

A Proposal to Revise the Current Requirement for Master Degree with Non-thesis Option (Creative Component)

1. **The Issue:** Recently, the graduate college has changed the requirement on the POS committee of MS students with non-thesis option. Instead of requiring a major professor and two additional members to compose the POS committee, the new rule only requires at least one member of the graduate faculty (as the major professor), and leaves the decision to individual programs whether the minimum number of committee members should be increased.

Quote: on page 52 of the graduate handbook: *"Master with creative component: The master's POS committee for a student completing a creative component consists of at least one member of the graduate faculty as the major professor. Individual programs should consider whether the minimum number of committee members should be increased for the benefit of the students. The number of committee members in addition to the major professor will be established and monitored by the major/program/department. The POSC form available through AccessPlus must be submitted."*

However, a final oral examination is still required for MS students with non-thesis option. This means that, even with a one-member POS committee, the student still has to do a final oral examination in front of the major professor only. This scenario does not seem reasonable as the major professor is very much aware of the student's creative component project and would have approved/disapproved the project even without a final oral exam.

Quote: on page 113 of the graduate handbook: *"Master of Arts or Master of Science—Non-thesis. In certain programs a non-thesis degree program is offered. (For more information on requirements, contact the individual program or department.) This option requires the satisfactory completion of at least 30 graduate credit hours of acceptable work (not including research credit), not less than 22 of which must be earned from ISU, and satisfactory completion of a comprehensive final oral examination. In addition, every non-thesis master's program must present substantial evidence of individual accomplishment (e.g., a special report, capstone course, integrated field experience, annotated bibliography, or other creative endeavor). A minimum of two semester hours of such independent work (referred to as the creative component) is required on every program of study for a non-thesis master's degree and is applied toward the credit-hour requirement. This element of creative independent study must be explicitly identified on the program of study. Detailed requirements may vary with fields. Reference should be made to the program descriptions in the ISU Catalog."*

2. **The Proposal** is to remove the mandatory final oral examination component for Master degree with non-thesis option. Instead, the decision is left to individual programs whether a final oral examination should be required for the benefit of the students.