

College of Nursing and Health Sciences

EXERCISE AND HEALTH SCIENCES MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

FULL APPROVAL STATUS

The Exercise and Health Sciences Graduate program maintains Full Approval Status from Academic Quality Assessment and Development (AQUAD)

The Exercise and Health Sciences Master Program at the University of Massachusetts Boston is accredited by Academic Quality Assessment and Development (AQUAD)

**ALL STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR UNDERSTANDING
AND COMPLYING WITH ALL HANDBOOK POLICIES**

Students are expected to refer often to the policies and procedures contained within the current EHS MS Handbook available on the MCNHS website as well as other links provided in the EHS MS Handbook. All students are to provide their signature that they fully understand and agree to comply with all policies and procedures set forth in the Exercise and Health Sciences Graduate Student Handbook before the end of the 1st semester in the program.

**POLICIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE; STUDENTS WILL BE NOTIFIED VIA EMAIL IN A TIMELY MANNER OF IMPORTANT CHANGES.*

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1. Overview of the Program

The master's degree program offers advanced study in exercise and health sciences, including an option for practical experience with completing either a project or a thesis. A wide choice of electives and faculty research areas complement the core courses' tight focus on applied exercise physiology, advanced physical activity and health, and advanced health fitness assessment. Electives include areas such as clinical exercise physiology, exercise metabolism, advanced nutrition and health, and designing health promotion interventions. Faculty research focuses on areas such as exercise physiology, physical activity interventions for special populations, behavioral strategies for improving health, and physical activity epidemiology.

Core learning outcomes for master's students are:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge in Exercise Physiology and/or Physical Activity and Health.
- Apply statistical and research skills to identify, synthesize and critically evaluate scientific literature in the field of Exercise Physiology and/or Physical Activity and Health.
- Design and manage physical fitness assessment or exercise prescription and interventions for promoting exercise, physical activity, and health in different populations.
- Translate knowledge acquired in classroom to actual practice (e.g., research labs, clinical settings).
- Synthesize and disseminate scientific findings through theses or capstone projects.
- Demonstrate leadership to promote physical activity and improve health in diverse populations.

Thesis Option: This option is intended for students who may wish to pursue further academic or scientific study in the field. Prepares student to develop their skills in conducting scientific research. This option culminates with a final written thesis at the end of the student's 4th semester.

Non-Thesis Option: The non-thesis option is focused on acquiring the experiential skills necessary to prepare students for entry into the health field (e.g., exercise physiologist, worksite wellness director, etc.). The practicum provides students with an opportunity to strengthen their scientific knowledge and practical skills in the workplace and prepare students for future entry into the health field. This option culminates with a practicum in the student's area of interest at the end of their 4th semester.

Important Notes

As noted elsewhere in this handbook, the MS Thesis Option is one of two pathways available for students to complete the MS degree in the Department of Exercise and Health Sciences. The other option is the Practicum Option (see page 17). Students can opt into the Thesis Option during Year 1 of their graduate studies, but a major faculty advisor (mentor) and the Graduate Program Director (GPD) must approve this change. Details of that process are outlined below.

2. Choosing a Faculty Advisor

The first semester of study is a critical time for master's students to determine which option of study they will pursue and which faculty mentor/advisor they will choose to help them complete

the program. Students are encouraged to be proactive in making this all-important choice by meeting with the Graduate Program Director, the Program Assistant and individual faculty to determine which faculty may be the best “fit” to guide the student. The process is completed when the student has met with a faculty member, discussed her/his area of interest, and secured the commitment of the faculty member to guide the student. This should be done by the end of the student’s first semester of study. The faculty advisor will help the student narrow the area of focus, advise the student on relevant coursework for their elective credits, and mentor the student in their selected option.

Once the faculty member and student have agreed to work together, it is important that they continue to communicate as the student moves through the program. The frequency of this communication will vary and will depend upon the student’s need for mentoring. At the very least by the beginning of the third semester, the student and faculty need to determine (based upon the option of study) the topic of the student’s thesis or practicum. For thesis students, the student’s faculty advisor will help identify at least two additional faculty to comprise the student’s thesis committee during the third semester. The student’s committee, once approved by the Graduate Program Director and the Dean of Graduate Studies, guides the student in completing their thesis.

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The MS Thesis Option

2.1 Overview of MS Thesis Option

The MS thesis option provides students with the unique opportunity to conduct scholarly research on issues regarding physical activity, nutrition, and health in a multicultural setting. Students who select the Thesis option will demonstrate their ability to plan and conduct a mentored research project. The graduate program's research focus is intended to enhance the career growth potential of students, whether they choose to apply their research skills in advanced academic study, or in workplace settings where sophistication in conducting and managing research and other projects is required. Students have the opportunity to conduct their thesis research in a number of topical areas that align with the skills and expertise of faculty in the department. The major faculty advisor and thesis committee will ensure departmental and university-wide consistency in meeting master's-level criteria.

By the end of their first semester, students are encouraged to identify a faculty mentor (i.e., major faculty advisor) with whom they wish to study. In conducting their research, students must also demonstrate knowledge in research methods and leadership skills.

The student will identify a thesis topic in consultation with their major faculty advisor and thesis committee. The thesis committee must be comprised of at least two EHS faculty members and one external member. The range of possible thesis projects can entail either primary or secondary data collection and/or data analysis. The advisor and thesis committee members must provide signed approval of the proposal before students move on conducting their research.

The thesis option requires students to demonstrate their ability to conduct thesis research in a period of two semesters or stages. The thesis proposal stage involves the student completing a thorough literature review (including historical context of the research, current gaps in knowledge and other relevant topics), writing specific aims and objectives, determining the study design, and completing both a written and oral presentation of the proposed research ideally by November 1 of Semester 3. Students complete this stage while enrolled in EHS 690 – Proposal Development, which is worth 3 credits.

The proposal includes a written document that is distributed to the faculty members at least 2 weeks before the oral presentation. The written proposal should consist of 3 chapters, an introduction (Chapter 1), a comprehensive literature review (Chapter 2), and a detailed summary of the study design and methods (Chapter 3). The oral presentation is expected to be approximately 20-30 minutes in length and summarizes the literature review and highlights the study aims, design and methods.

The thesis execution stage occurs while the student is enrolled in EHS 699 – Thesis. Students cannot enroll in this course unless they have successfully passed the thesis proposal stage. The thesis execution stage involves conducting the research, analyzing the data, writing the thesis document, and passing an oral defense during Semester 4. Students are expected to demonstrate satisfactory skills, knowledge, and abilities introduced in the master's degree core curriculum and electives. The final thesis product will include a manuscript-ready format eligible for submission for publication to a peer-reviewed journal. The overall structure of thesis will be: introduction

(Chapter 1), literature review (Chapter 2), design and methods (Chapter 3), results (Chapter 4), and discussion (Chapter 5). The thesis shall follow the [University's guidelines for thesis preparation](#) and shall require a formal defense. The thesis must be approved by all members of the thesis committee, the GPD acting on behalf of the program, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Table 1. Required Documentation and Deadlines for Completing MS Thesis Option

Forms	Description	Deadline
Commitment to MS Thesis Option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commits the student to completing the thesis option. Signed by student, major faculty advisor, and GPD by the end Semester 2 	End of Semester 2
Form 1: Designation of MS Thesis Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formally designates student's thesis committee. Signed by student, major faculty advisor, 2 other faculty committee members, and the GPD. 	Ideally by September 30 of Semester 3
Form 2: Approval of Thesis Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed by the student, the thesis committee chair and GPD after student finalizes date of final oral presentation and defense. Student and committee chair work with the GPD and GPA to promote public defense. 	Form 2 should be completed and submitted 4-6 weeks prior to final oral defense to allow for proper scheduling and logistical matters to be accounted for.
Form 3: Thesis Defense announcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form announces official thesis defense date. Students present a written document and PowerPoint presentation to the committee 2 weeks prior to oral defense and complete final oral presentation. 	<p>Oral thesis defense should ideally take place by March 15 of Semester 4.</p> <p>You must let your committee members, GPA and GPD know about your proposed date at least 14 days prior to the date of defense.</p>
Form 4: Final Approval of Completed MS Thesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed by committee and GPD after student successfully defends their thesis. Students present a written 	<p>Oral Thesis Defense by March 15 of Semester 4.</p> <p>Final signed approval by thesis</p>

	document to the committee 2 weeks prior to oral defense and complete final oral presentation.	<p>committee and GPD at least 5 business days before April 10.</p> <p>This deadline gives the student and faculty time for revision of the written thesis and submission of a final grade.</p> <p>April 10 is the final submission deadline of the written document for a May degree.</p> <p>August 1 is the final submission deadline of the written document for an August degree.</p>
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2.2 MS Thesis Option Coursework

In addition to core courses, there are two required courses, EHS 690 - Proposal Development (3 credits) and EHS 699 - Thesis (3 credits) and 3 credits of electives in the thesis option. Table 2 lists core courses for the MS program for students in the thesis option. After completing three core courses and prior to EHS 690 Proposal Development, the student will select a major faculty advisor for their thesis.

Table 2. Thesis Option Course of Study

	AEP Thesis option	PAHP thesis option
	Courses (Credits)	Courses (Credits)
Semester 1 (Fall)	EHS630-Advanced Health Fitness Assessment (3) EHS685-Applied Exercise Physiology (3) NU760- Biostatistics (3)	EHS630-Advanced Health Fitness Assessment (3) EHS685- Applied Exercise Physiology (3) NU760- Biostatistics (3)
Semester 2 (Spring)	EHS625-Quantitative Research Methods (3) EHS655-Advanced Physical Activity and Health (3) EHS680- Clinical Exercise Physiology (3)	EHS625-Quantitative Research Methods (3) EHS655 Advanced Physical Activity and Health (3) (3) EHS670-Designing Exercise and Health Promotion Interventions (3)
Semester 3 (Fall)	EHS682-Exercise Metabolism (3) EHS690-Proposal Development (3) <i>EHS ELECTIVE</i> (3)	EHS656-Advanced Nutrition and Health (3) EHS690-Proposal Development (3) <i>EHS ELECTIVE</i> (3)
Semester 4 (Spring)	EHS699-Thesis (6)	EHS699-Thesis (6)
Total credits	33	33

Table 3. Thesis Option Timeline

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk with Graduate Program Director and/or Graduate Program Assistant about career and project interests. • Engage with appropriate faculty to discuss ideas about project and possible mentorship • Narrow interests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage with appropriate faculty to discuss project ideas and mentorship. • Select major advisor for thesis. • Meet with potential committee members on EHS faculty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize committee (sign Form 2). • Complete Forms 1 (Thesis committee form) and 2 (Thesis proposal form) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with faculty advisor (weekly/bi-weekly as needed) • Complete an oral presentation to committee (final defense). • Complete Forms 3 (Thesis defense announcement form) and 4 (Thesis defense form).

2.3 MS Advisor and Thesis Committee

Thesis committees in the Department of Exercise and Health Sciences consist of a Chair (Major Faculty Advisor) and two additional members. All members of the committee must be graduate faculty for the MS Program. By the middle of the third semester, each student's major faculty advisor will help the student identify two additional faculty members to comprise the student's thesis committee. These two other faculty members should be selected for their expertise relative to the student's topic. This may include content expertise or skills in areas such as statistics or study design that may contribute to the thesis. At minimum, MS thesis committees must consist of 3 members, two of whom should be full-time faculty from the Department of Exercise and Health Sciences. In certain cases, where specialized expertise is needed, committees may consist of up to 4 members. In special cases the composition of the thesis committee can be modified with approval from the GPD.

The GPD must provide written approval of the thesis committee by completing Committee Approval Form. The thesis committee guides the student in developing the thesis proposal, completing the thesis, and in the final oral defense of the thesis. The committee will help to ensure consistency across departmental and university-wide requirements and expectations for the thesis. It shall be the responsibility of the thesis committee to approve the thesis project, to supervise its execution by the student, and to arrange for the final examination of the student, including public notice.

2.4 Thesis Standards

These standards provide information for the preparation of the final manuscript following the thesis or defense and for the submission of the work to the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS), after the final review of content and style by your major advisor. Please read them carefully and

in their entirety. They are to be used in conjunction with the specific format and styles manual adopted by your academic program and accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies. **These instructions should be used from the moment you begin your thesis, and not as an afterthought to correct format.**

Throughout the preparation of your thesis, you should keep in mind that your manuscript will be considered a published work and not a pre-publication document. Some style manuals, especially those issued by professional associations, are intended to guide the preparation of an article for editorial review and revision; therefore, you may encounter requirements in those manuals which are not applicable to the preparation of a thesis. For example, pre-publication manuals often instruct that the reference section of the work be double-spaced, while correct thesis form in the reference section is single-spaced.

All theses will be submitted electronically to the UMass Boston-ProQuest/UMI web site. No paper copies will be required or accepted. The requirements presented below are effective as of November 2019, and any thesis submitted after this date must follow them. *You should not use theses written prior to this date as models for manuscript preparation and formatting, since they may not conform to the current standards.* If you have questions, contact your program director. A step-by-step guide to using ETD is available at the [UMass Boston Graduate Studies website](#).

2.5 Proposal Development (3rd semester)

The Master's Proposal is due at the end of the 3rd semester of the program. There is variability in the format of the master's proposal, ranging from a 10-page single spaced document (not including title page, abstract, and appendices) to a proposal that includes a much longer introduction and literature review.

The proposal should include the following:

1. **Title of Project:** Choose a title that is specific (rather than general) and highly descriptive of the project.
2. **Abstract:** An abstract is one of the most important sections of a scholarly project such as a journal article or grant proposal. This section includes a brief summary of the proposal. Important areas to be covered include a statement of questions or hypotheses to be investigated as well as a description of the research participants, key constructs, and procedures that will be used to carry out the study.
3. **Introduction (Chapter 1):** List the broad objectives or overarching goals of the project along with more specific research hypotheses or questions that the proposed research is designed to address. This section should be one to two pages.
4. **Literature Review (Chapter 2):** Present an opening argument that highlights the importance and significance of the aims of the proposed research. Next review the literature relevant to the current proposal. Critically evaluate existing knowledge and identify gaps that the project is intended to fill. The literature reviewed should be oriented toward the specific questions addressed in the proposed master's thesis project. Do NOT discuss research in the general area unless it provides direct justification for the particular hypotheses, research questions, or

concepts that will be pursued. This is the section in which variables and hypotheses/questions that will be examined should be clearly identified and defined. If used, measures that test the hypotheses should also be explicitly outlined in the methods section. It is important to provide a rationale or justification of the relevance of each of the particular variables that are included and proposed for study or each of the questions that will be explored. The length of this section is determined in discussions with individual mentors. The content of the background and significance will also vary depending on the aims and methods proposed.

5. *Design and Methods (Chapter 3):* Describe the proposed research design and procedures that will be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. This section should be a summary of each step in the execution of the project; it tells the reader which population will be studied, exactly what procedures will be followed, and how data will be analyzed. Note what is novel or innovative about the proposed conceptualization or approach. For qualitative research, in which broad research questions may be proposed rather than specific hypotheses, it is important to explain the procedures for data collection and the particular method proposed within the field of qualitative research. To the extent possible, include a description of the proposed participants (who they will be, how many will be recruited/enrolled, and what inclusion and exclusion criteria will be employed). Include any instructions to be given to participants, how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted, scoring procedures, procedures to ensure that scoring is reliable, and specific analyses to be undertaken. For quantitative studies, be sure that variables are clearly operationalized and that a rationale for the statistical methods chosen is provided. The proposed analyses should follow from and closely match (in both number and technique) the hypotheses that were outlined in the background and significance section.

6. *References:* Include in the reference section a list of all references cited in the text. Refer to the APA publication manual for the correct form for citing references both in the text and in the references section. There is no page limit in the reference section.

7. *Appendix:* Students can choose to attach an appendix if there is information that would be distracting or too detailed to include in the main body of the text, but is nonetheless important to include. For example, students may choose to append a new measure or coding scheme that was developed specifically for the proposed study, or one which is not widely known or cited in previously published research. If more than one document is appended, title this section "appendices."

2.6 Written and Oral Presentation of the Proposed Research

Steps in Proposal Hearing Preparation

Once the Chair, in consultation with the Thesis Committee, has determined the proposal is satisfactory, the student will schedule a date for the proposal hearing with all committee members. All members of the Thesis Committee are required to be in attendance for the defense. The student should take the following steps in scheduling the defense:

1. The student is responsible for choosing a date with all committee members.
2. The student should contact the Graduate Program Assistant for reservation of a room for the defense.
3. Two weeks prior to the defense, the student should submit a completed proposal

announcement to the Graduate Program Assistant.

4. The student is responsible for all set up, material preparation, and other details for the hearing.
5. The student must bring Thesis Proposal Form (Notification of Proposal Acceptance) with them to the hearing for committee members to use in evaluating the proposal.

Results of the Hearing

The two possible outcomes of the committee vote are:

- Pass: Everyone on the committee checks the “pass” box and signs. Any required revisions are clearly spelled out in the comments section of the form by the Major Advisor and the Committee. In some cases, the entire committee may indicate that they want to see changes to the proposal. In other cases, only the major advisor will need to review the changes and sign off indicating that the conditions for the “pass” have been met.
- Fail: Everyone on the committee checks the “fail” box and signs. To advance in their program, students may have to submit a new written proposal to the committee for review and/or present at a second oral defense. The specific conditions will be decided upon by the Major Faculty Advisor and the committee. Students have one opportunity to redo the written and/or oral components of the thesis proposal. If the student receives a fail on the retake, they automatically are opted back into the MS exam option.

Students may be required to make modifications to the written proposal document. Typically, revisions will be completed within two weeks of the oral defense. Once this stage is completed, Thesis Proposal Form is signed by the committee, and the GPD. Once this form is signed, the student may commence research activities related to the project.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

All research involving contact with human subjects or animals must be approved by the campus Institutional Review Board (IRB) or the campus Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and data collection cannot start until appropriate IRB or IACUC approvals have been obtained. Forms and information about IRB or IACUC Review can be obtained from [Office for Research and Sponsored Programs](#). Students are advised to consult with the IRB or the IACUC early in the process.

Thesis Development (4th semester)

- Conducting the research
- Analyzing the results
- Writing the thesis

Preparing and Defending – Final Thesis (4th semester)

- Passing an oral defense
- Manuscript-ready format eligible for submission to a peer-reviewed journal

2.7 Final Oral Defense

The final oral defense of the thesis should be completed by March 15 of Semester 4 for an April submission date. Once the student passes this stage, the Thesis Defense Form (MS) will be signed by the committee, the student, the GPD, and the EHS Department Chair. Students will have 2 more

weeks to completed revisions of the final thesis document, if needed. The oral defense will consist of a 25-30 minute presentation on the background of the thesis research, the significance of the findings, and a discussion and interpretation of the results. Students will need to respond to relevant questions from the thesis committee related to the thesis research design, implementation, and results. This final examination, which will consist of an oral presentation, will be conducted by the thesis committee, and will be primarily concerned with, but not necessarily limited to, the candidate's thesis. For example, a committee member may question or probe a student about practical implications of their findings or future research directions.

This final oral defense or examination shall be scheduled when all thesis committee members agree that the thesis is sufficiently complete to undergo defense; approval of the thesis, passing the defense, and/or recommending the degree, however, are not implied by scheduling this examination.

The final oral defense/examination itself is attended by the candidate, the thesis committee, and invited guests, such as other EHS faculty and students. Only the committee members may vote. If all committee members cast positive votes, the student shall be deemed to have passed the final oral examination. If there is one negative vote, the degree will be held up pending satisfactory resolution by the student of the objections of the dissenting member of the committee; final program approval is represented by the signature of the GPD. Students failing in their initial defense will be required to repeat all or part of the defense. A second failure of the thesis defense will result in the student's release from the graduate program.

2.8 Process and Deadlines for Thesis Submission

Final submission:

- By 11:59 PM (EST/EDT) on the dates below, you must submit a copy of your defended and revised thesis, approved in full for **content** by your program, to the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) via the UMass Boston/ProQuest/UMI ETD website (see link at https://www.umb.edu/academics/graduate/info_for_graduate_students/graduating_from_uma_ss_boston/theses_dissertations)
- Before the final submission, the **format** of the thesis must have been approved in full by the Office of Graduate Studies format editor and must have been authorized by this advisor in writing to submit the final version of the thesis. [See here for the most up to date Standards for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations.](#)
- The student must submit **the final copies** of the thesis via the UMass Boston/ProQuest/UMI ETD website by 11:59 PM (EST/EDT) on or before the dates below.
 - April 10 for May degree date
 - Aug 1 for August degree date

A. Materials Needed for Submission

1. Thesis in PDF format; make sure there is no password protection on the file. You should include the **unsigned** Signatory Page in the pdf; do not include the **signed** signatory page.
2. An electronic copy of your abstract to cut and paste
3. Supplemental files (optional)
4. Signed Signatory Page
5. Chairperson and Committee Members names and titles
6. Subject Categories

7. Credit/Debit Card for payment

B. Corrections with Format Editor

- The format editor is responsible only for the standards listed in this document. You should consult with your program director regarding the specific format-and-style manual adopted by your program and approved by the Office of Graduate Studies; this manual will guide you with important issues such as style for footnotes/endnotes and bibliography. Should any discrepancy exist between these standards and the manual used in your program, these requirements take precedence. (Note, for example, the distinction made at the beginning of these standards between pre-publication style and correct thesis style.) For any issue not covered in your program's approved style guide or these requirements, refer to Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th edition (paperback), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018.
- Issues that fall primarily within the purview of the program, rather than OGS, include:
 1. All content and grammar
 2. Footnote and endnote format
 3. Bibliographical format
- The format editor is primarily responsible for making sure that you have correctly followed the OGS standards in all respects. He/she may not approve your thesis until ALL of these standards for format have been successfully met.

C. Communication and Step-by-Step Process

Before your defense:

Introduce yourself to your format editor by email (optional). Feel free at this time to ask any questions you may have about format.

Email the format editor a copy of your Signatory Page, to obtain approval of its format ***before*** seeking the actual signatures. *Please be attentive to the details of the signatory page, particularly the name and title of each committee member, since errors will require you to have the page re-printed and re-signed by your committee again.*

After your defense (and after any revisions required by your program have been made):

1. Submit your initial document to the Office of Graduate Studies via the [UMass Boston-ProQuest/UMI ETD website](#). Do not include the signed Signatory Page. The signed Signatory Page should be mailed or brought to the Office of Graduate Studies. Thesis will be corrected for format on a first-come, first-served basis. You are encouraged to submit your thesis prior to the published initial-submission date, in order to give yourself more time to make corrections.
2. Wait a week to be contacted by your format editor; if you do not hear back from your advisor after a week, you should either email him/her or call the Office of Graduate Studies. Remember, it is *your responsibility*, with your format editor's help, to make sure that this process is complete by the final-submission deadline.

3. Make any corrections that are necessary, following your format editor's directions exactly. Return the corrected version of your thesis to the Office of Graduate Studies via the [UMass Boston-ProQuest/UMI ETD website](#) as quickly as possible.
****** Please note that there may be multiple steps to the correcting process, and you may need to submit and resubmit your thesis more than once before you obtain the final OK from your format editor.**
4. Receive the final OK from your format editor in writing.
5. *The full final submission must be received by the Office of Graduate Studies by April 10th for May graduation, by August 1st for August graduation, and by December 1st for December graduation.*
6. You will receive an email receipt for the final submission of your thesis. Please note that you may have additional requirements for graduation. Please contact the Registrar's Office for a final determination of your graduation status

D. Final Copies of Thesis

- Once the final version of the thesis has been accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies, it becomes the property of that office and cannot be removed by the degree candidate, any member of the faculty or staff, or other students. No further corrections may be made.
- One bound copy will be given to and retained by your program, the other will be retained by Healey Library.

Copyright Information

A thesis automatically falls under general copyright protection as soon as it is fixed in final form. No fee or formal registration with the Library of Congress is required. However, a copyright notice should be placed on the page following the title page. See the sample page at the end of these standards. This copyright notice is generally sufficient, but if formal registration is desired, you may either contact the Copyright Office at the Library of Congress. An electronic copy of the abstract may be kept by the Office of Graduate Studies or Healey Library and may be published (hard copy or electronically) as part of collections of abstracts, theses.

University of Massachusetts Intellectual Property Policy, Amherst and Boston (Doc. T96-040) states that "Theses and Dissertations - The texts of all student theses and derivative works of these works, are considered Exempted Scholarly Works; therefore, the student will own copyright to the Scholarly Work, subject to a royalty-free license to the University to reproduce and publish the Scholarly Work."

More Information:

[Standards for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations at the University of Massachusetts Boston](#)

3. The MS Non-Thesis Option

3.1 Overview of the MS Non-Thesis Option

The purpose of the graduate practicum is to provide students with a capstone experience in the fields of exercise and health sciences. This experiential course, which can be field- or laboratory-based, and located on site at UMass Boston or off-campus, provides an opportunity for students to apply relevant clinical, communication and management skills. In close consultation with the course instructor and major advisor, the student is placed in an EHS Department-approved site to complete a minimum of 100 hours of experience.

The student who elects this option wishes to strengthen their scientific knowledge and management/leadership skills in the workplace. This option provides students with an opportunity to acquire and apply the experiential skills necessary to prepare students for entry into the health field (e.g. exercise physiologist, work site wellness director).

The EHS MS Practicum Option is designed for students who are interested in careers that include, but are not limited to:

- Project leadership and management, such as in grant-funded research or in clinical or practice settings, such as worksite wellness programs or public health departments.
- Fitness and wellness management, exercise physiology.
- Public or private sector positions in exercise science/physiology, or other health promotion and disease prevention programs implemented in clinical or health management settings.

The practicum is designed to support students' translation of knowledge acquired in EHS courses to hands-on, skilled based practice. One of the main objectives is to complete a work product such as, but not limited to, participation in the development and/or implementation of a site-based evaluation, or development and presentation of evidence-based training materials.

Students taking the Practicum Option must present their capstone experience at an event open to the university. This presentation should clearly demonstrate the student's proficiency and includes real examples of some of the following: written communication, oral presentations, work plans, budgets, intervention/exercise/curriculum/program plans, and/or evaluations of an intervention/curriculum/program.

In addition to the core courses, this option includes EHS 698 Practicum (3 credits), and six elective credits, three which must be taken within the EHS department. Table 6 lists elective courses for the MS program for students in the project option. Once the student makes that selection, a practicum placement will be coordinated (EHS 698) by the student, the GPA and the Clinical and Internship Placement Office (CIPO). This option entails the completion of a minimum of 100 hours of hands-on experience at an approved practicum site. The practicum will culminate with a capstone presentation of the student's experience at an event open to the university (this may include Research Day or another college event).

3.2 MS Non-Thesis Option Coursework

The Practicum Option aims to enable the student to accomplish some or all the following objectives:

- Integrate and strengthen technical knowledge and quantitative skills developed in master's degree courses (leadership, communication, program/project management).
- Gain firsthand experience within a professional network in a physical activity and health promotion, health care or research setting.

- Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- Develop management and leadership competencies in areas such as supervision, team development, communication, and program/project management responsibilities.
- Translate research skills into development, management and evaluation of public health projects/programs.

Table 4. Non-thesis Option Course of Study

	AEP Non-thesis option	PAHP Non-thesis option
	Courses (Credits)	Courses (Credits)
Semester 1 (Fall)	EHS630-Advanced Fitness Assessment (3) EHS685- Applied Exercise physiology (3) NU760- Biostatistics (3)	EHS630-Advanced Fitness Assessment (3) EHS685- Applied Exercise physiology (3) NU760- Biostatistics (3)
Semester 2 (Spring)	EHS650- Obesity and Weight management (3) EHS655- Advanced Physical Activity and Health (3) EHS 680- Clinical Exercise Physiology (3)	EHS650- Obesity and Weight management (3) EHS655- Advanced Physical Activity and Health (3) EHS670- Designing Exercise and Health Promotion Interventions (3)
Semester 3 (Fall)	EHS682- Exercise Metabolism (3) EHS 635- Program and Project Management (3) <i>EHS ELECTIVE (3)</i>	EHS656- Advanced Nutrition and Health (3) EHS 635- Program and Project Management (3) <i>EHS ELECTIVE (3)</i>
Semester 4 (Spring)	EHS 698-Practicum (3) <i>EHS ELECTIVE (3)</i>	EHS 698-Practicum (3) <i>EHS ELECTIVE (3)</i>
Total credits	33	33

Table 5. Non-thesis Option Timeline

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk with Graduate Program Director and/or Graduate Program Assistant about career and project interests. • Engage with appropriate faculty to discuss ideas about project and possible mentorship • Narrow interests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage with appropriate faculty to discuss project ideas and mentorship. • Select major advisor for project. • Meet with potential committee members on EHS faculty. • Meet with major advisor to discuss potential sites and projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with major advisor and GPA to identify and coordinate with site. • Complete site and MCNHS requirements (e.g., clinical clearance as needed). • Interview with potential practicum sites as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete practicum hours at site and project. • Meet with faculty advisor (weekly/bi-weekly as needed) • Complete oral presentation during Research Day • Revise and resubmit final portfolio document to course instructor for final grading.

3.3 Practicum Standards

Students are required to work in consultation with the course instructor, major advisor and site supervisor to develop a contract stating agreed-upon, site-specific goals, objectives, and evaluation methods, designed to satisfy EHS 698 course objectives. One of the primary learning objectives for this course is to complete a work product such as, but not limited to, participation in the development and/or implementation of a site-based evaluation (not a thesis), or development and presentation of evidence-based training materials. Students present this as a capstone paper and an oral presentation at an event open to the university.

Students will work as a team member in the sponsoring organization (i.e., project site) under the supervision of a faculty advisor and site preceptor for a minimum of 100 hours during Semester 4. Students will meet regularly with their major advisor to discuss progress with their projects.

Students will pick from a list of existing sites or may look into finding their own site and apply for the practicum in the semester preceding the placement. As with our undergraduate placements, all background check, clinical, and agreement paperwork deadlines need to be met and will need to be completed prior to the semester beginning.

The practicum is designed to support students' translation of knowledge acquired in prior EHS courses to actual skill-based practice. In close consultation with the course instructor and major advisor, the student is placed in an EHS Department-approved site to complete a minimum of 100 hours of experience. In addition, the student attends a class meeting once per month. The classroom meetings provide a forum for students to reflect on and assess their practicum learning experiences with their course instructor and peers. Discussion extends beyond the student's skill practicum experience to include on-going evaluation or re-evaluation of career goals.

3.4 Final Oral Presentation

In the oral presentation, coordinated by the student's and the course instructor, the student will present the rationale for, relevance of, and outcomes of the practicum, and respond to relevant questions regarding the design, implementation, and evaluation of their practicum. This presentation will take place during the college's Research Day.

3.5 Clinical Clearance Requirements

The Clinical and Internship Placement Office (CIPO) supports the College of Nursing and Health Sciences with compliance for clinical groups, internships, preceptorships, and practica. In order to maintain partner compliance per our affiliation agreements, the CIPO staff regularly communicates with various outside constituents, such as health care partners and their legal counsel, Office of General Counsel, Board of Health, Center for Disease Control, Massachusetts Centralized Clinical Placement System, and others.

All clinical clearances must be done through InPlace Smart Placement Services. Chief activities include:

- CORI & National Background Checks
- Health Requirements: Immunization, Health Insurance, CPR Certification
- FERPA Releases
- Affiliation Agreements

Students are fully responsible to complete and submit clinical clearance documents correctly and on time. Incomplete packets will not be accepted. Students who fail to submit Clinical Clearance documentation on time will be administratively withdrawn from clinical EHS courses. Following initial clearance, it is the students' responsibility to remain in compliance with clinical requirements. EHS students are also responsible for all costs related to required immunizations, tests, certifications, insurance, illness, and/or hospitalization.

4. Policies and Procedures

4.1 Academic Standing and Progression

Academic standing is the basis for decisions regarding student progression, probation, graduation, and dismissal in the Graduate EHS Program. Academic standing is determined by the student's cumulative quality point average, a measure of all the grades the student has earned

in the University which are applied to the course requirements of the Master's Program. The following policies apply to all matriculated students in the Graduate Program. Policies in effect when the student is matriculated into the program of study will apply throughout the students' program of study. Policies in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences handbook may be more stringent than those of general graduate academic policies set forth by the [Office of the Registrar](#). In matters of policy difference, the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and Health Sciences policy supersedes the University policy. All graduate EHS students are required to comply with the policies included in this document.

4.1.a All full and part time students must maintain a cumulative average of 3.0 to graduate.

4.1.b All full and part-time students who fail to maintain a 3.0 GPA may be subject to academic dismissal.

4.1.c Students who do not maintain a cumulative quality point average of 3.00 will be referred to the MCNHS Student Affairs Committee. Students will be asked to submit a letter of appeal with an explanation to the MCNHS Student Affairs Committee. Based upon review of the student's record and letter of appeal, the MCNHS Student Affairs Committee will recommend conditions of Probation, or Dismissal and forward these to the Department Chair and Graduate Program Director.

4.2 Academic Honesty & Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and are not tolerated by MCNHS or the University. Strict policies and procedures for dealing with these offenses are in place at the University and are outlined extensively in both the [University's Code of Student Conduct](#) and [Policies & Regulations website](#).

Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, cheating on examinations, submitting written material that is the work of others, purchasing papers over the internet, or seeking unauthorized use of computer files of a faculty or staff member or other student(s).

Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, furnishing false or inaccurate information, disruptive conduct, or theft and damage to university property.

Should a faculty member suspect a student of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty, the faculty member will notify the EHS student in writing of the charges and inform him/her of his/her rights and responsibilities as outlined in the [University's "Procedures for Academic Dishonesty"](#). The faculty member should meet with the EHS student to discuss the alleged violation within ten (10) days of incident. If the issue is not resolved at this meeting, the faculty member will notify the EHS student in writing within ten (10) days of the meeting, and copy the Dean of Graduate Studies, Graduate Program Director, and the Department Chair.

Sanctions for plagiarism or academic dishonesty may include, but are not limited to, a zero (0) for the assignment, course, or both, and other sanctions up to dismissal, per University policy.

The University has a special concern for incidents in which persons are subject to harassment because of membership in a protected class. Such incidents damage not only individuals but also the free and open academic environment of the University. If no sanction is imposed, the charges are considered dismissed. The student will be notified regarding next steps in the process by the Office of Graduate Studies. Students are encouraged to utilize Student Services as a resource during this process. Cheating EHS students are honor-bound to maintain ethical practices when taking an examination. If a EHS student's behavior signifies that s/he is cheating during an examination, as defined under the "Academic Honesty" section of the Code of Student Conduct, the EHS student will be asked to surrender the examination and meet with the faculty member as specified below.

4.3 University Policy on Non-Discrimination

The University of Massachusetts Boston prohibits discrimination in all its policies on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, physical or mental difference of ability, or veteran status.

Disability-Related Accommodations

Both the College and University strive to maintain adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with documented differences of physical or mental ability and require accommodations should review the related information from the Ross Center for Disability Services (www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/disability) and the Events, News & Media Department (www.umb.edu/news_events_media/events/special/policies/accommodations).

4.4 Full time and Part-Time Enrollment

It is the intention of the faculty to be flexible with students' needs to balance the demands of graduate study with the obligations of work and family. Students may, therefore, elect to enroll in the program on either a full time or part time basis. Upon admission students will indicate which option they will choose. A student may change their enrollment option only with the permission of their faculty advisor and the Graduate Program Director. The semester enrollment patterns under each option presented above apply to students who are enrolling full time.

4.5 Five-Year Limitation on Period to Earn a Degree

University policy indicates that all graduate students must earn their degree within five years of the date of matriculation into the program of study in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

4.5.a Exceptions to credit minimum must be made in consultation with the student's advisor. Changes will affect the student's program of study and expected date of graduation.

4.5.b The student must petition their Graduate Program Director for an exception to the minimum credit policy.

4.5.c Exceptions will be made in special circumstances and may be granted for one semester only.

4.5.d If an exception is granted by the Graduate Program Director, the student will be notified in

writing and requested to meet with their advisor to file a new program of study and expected date of graduation.

5.5.d Graduate students who fail to complete their program of study within five years will be placed on registration hold by the university registrar and may be subject to dismissal by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

4.6 Request for Extending Five Year Limitation

Graduate students may seek an extension of the five-year time limitation to complete their program of study because of extenuating circumstances one time during their program of study.

4.6.a Graduate students must be in good academic standing and not on probation to be considered for an extension.

4.6.b Graduate students must file a petition for extension on the deadline to graduate in writing to the Graduate Program Director who will forward the request to the Dean of Graduate Studies. The petition request should include all relevant information including a clear statement of the reasons for the request, the extenuating circumstances, and a revised plan of study with new date of graduation.

4.6.c A signature of the graduate student's academic advisor of record must accompany the petition for extension containing the revised program plan at the time of the request.

4.6.d The Dean of Graduate Studies will notify graduate student of the decision in writing.

4.7 Grading Policy

Policy on Grades.

The instructor of a class has full responsibility for grading and is the best judge of student performance; there may, however, be instances in which a graduate student believes that a grade has been assigned unfairly. In such cases, the student should discuss the grade with the instructor. If they are unable to resolve the issue, the student should make a written request to the Graduate Program Director asking for a meeting with the faculty member to discuss a fuller explanation of the grade and/or reconsideration of the grade. Although the Graduate Program Director serves as mediator in this meeting, the faculty member remains the final authority for any grading decision.

Incomplete.

4.7.a A grade of incomplete (INC) is not automatically awarded when a student fails to complete a course. Incomplete grades are awarded only when satisfactory work has been accomplished in the majority of the course (75% completed) and the student is unable to complete course requirements due to extenuating life circumstances beyond their control. The student must negotiate with and receive the approval of the course instructor in order to receive the grade of incomplete.

4.7.b A copy of the written agreement between the faculty member and the student which specifies the work to be completed and the deadline for completion must be on file with the Graduate Program Director with a copy to the graduate student's advisor.

5.7.c. A student can only obtain credit for an INC by completing the coursework before the end of one calendar year from the time of enrollment in the course in which they have earned an incomplete. At the end of that period, if the course faculty member does not submit a change of grade form, a grade of F (Failure) will be recorded on the student's transcript. An incomplete grade that converts to an F is irrevocable.

5.7.d Graduate students with an Incomplete in a pre-requisite course cannot progress to active enrollment in a course requiring that pre-requisite while an INC grade remains on their transcript.

5.7.e Graduate students who have an INC in a clinical course may not progress to the next clinical course.

4.8 Graduate Assistantships

The University offers a limited number of graduate assistantships in teaching or research to qualified students. Applicants for admission to graduate programs and currently enrolled students should consider applying. These graduate assistantships, which range from 0.5 to 1.0 FTE require weekly service in the areas of teaching, research or administrative support. In return, the University pays a stipend and provides a tuition waiver and a waiver of a certain percentage of the fees. Students may obtain more information about assistantships by contacting the Graduate Program Director. General information about assistantships is also available from the Office of Graduate Studies.

4.9 Graduation Requirements and Procedures

The College recognizes master's students eligible for graduation in May and August.

4.9.a Graduate students must consult the individual program descriptions in the [Graduate Student Bulletin for complete information regarding graduation requirements.](#)

In general, graduate students are eligible for graduation if they complete the following:

4.9.b The required number of credits as designated in their program of study and all thesis or practicum requirements as designated in their program of study.

4.9.c Have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 in all required UMass Boston courses excluding electives.

Filing for Graduation

All students must declare their intent to graduate by applying online through WISER by the dates published on the [Academic Calendar Planning for Graduation and How to Apply Applying for Graduation - UMass Boston \(umb.edu\)](#)

Appendix A. Further information

Frequently asked questions

https://www.umb.edu/academics/graduate/info_for_graduate_students/faqs#panel3

Academic Policies

https://www.umb.edu/academics/cnhs/academic_policies

Academic calendar

https://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_calendar

Graduation Policies

<https://www.umb.edu/registrar/graduation>

Graduate Registrar Forms

<https://www.umb.edu/registrar/forms>

Office of the Bursar

<https://www.umb.edu/bursar>

Appendix B. Elective Courses

Exercise and Health Sciences		
EHS 410/610	Exercise and Aging	3
EHS 620	Pediatric Exercise	3
EHS 440	Health Fitness Management	3
EHS 635	Project and Program Management	3
EHS 645	Leadership and Communication	3
EHS 350/650	Obesity and Weight Management	3
EHS 670	Designing Exercise and Health Promotion Interventions	3
EHS 675	Principles of Public Health	3
EHS 480/680	Clinical Exercise Physiology	3
EHS 682	Exercise Metabolism	3
EHS 685	Applied Exercise Physiology	3
EHS 710	Physical Activity Intervention, Chronic Disease and Disability in Aging	3
EHS 731	Body Composition Assessment	3
EHS 740	Human Motor Control and Movement Dysfunction	3
EHS 745	Theoretical Foundations of Health Behavior	3
EHS 772	Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention	3
EHS 775	Statistical Methods for Epidemiology	3
EHS 783	Neuromuscular Aspects of Exercise in Obesity and Cancer	3
EHS 784	Cardiovascular Aspects of Exercise in Clinical Populations	3
EHS 786	Exercise Endocrinology and Metabolic Disorders	3
EHS 787	Neurovascular Exercise Physiology in Health and Cardiovascular-Related Disease	3
EHS 790	Professional Skills & Grant Writing for Exercise Science	3
Writing/Communication		
MBAACM 681	Analytical Writing in Management	3
MBAACM 682	Oral Communication for Managers	3
MBAACM 684	Written Communication for Managers	3
Leadership		
MBAMGT 683	Leadership Management in the 21st Century	3
MBAMGT 680	Management of Health Organizations	3
NURSNG 765	Leadership and Management in Health Care	3
DISRES 621	Negotiation	3

Biology		
BIOL 607	An Introduction to Computational Data Analysis for Biology	3
BIOL 612	Advanced Cell Biology	3
BIOL 615	Immunology	3
BIOL 650	Scientific Communication	3
BIOL 674	Cell Signaling	3
BIOL 675	Advanced Molecular Biology	4
BIOL 693	Seminar in Neurobiology	3
Health-Related Courses		
NURSNG 705	Health Disparities	3
NURSNG 741	Health Policy I	3
NURSNG 742	Health Policy II	3
MBAMGT 681	The Health System and Health Policy	3
GERON GR 611	Health and Physical Changes in Aging	3
Research Methodology-Related Courses		
NURSNG 721	Program Evaluation	3
NURSNG 770	Biostatistics II: Advanced Statistical Methods in Healthcare Research	3
NURSNG 780	Epidemiological Methods	3
PSYCH 775	Qualitative Methods in Psychological Research	3
PAFG 645	Program Evaluation	3

* These courses are not offered every semester and those outside of EHS may vary in their delivery (in-person, online, weekend classes).