ETS 699).
- 9 credits of approved electives.
- At least 15 credits must be 600 level.
- No course work may be taken more than 7 years prior to the completion of the Masters, unless the course work has been validated by the School of Graduate Studies.
- Only acceptable transfer credits may be used within the ETS graduate program. Please see 'Transfer Credits' section for requirements of acceptable transfer credits.

Portfolio option (plan C) program of graduate study requirements

A minimum of 36 credits of graduate course work is required for the portfolio option (plan C) in the ETS graduate program. Requirements for the portfolio option program of graduate study include:

- 9 credits of core courses (ETS 601, ETS 604, ETS 668 or approved substitutions).
- 6 credits of track courses (ETS 670, ETS 671 or approved substitutions for the research track or ETS 650, ETS 673 or approve substitutions for the technology education track).
- 21 credits of approved electives.
- At least 18 credits must be 600 level.

- No course work may be taken more than 7 years prior to the completion of the Masters, unless the course work has been validated by the School of Graduate Studies.
- Only acceptable transfer credits may be used within the ETS graduate program. Please see 'Transfer Credits' section for requirements of acceptable transfer credits.

Grades and GPA

For graduate course work, a grade of A is excellent, a grade of B is good and a grade of C is acceptable. Any grade of a C- or below is considered unsatisfactory in graduate course work. If a graduate student makes a grade of C- or below, he or she will not earn graduate credit for the course in which that grade was earned. The graduate student must retake the course if he or she wishes it to be used within the graduate program. When a course is retaken, both the original grade and the retake grade are used to calculate GPA and both grades will appear on the graduate student's transcript. A grade of FN (failure due to non-attendance) or U (unsatisfactory) is calculated as an F in the graduate student's GPA.

If a graduate student takes an incomplete (I) for course work, he or she has one semester to clear the incomplete or the grade is changed to an F. The exception is if the incomplete is given in the spring semester of the regular academic year, in which case, the graduate student has until the end of the following fall semester to clear the incomplete.

Thesis credits (ETS 699) are graded as in progress (IP) until the completion of the graduate program. At the time of the graduate student's successful completion of the graduate program, the grade for thesis credits will be converted to satisfactory (S). The graduate student's advisor must submit a **Request for Change of Grade Form** to the Office of Records and Registration to change the in progress (IP) grade to satisfactory (S). This is not done automatically after the graduate student successfully completes the requirements of the ETS graduate program.

Graduate students must maintain at least a 3.00 cumulative GPA in the ETS graduate program. Graduate students who do not maintained the minimum GPA are placed on probation and are given one (1) semester in which to bring their GPA into compliance. If a graduate student feels he or she will be unable to bring his or her GPA into compliance at the end of the probation semester, the graduate student may file a petition for an extension of the deadline. It is the responsibility of the graduate student to obtain a **Petition Form** from the School of Graduate Studies, complete the form and submit it to his or her advisor and the graduate dean for approval. If the graduate student fails to bring his or her GPA into compliance by the deadline, he or she may have their graduate student status terminated.

Please refer to the Graduate Bulletin for more information on grades and GPA.

Course Load

A full time graduate student at St. Cloud State University is defined as a student taking a minimum of eight (8) graduate credits per semester. The maximum credit load a graduate student may take is sixteen (16) credits per semester during the regular academic year (fall and spring semesters). This includes any combination of graduate, undergraduate and/or transfer credits. The maximum credit load a graduate student may take during the summer is twelve (12) credits + three (3) credits during the intersession. This includes any combination of graduate, undergraduate and/or transfer credits. If a graduate student wishes to exceed the maximum credit load, he or she must obtain a **Graduate Overload Petition Form** from the School of Graduate Studies, complete the form and submit it to his or her advisor and the graduate dean for approval. If a graduate student exceeds the load limit without prior approval, he or she will lose the credits in excess of the maximum credit load.

Please refer to the Graduate Bulletin for more information on course load.

Course Time Limit and Course Validation

Graduate course work taken at St. Cloud State University more than seven (7) years prior to the completion of the Masters cannot be used to meet ETS graduate program requirements unless the course work has been validated by the School of Graduate Studies. A graduate course in which the graduate student received a grade of C or less is ineligible for validation. No more than half of all graduate course work for the ETS graduate program can be validated.

To petition for a course to be validated, the graduate student must obtain a **Petition Form** from the School of Graduate Studies, complete the form and submit it to his or her advisor and the graduate dean for approval. If the petition is approved by both the advisor and graduate dean, a validation form is sent by the School of Graduate Studies to the chairperson of the department in which the course was taught. It is then the graduate student's responsibility to contact that chairperson and determine if he or she is willing to consider validating the course. If the department is willing to consider validating the course, the department chairperson will assign a professor to determine the validation requirements. The professor will contact the graduate student and inform him or her of these validation requirements, which typically take the form of assigned work. Once the graduate student completes the validation requirements, the professor will make a recommendation on the validation form and return the form to the School of Graduate Studies. After the professor's recommendation has been reviewed, the graduate dean will inform the graduate student if the course has been validated. If validation is given, the course is eligible to be included on the graduate student's program of graduate study.

Please refer to the Graduate Bulletin for more information on course validation.

Transfer Credits

For the graduate student's advisor to consider using credits earned at another institution within the ETS graduate program, the credits must first be officially transferred to St. Cloud State University.

With approval of the graduate student's advisor and the graduate dean, a maximum of sixteen (16) semester graduate credits from other universities within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system (MnSCU) may be used within the graduate student's program of study. The grade for credits transferred must be B or above, a satisfactory (S) in a S/U grading system or a pass (P) in a P/F grading system.

With approval of the graduate student's advisor and the graduate dean, a maximum of ten (10) semester graduate credits from other accredited institutions outside the MnSCU system may be used within the graduate student's program of study. The grade for credits transferred must be B or above, a satisfactory (S) in a S/U grading system or a pass (P) in a P/F grading system.

Credits taken at other institutions after admission to the ETS graduate program may be accepted into the program as transfer credits only with prior approval from the graduate dean. If the graduate student wishes to transfer credits after admission to the ETS graduate program, it is his or her responsibility to obtain a **Petition Form** from the School of Graduate Studies, complete the form and submit it to his or her advisor and the graduate dean for approval.

Credits transferred to the ETS graduate program cannot include credits earned:

- Which are not appropriate for the ETS graduate program.
- Which will be older than seven (7) years by the completion of the ETS graduate program. These credits are ineligible for validated by the School of Graduate Studies.
- In correspondence and independent/individual study courses.
- At a Minnesota location, but through a university headquartered outside of Minnesota.
- Which were applied towards other degrees.
- At workshops, continuing education courses and/or in-service training.
- At extended campuses of a university that is not accepted at the on-campus graduate program of that university.
- In courses conducted by proprietary groups.

Please refer to the Graduate Bulletin for more information on transfer credits.

Arranged Courses

A graduate student may work with an instructor to design an arranged course (ETS 501). In an arranged course, a graduate student will take an upper division undergraduate course as graduate course work, however, the instructor will outline special graduate requirements for the course. These requirements must exceed those of the undergraduate course requirements and may include more strenuous writing

and testing criteria. Arranged courses are repeatable, however, only a maximum of six (6) credits of ETS 501 may be applied to a graduate student's program of study. An arranged course may be taken on demand.

To register for an arranged course (ETS 501), the graduate student and instructor must complete the **Individual Study Approval Form**, which can be obtained from the ETS office (HH 216). The graduate student must obtain the department chairperson's signature and submit the form to the School of Graduate Studies for graduate dean approval. If the form is approved, the School of Graduate Studies will forward the form to the Office of Records and Registration.

Selected Readings

A graduate student may apply up to three (3) credits of selected readings (ETS 514) to his or her graduate program of study. Selected readings are a variable credit and repeatable course which allows a graduate student to research a special environmental and/or technological topic or issue. The course requirements are determined by a member of the graduate faculty who will act as the instructor of the course. Selected readings may be taken on demand.

To register for a selected reading (ETS 514), the graduate student and instructor must complete the **Individual Study Approval Form**, which can be obtained from the ETS office (HH 216). The graduate student must obtain the department chairperson's signature and submit the form to the Office of Records and Registration.

Internship Credits

A graduate student may apply up to three (3) credits of internship (ETS 544) to his or her graduate program of study. Internship credits are variable credit and repeatable. Internships must be with organizations for which prior approval has been given by the internship coordinator.

To register for internship credits (ETS 544), the graduate student must first meet with the internship coordinator to review the internship requirements. The graduate student and internship coordinator must then complete the **Individual Study Approval Form**, which can be obtained from the ETS office (HH 216). The graduate student must obtain the department chairperson's signature and submit the form to the Office of Records and Registration.

Special Problems

A graduate student may apply up to three (3) credits of special problems (ETS 600) to his or her graduate program of study. Special problems are a variable credit and repeatable course which allows a graduate student to conduct a thorough and comprehensive investigation of a special environmental and/or

technological topic or issue. The course requirements are determined by a member of the graduate faculty who will act as the instructor of the course, however, the criteria for special problems is typically much more in-depth than those for selected readings (ETS 514). Special problems may be taken on demand.

To register for special problems (ETS 600), the graduate student and instructor must complete the **Individual Study Approval Form**, which can be obtained from the ETS office (HH 216). The graduate student must obtain the department chairperson's signature and submit the form to the Office of Records and Registration.

Seminar

A graduate student may apply three (3) credits of seminar (ETS 615) to his or her graduate program of study. Seminars are organized to give graduate students technical study of environmental and technological topics and issues. Seminar may be taken on demand or as a regularly scheduled course.

To register for seminar (ETS 615), it may be necessary for the graduate student and the instructor to complete the **Individual Study Approval Form**, which can be obtained from the ETS office (HH 216). The graduate student must obtain the department chairperson's signature and submit the form to the Office of Records and Registration. However, if seminar (ETS 615) is offered as a regular course during an academic term, the graduate student can register for the course using normal registration procedures.

Thesis Credits

A graduate student pursuing the thesis option (plan A) is required to complete six (6) credits of thesis (ETS 699). Thesis credits are credits earned for work the graduate student does in his or her thesis study.

To register for thesis credits (ETS 699), the graduate student and the graduate student's advisor must complete the **Individual Study Approval Form**, which can be obtained from the ETS office (HH 216). The graduate student must obtain the department chairperson's signature and submit the form to the Office of Records and Registration.

The grading option on the individual study approval form for thesis credits must be S/U. Thesis credits are graded as in progress (IP) until the completion of the graduate program. At the time of the graduate student's successful completion of the graduate program, thesis credits will be converted to satisfactory (S). The graduate student's advisor must submit a **Request for Change of Grade Form** to the Office of Records and Registration to change the in progress (IP) grade to satisfactory (S). This is not done automatically after the graduate student successfully completes the requirements of the ETS graduate program.

Workshop Credits

Limited workshop credits may be applied to a graduate student's program of study. Workshop credits carry special department numbers: 595 or 695 for temporary workshops and 588 for continuing education workshops. ETS courses 535, 551, 558, 559, 585 do not fall under this regulation.

Graduate students pursuing the thesis option (plan A) are allowed a maximum of four (4) workshop credits. Graduate students pursuing the portfolio option (plan C) are allowed a maximum of ten (10) workshop credits.

Please refer to the Graduate Bulletin for more information on workshop credits.

Thesis Outline and Format

With guidance from his or her advisor and graduate committee, the graduate student pursuing the thesis option (plan A) will develop a thesis based on a study. The following details the basic outline of a thesis in the ETS department.

- Chapter 1 – Introduction to the Study. In this chapter, the graduate student will introduce the thesis study. The chapter includes a brief overview of the study, as well as a statement of the problem, statement of purposes, research questions, assumption, limitations, procedures and terminology.
- Chapter 2 – Review of Literature. In this chapter, the graduate student will demonstrate his or her comprehensive knowledge and understanding of previous work conducted in the thesis area of study.
- Chapter 3 – Methodology. In this chapter, the graduate student will detail all materials and methods needed to complete the thesis study. The chapter also includes procedures for statistical analysis of data.
- Chapter 4 – Results and Discussion or Analysis of Data. In this chapter, the graduate student will report his or her results, interpret those results and relate them to other research previously conducted by others. This chapter usually contains graphical content (figures, charts and tables) and statistical analysis.
- Chapter 5 – Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations. In this chapter, the graduate student will summarize the study, draw conclusions and make recommendations.

Thesis studies involving human subjects may require Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Thesis studies involving animal subjects must follow the Standards of Animal Care outlined by the Association

for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care. Please refer to the Office of Sponsored Programs website for more details regarding the IRB process and Standards of Animal Care.

The graduate student's advisor will review preliminary drafts of the thesis. The graduate student should expect several revisions of his or her thesis prior to the final oral examination. The graduate student should allow at least two (2) weeks for review of each thesis draft.

A graduate student must format his or her thesis according to the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies. Please refer to the Manual for the Preparation of Field Studies and Theses found on the School of Graduate Studies website or purchase the manual at the Husky Bookstore. Thesis formatting services may be available on campus for a fee.

One complete copy of the thesis is to be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies after the graduate student has successfully passed his or her final oral examination and after all revisions requested by the graduate committee have been completed. This copy is for format review and is not the final copy to be submitted for binding.

After approval by the format reviewer, the graduate student must submit a minimum of three (3) final copies of the thesis by the appropriate deadline. For binding, all final copies must be submitted on 100% cotton paper. The final copies must also have signatures of all committee members on each approval page. After the final copies have been submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and fees paid, the thesis is sent for binding.

In addition to the final thesis copies, the graduate student must also submit to the School of Graduate Studies two (2) additional signed copies of the thesis abstract.

Please refer to the School of Graduate Studies website for more information on thesis format, submission requirements, deadlines and fees.

Thesis Preliminary Conference

A graduate student pursuing the thesis option (plan A) will propose a thesis study to his or her graduate committee. The thesis proposal typically takes the form of the first three (3) chapters of the thesis. These chapters are: A) an introduction, which includes a problem statement, research questions and research objectives, B) a comprehensive review of literature and C) the methodology required to complete the study. For more details on the outline of the first three (3) thesis chapters, see the 'Thesis Outline and Format' section. Other aspects of the proposal should also include a funding strategy, organization of needed supplies, equipment, instrumentation and other resources, approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for studies involving human subjects and a timeline of completion.

It is the graduate student's responsibility to organize a preliminary conference with his or her committee. This conference is sometimes referred to as the proposal defense meeting. In this meeting, the graduate student will present his or her proposed thesis study. An advisor approved draft of the first

three (3) chapters of graduate student's thesis should be submitted to the graduate committee at least three (3) weeks prior to the preliminary conference. The preliminary conference and the final oral examination cannot occur within the same semester.

At least two (2) weeks prior to the thesis preliminary conference, the graduate student must inform the School of Graduate Studies of the date, time and location of the conference, as well as the names of all committee members. At least three (3) working days prior to the thesis preliminary conference, the graduate student must confirm that the **Report of Preliminary Evaluation Committee Form** from the School of Graduate Studies has been received by his or her advisor/committee chairperson.

During the thesis preliminary conference, the student will be asked to give a presentation of his or her proposed study. While the format of this presentation is determined by the graduate student and his or her advisor, a typical presentation will consist of a 30 minute Powerpoint presentation summarizing the proposed thesis research. This includes identifying the problem statement, research questions, research objectives, a brief literature review summary, an outline of the methodology, a funding strategy, organization of needed supplies, equipment, instrumentation and other resources, approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for studies involving human subjects and a timeline of completion.

At the conclusion of the proposal presentation, the committee and graduate student will participate in a discussion session. Following the discussion session, the graduate committee will deliberate the validity of the proposed study. At this point the graduate committee may accept the proposal, accept the proposal with conditions/corrections or reject the proposal. The graduate committee's decision is documented on the **Report of Preliminary Evaluation Committee Form**. If the proposal is accepted, the graduate student may begin his or her study. If the proposal is accepted with conditions/corrections, the graduate student must make the documented changes/corrections prior to beginning his or her study. If the proposal is rejected, the graduate student must revise the proposal and organize another thesis preliminary conference.

At the conclusion of the preliminary conference, the graduate student must submit the completed **Report of Preliminary Evaluation Committee Form**, as well as a copy of his or her proposal to the School of Graduate Studies.

While it is not uncommon for a graduate student to have begun his or her study prior to preliminary conference, the decision of the graduate student's committee regarding the validity of the thesis study proposal may negate previously completed work on the study. It is important that if the graduate student intends to begin his or her study prior to a formal thesis preliminary conference, he or she should communicate plans to his or her graduate committee as soon as possible.

Thesis Final Oral Examination

It is the graduate student's responsibility to organize a thesis final oral examination with his or her committee. This examination is sometimes referred to as a thesis defense meeting. The graduate

student should contact his or her committee early in the graduate student's final semester to set the date of the final oral examination. The thesis final oral examination cannot be scheduled during the final exam week of the semester. Furthermore, the preliminary conference and the final oral examination cannot occur within the same semester.

In the thesis final oral examination, the graduate student will present a summary of his or her thesis study and any recommendations. An advisor approved draft of the thesis should be submitted to the graduate committee at least three (3) weeks prior to the final oral examination.

At least two (2) weeks prior to the thesis final oral examination, the graduate student must inform the School of Graduate Studies of the date, time and location of the examination, as well as the names of all committee members. At least three (3) working days prior to the thesis final oral evaluation, the graduate student must confirm that the **Report of Final Evaluation Committee Form** from the School of Graduate Studies has been received by his or her advisor/committee chairperson.

During the thesis final oral examination, the student will be asked to present a summary of his or her thesis study. While the format of this presentation is determined by the graduate student and his or her advisor, a typical presentation will consist of a 30 to 45 minute Powerpoint presentation over viewing the research objectives, results, conclusions and recommendations.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the committee and graduate student will participate in a discussion session. Following the discussion session, the graduate committee will deliberate the validity of the study. At this point, the graduate committee may accept the thesis without revision, accept the thesis with revision or reject the thesis. The graduate committee's decision is documented on the **Report of Final Evaluation Committee Form**. If the thesis is accepted without revision, the graduate student must submit a thesis draft to the School of Graduate Studies for a format check. If the thesis is accepted with revision, the graduate student must make revisions and re-submit the thesis to the committee before submitting a thesis draft to the School of Graduate Studies. If the thesis is rejected, the graduate student may need to re-do major aspects of the thesis study. In the latter case, the graduate student must make changes to the thesis and organize another thesis final oral examination.

At the conclusion of the final oral examination, the graduate student must submit the completed **Report of Preliminary Evaluation Committee Form** to the School of Graduate Studies.

Portfolio Outline and Format

The portfolio option (plan C) in the ETS graduate program is primarily designed for those in educational fields. Graduate students in other fields interested in pursuing the portfolio option should first consult their advisor. The following details the basic outline of a portfolio in the ETS department.

- Section 1 – Introduction. In this section, the graduate student will describe his or her educational and professional background, as well as his or her teaching and program

philosophies. This section is not to be a bulleted list of details, but rather a strongly written document.

- Section 2 – Goals and Competences. In this section, the graduate student will describe his or her long term and short term professional goals. The graduate student will also describe his or her current competences and those he or she is working towards obtaining. This section is not to be a bulleted list of details, but rather a strongly written document.
- Section 3 – Evidence of Alignment with Standards. In this section, the graduate student will identify a set of education standards with which he or she will show evidence of alignment in his or her current teaching approaches and methods. The graduate student will describe how each educational standard is met with past, current and/or future actions. The graduate student will show documentation of alignment with the education standards identified. This evidence may include lesson plans, assessment plans, graded student work, etc. Evidence should be highly organized in the appendices in section 5 of the portfolio.
- Section 4 – Conclusion. In this section, the graduate student will describe his or her professional strengths and weaknesses. This section is not to be a bulleted list of details, but rather a strongly written document.
- Section 5 – Appendices and References. In this section, the graduate student will arrange documentation evidence in a highly organized appendices. This section should also included references of any materials cited within the portfolio.

The graduate student’s advisor will review preliminary drafts of the portfolio. The graduate student should expect several revisions of his or her portfolio prior to the portfolio final oral examination. The graduate student should allow at least two (2) weeks for review of each portfolio draft.

A graduate student’s portfolio in the ETS graduate program may be submitted in an electronic or traditional hard copy format. Narrative portions of the portfolio must be strongly written and bulleted information should be minimized. Evidence in the portfolio must be related back to the narrative portions of the portfolio. To show that educational standards are being met, documentation should include assessment evidence.

After the graduate student has successfully defended his or her portfolio and after all revisions requested by the graduate committee have been completed, a copy of the portfolio will be submitted to the ETS department.

Portfolio Preliminary Conference

A graduate student pursuing the portfolio option (plan C) will propose a portfolio design, which includes a description of intended content to his or her graduate committee. The portfolio proposal typically takes the form of a preliminary draft of the first three (3) sections of the portfolio. These sections are: A) an introduction, which includes a description of the graduate student's educational and profession background and his or her teaching and program philosophies, B) a description of professional goals and competences and C) evidence of alignment with specified educational standards. In the latter section, typically, this description will just include identification of which standards will be highlighted. Little evidence of standard alignment may be provided in the proposal. For more details on the outline of the first three (3) portfolio sections, see the 'Portfolio Outline and Format' section. Another aspect of the proposal should also be a timeline of completion.

It is the graduate student's responsibility to organize a portfolio preliminary conference with his or her committee. This conference is sometimes referred to as a proposal defense meeting. In this meeting, the graduate student will present his or her proposed portfolio design. An advisor approved draft of the first three (3) sections of graduate student's portfolio should be submitted to the graduate committee at least three (3) weeks prior to the preliminary conference. The preliminary conference and the final oral examination cannot occur within the same semester.

At least two (2) weeks prior to the portfolio preliminary conference, the graduate student must inform the School of Graduate Studies of the date, time and location of the conference, as well as the names of all committee members. At least three (3) working days prior to the portfolio preliminary conference, the graduate student must confirm that the **Report of Preliminary Evaluation Committee Form** from the School of Graduate Studies has been received by his or her advisor/committee chairperson.

During the portfolio preliminary conference, the student will be asked to give a presentation of his or her proposed portfolio design. While the format of this presentation is determined by the graduate student and his or her advisor, a typical presentation will consist of a 30 minute Powerpoint presentation summarizing the proposed portfolio design and a description of intended content. This includes a description of the graduate student's educational and profession background and his or her teaching and program philosophies, a description of professional goals and competences and evidence of alignment with specified educational standards.

At the conclusion of the proposal presentation, the committee and graduate student will participate in a discussion session. Following the discussion session, the graduate committee will deliberate the validity of the proposed portfolio. At this point the graduate committee may accept the proposal, accept the proposal with conditions/corrections or reject the proposal. The graduate committee's decision is documented on the **Report of Preliminary Evaluation Committee Form**. If the proposal is accepted, the graduate student may continue work on his or her portfolio. If the proposal is accepted with conditions/corrections, the graduate student must make the documented changes/corrections prior to continuing work on his or her portfolio. If the proposal is rejected, the graduate student must revise the proposal and organize another portfolio preliminary conference.

At the conclusion of the preliminary conference, the graduate student must submit the completed **Report of Preliminary Evaluation Committee Form**, as well as a copy of his or her proposal to the School of Graduate Studies.

Portfolio Final Oral Examination

It is the graduate student's responsibility to organize a portfolio final oral examination with his or her committee. This examination is sometimes referred to as a portfolio defense meeting. The graduate student should contact his or her committee early in the graduate student's final semester to set the date of the final oral examination. The portfolio final oral examination cannot be scheduled during the final exam week of the semester. Furthermore, the preliminary conference and the final oral examination cannot occur within the same semester.

In the portfolio final oral examination, the graduate student will present his or her professional portfolio. An advisor approved draft of the portfolio should be submitted to the graduate committee at least three (3) weeks prior to the final oral examination.

At least two (2) weeks prior to the portfolio final oral examination, the graduate student must inform the School of Graduate Studies of the date, time and location of the examination, as well as the names of all committee members. At least three (3) working days prior to the portfolio final oral evaluation, the graduate student must confirm that the **Report of Final Evaluation Committee Form** from the School of Graduate Studies has been received by his or her advisor/committee chairperson.

During the portfolio final oral examination, the student will be asked to give a presentation of his or her portfolio design. While the format of this presentation is determined by the graduate student and his or her advisor, a typical presentation will consist of a 30 to 45 minute Powerpoint presentation summarizing the portfolio design and content. This includes a description of the graduate student's educational and profession background and his or her teaching and program philosophies, a description of professional goals and competences, evidence of alignment with specified educational standards and a description of strengths and weaknesses.

At the conclusion of the portfolio presentation, the committee and graduate student will participate in a discussion session. Following the discussion session, the graduate committee will deliberate the validity of the portfolio. At this point the graduate committee may accept the portfolio without revision, accept the portfolio with revision or reject the portfolio. The graduate committee's decision is documented on the **Report of Final Evaluation Committee Form**. If the portfolio is accepted without revision, the graduate student must submit a copy of the portfolio to the ETS department. If the portfolio is accepted with revision, the graduate student must make revision and re-submit the portfolio to the committee before submitting the final portfolio to the ETS department. If the portfolio is rejected, the graduate student may need to re-do major aspects of the portfolio. In the latter case, the graduate student must make changes to the portfolio and organize another portfolio final oral examination.

At the conclusion of the final oral examination, the graduate student must submit the completed **Report of Preliminary Evaluation Committee Form** to the School of Graduate Studies.

Graduation

Graduation requirements are outlined by the School of Graduate Studies and include the following criteria. The graduate student is required to have:

- Satisfactorily completed all requirements outlined in the ETS program and his or her program of graduate study.
- Maintained at least a 3.00 GPA.
- Obtained a grade of C or better in all courses within the program of graduate study.
- Successfully passed his or her final oral examination.
- Completed his or her thesis or portfolio to the satisfaction of his or her committee. Theses must be submitted in the correct format to the School of Graduate Studies with binding fee and abstracts.
- Applied for graduation. A graduate student must file the **Application for Graduation and Commencement Form** with the School of Graduate Studies at the beginning of the semester in which he or she intends to graduate. With the application, the graduate student must also pay a non-refundable graduation fee. If a graduate student does not graduate in the semester in which he or she applied, the graduate student must re-apply for graduation.

Upon completion of all graduation requirements, diplomas will be mailed by the Office of Records and Registration approximately eight (8) weeks after the graduate student's semester of graduation. Transcripts will state degree completion approximately three (3) weeks after the graduate student's semester of graduation.

Commencement and graduate hooding ceremonies are held during the conclusion of the fall and spring semesters. There are no ceremonies held at the conclusion of the summer semester, however, if a graduate student completes his or her Masters during the summer semester, he or she may take part in a fall or spring ceremony if so desired.

Please see the School of Graduate Studies website for graduation requirements and instructions.

Important Forms

Any forms discussed in this handbook are denoted in bold print. Descriptions of these forms, as well as other important forms, are given in alphabetical order in the following section.

Each description details: 1) the purpose of the form, 2) where the form can be found, 3) who is responsible for obtaining the form, 4) by whom the form is to be completed, 5) signatures required, 6) where/to whom the form should be submitted and 7) who is responsible for submitting the form.

➤ **Application for Graduation and Commencement**

- Purpose of the form:
 - To inform School of Graduate Studies of intent of graduate student to graduate
 - To allow School of Graduate Studies to perform graduation clearance for graduate student
 - To provide information for diploma and commencement ceremonies
- Where the form can be found:
 - School of Graduate Studies website
- Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Graduate student
- By whom the form is to be completed:
 - Graduate student
- Signatures required on the form:
 - Graduate student
- Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - School of Graduate Studies
- Who is responsible for submission of the form:
 - Graduate student

➤ **Graduate Admission Application Form**

- Purpose of the form:
 - To apply for graduate admission to St. Cloud State University and ETS graduate program
- Where the form can be found:
 - School of Graduate Studies website
- Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Graduate student applicant
- By whom the form is to be completed:
 - Graduate student applicant
- Signatures required on the form:
 - Graduate student applicant

➤ **Graduate Admission Application Form (*continued*)**

- Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - School of Graduate Studies
- Who is responsible for submission of the form:
 - Graduate student applicant

➤ **Graduate Assistantship Application Form**

- Purpose of the form:
 - To apply for graduate assistantship positions
- Where the form can be found:
 - School of Graduate Studies website
- Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Graduate student
- By whom the form is to be completed:
 - Graduate student
- Signatures required on the form:
 - Graduate student
- Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - Department(s) with graduate assistantship position opening(s)
- Who is responsible for submission of the form:
 - Graduate student

➤ **Graduate Overload Petition Form**

- Purpose of the form:
 - To request permission for the graduate student to enroll in more than sixteen (16) credits per semester in the regular academic year (fall and spring semesters)
 - To request permission for the graduate student to enroll in more than twelve (12) credits during the summer session + three (3) credits in summer intersession
- Where the form can be found:
 - School of Graduate Studies website
- Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Graduate student
- By whom the form is to be completed:
 - Graduate student
- Signatures required on the form:
 - Graduate student
 - Advisor
 - Graduate dean (after submission of form)

- **Graduate Overload Petition Form (*continued*)**
 - Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - School of Graduate Studies
 - Who is responsible for submission of the form:
 - Graduate student

- **Individual Study Approval Form**
 - Purpose of the form:
 - To register for an arranged course (ETS 501), internship credits (ETS 544), special problems (ETS 600), seminar (ETS 615) or thesis credits (ETS 699)
 - Where the form can be found:
 - ETS office (HH 216)
 - Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Instructor of course for ETS 501, ETS 600, ETS 615
 - Internship coordinator for ETS 544
 - Graduate student's advisor for ETS 699
 - By whom the form is to be completed:
 - Instructor of course for ETS 501, ETS 600, ETS 615
 - Internship coordinator for ETS 544
 - Graduate student's advisor for ETS 699
 - Signatures required on the form:
 - Graduate student
 - Instructor of course for ETS 501, ETS 600, ETS 615
 - Internship coordinator for ETS 544
 - Graduate student's advisor for ETS 699
 - ETS department chairperson
 - Graduate dean (ETS 501 only)
 - Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - Office of Records and Registration
 - School of Graduate Studies (ETS 501 only) (after submission of form)
 - Who is responsible for submission of the form:
 - Graduate student

- **Non-Degree Seeking Student Registration Form**
 - Purpose of the form:
 - To request registration as a non-degree seeking student
 - Where the form can be found:
 - Office of Records and Registration website

➤ **Non-Degree Seeking Student Registration Form (*continued*)**

- Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Non-degree seeking student
- By whom the form is to be completed:
 - Non-degree seeking student
- Signatures required on the form:
 - Non-degree seeking student
- Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - Office of Records and Registration (online submission)
- Who is responsible for submission of the form:
 - Non-degree seeking student

➤ **Petition Form**

- Purpose of the form:
 - To request course substitutions, additions and/or deletions to an approved graduate program of study
 - To request a change in culminating project, e.g. change from thesis option (plan A) to portfolio option (plan C)
 - To request a change in the number of credits required in an approved graduate program of study (a minimum of 30 credits of graduate course work required for plan A and a minimum of 36 credits of graduate course work required for plan C)
 - To change graduate committee members
 - To seek exception to graduate assistantship credit requirements
- Where the form can be found:
 - School of Graduate Studies website
- By whom the form is to be completed:
 - Graduate student
- Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Graduate student
- Signatures required on the form:
 - Graduate student
 - Advisor
 - Graduate dean (after submission of form)
- Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - School of Graduate Studies
- Who is responsible for submission of the form:
 - Graduate student

➤ **Proposed Semester Program of Graduate Study Form**

- Purpose of the form:
 - To formally declare course work the graduate student will take as part of the ETS graduate program
- Where the form can be found:
 - Office of the ETS graduate coordinator
 - School of Graduate Studies
- Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Graduate student
- By whom the form is to be completed:
 - Graduate student
 - Advisor
- Signatures required on the form:
 - Graduate student
 - Advisor
 - Graduate dean (after submission of form)
- Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - School of Graduate Studies
- Who is responsible for s submission of the form:
 - Graduate student

➤ **Report of Final Evaluation Committee Form**

- Purpose of the form:
 - To record date, committee members and outcome of the final oral examination
- Where the form can be found:
 - School of Graduate Studies office only
- Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Graduate student must request form two (2) weeks prior to the final oral examination
 - Graduate student should confirm three (3) working days prior to his or her final oral examination that the form has been received by his or her committee chairperson
- By whom the form is to be completed:
 - School of Graduate Studies
 - Committee chairperson
- Signatures required on the form:
 - Committee chairperson
 - Committee members

➤ **Report of Final Evaluation Committee Form (*continued*)**

- Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - School of Graduate Studies
- Who is responsible for s submission of the form:
 - Graduate student

➤ **Report of Preliminary Evaluation Committee Form**

- Purpose of the form:
 - To record date, committee members and outcome of the preliminary conference
- Where the form can be found:
 - School of Graduate Studies office only
- Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Graduate student must request form two (2) weeks prior to the preliminary conference
 - Graduate student should confirm three (3) working days prior to his or her preliminary conference that the form has been received by his or her committee chairperson
- By whom the form is to be completed:
 - School of Graduate Studies
 - Committee chairperson
- Signatures required on the form:
 - Committee chairperson
 - Committee members
- Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - School of Graduate Studies
- Who is responsible for s submission of the form:
 - Graduate student

➤ **Request for Change of Grade Form**

- Purpose of the form:
 - To allow an instructor of a course to change a student's grade
 - To change IP for ETS 699 to S after successful completion of degree
- Where the form can be found:
 - ETS office (HH 216)
- Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Instructor of course in which grade is to be changed
- By whom the form is to be completed:
 - Instructor of course in which grade is to be changed

- **Request for Change of Grade Form (*continued*)**
 - Signatures required on the form:
 - Instructor of course in which grade is to be changed
 - Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - Office of Records and Registration
 - Who is responsible for submission of the form:
 - Instructor of course in which grade is to be changed

- **Request for Change of Graduate Program Advisor Form**
 - Purpose of the form:
 - To allow a graduate student to request a new advisor
 - Where the form can be found:
 - School of Graduate Studies website
 - Who is responsible for obtaining the form:
 - Graduate student
 - By whom the form is to be completed:
 - Graduate student
 - Signatures required on the form:
 - Graduate student
 - Proposed advisor
 - ETS graduate coordinator
 - Graduate dean (after submission of form)
 - Where/to whom the form should be submitted:
 - School of Graduate Studies
 - Who is responsible for submission of the form:
 - Graduate student

Resources Links

- ETS Graduate Program:
 - <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/ets/graduateprograms.asp>

- ETS Graduate Student List-Serve:
 - <http://lists.stcloudstate.edu/mailman/listinfo/ets-graduate-students>

- Graduate Bulletin:
 - <http://bulletin.stcloudstate.edu/gb/policies/default.asp>

- Office of Records and Registration:
 - <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/registrar/>

Resources Links (*continued*)

- Office of Sponsored Programs:
 - <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/osp/>

- School of Graduate Studies:
 - <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/>

Handbook prepared by Mitch Bender (mr Bender@stcloudstate.edu), ETS graduate coordinator on November 19, 2007.
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