

LAS graduate students can do either a thesis or non-thesis Masters Degree. All graduate students should speak with Graduate Advisor and pick up thesis or non-thesis guidelines in the Center of Latin American Studies before they form a committee.

THE NON-THESIS

The procedures for the non-thesis involve a) a brief (~2pp) **written proposal** to distribute to a potential Chair and committee members, b) the formation of a committee with a Chair affiliated with Latin American Studies and at least 2 other committee members from different departments, 1 of whom must be an affiliated Latin American faculty, c) input from the committee in refining the student's **research topic** and **bibliography**, d) the writing of a non-thesis, and e) passing an **oral exam** given by the committee (see details below).

Students should take **3 credits of Thesis/non-Thesis (LAA 899)** with their Chair. Only 3 credits of LAA 899 can count towards the non-Thesis MA degree. If the Chair does not have a line number for LAA 899, it can be acquired from Judy Farmer (jfarmer@ku.edu) in the Latin American Studies office. After selecting a committee, the student must submit the members' names to either Graduate Coordinator (currently Judy Farmer) or Graduate Director. The research topic must consist of an *interdisciplinary analysis of a broad issue that goes beyond the student's coursework and involves more than one country for purposes of comparison*. The format for the non-thesis consists of **a)** a 6-8 page bibliography, **b)** an annotated bibliography of at least 10 books, and **c)** a 30-page interdisciplinary analysis of the issue. The Chair must approve of the defensibility of the **final draft**, and then it must be distributed to the committee at least 3 weeks before the **oral exam**. Graduate Coordinator must also be notified of the date and project title 3 weeks before the exam. The oral exam entails questions posed by the committee members to evaluate the student's expertise on the research topic, overall knowledge, and ability to formulate judgments independently. Usually the exams last about 1½-2 hours. An oral exam should not be scheduled until at least three months have elapsed since the formation of the committee and at least three weeks after the student has requested a date, time, and place of the exam with Graduate Coordinator. The deadlines for completion of the thesis/non-thesis for graduation usually fall around December 15, May 1, and August 1 each year. One final copy of the revised non-thesis must be left with Latin American Studies.

THE THESIS

The procedures for the thesis involve a) a brief (~2pp) **written proposal** to distribute to a potential Chair and committee members, b) the formation of a committee with a Chair affiliated with Latin American Studies and at least 2 other committee members from different disciplines, 1 of whom must be an affiliated Latin American faculty, c) input from the committee in refining the student's **research topic** and **bibliography**, d) the writing of the thesis, and e) passing an **oral defense oral exam** given by the committee (see details below).

Students must take at least **3 credits of Thesis/non-Thesis (LAA 899)**, 6 of which can be applied to the MA, in which the committee Chair oversees their work. If the Chair does not have a line number for LAA 899, it can be acquired from Judy Farmer (jfarmer@ku.edu) in the Latin American Studies office. The research topic must consist of an *analysis of a specific issue that goes beyond the student's coursework*. The thesis should be an *original work of publication quality*, not merely a long research report. *The thesis must be of an appropriate quality to*

represent graduate work at KU and the Center of Latin American Studies. The text should be at least 80-100 pages in length, and formatting regulations are available in the College Graduate Division (300 Strong). Students must have their final **draft** passed by their Chair and distributed to their committee, at least 3 weeks before the oral defense. The Graduate Coordinator must also be notified of the date, the committee members, and the project title 3 weeks before the exam in order to schedule it. The **oral defense** entails questions posed by the committee members that enable evaluation of the student's expertise on the research topic and ability to formulate judgments independently. The student defends the research problem, methodology, presentation of evidence, and argument. Usually the defense lasts 1-2 hrs. The committee assigns either an Honors, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory for the thesis, and it can suggest revisions. Once the qualification has been given and the **final formatted copy** is signed by the committee, the student has passed. The deadlines for submission of the final formatted copy usually fall around December 15, May 1, and August 1. One copy of the revised thesis must be left with Latin American Studies and will become part of the permanent archive of the Center of Latin American Studies and the KU Libraries.