

gree will be exempt from the 8-year time limitation for those students pursuing a doctoral degree.

4. Timeline for Degree Completion

The following timeline is based on expectations of the Graduate School and the ARS Master Program. While every student does not progress through their graduate program at the same rate and often more than 4 semesters are required to complete the M.S. degree, students should seek to minimize substantial delays. Please note the Graduate School requirement that all course work must be completed within six years preceding the awarding of the degree (i.e. course work from more than six years ago cannot be applied towards the M.S. degree). Formal approval of all student advisory committees is made by the Graduate Dean.

Recommended Timeline:

<u>Suggested Deadline</u>	<u>Milestone</u>
End of first semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of Declaration of Advisor/Major Advisor/Committee Chair form³ v Schedule Entrance Interview with the ARS Graduate Program Director v Formation of advisory committee
End of second semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> v First committee meeting. Discuss research plan (proposal) and develop program of study (Program of Study form⁴) v <i>Graduate school deadline for declaration of advisor form</i>
End of third semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> v Graduate school deadline for program of study form v Second committee meeting: update committee on thesis research progress
End of fourth semester (or final semester)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> v Schedule a date for a thesis defense. The date of the defense should be at least three weeks prior to graduate school deadline for graduation v Submit graduation application form, at least several weeks in advance of the deadline for graduation (Graduation Application⁵) v Submit draft of complete thesis to committee members at least one month before scheduled thesis defense date v Defend thesis (public presentation and third committee meeting); revise thesis as needed v Submit Notice of Completion form after all requirements have been met (DSE (UE ⁶)) v Schedule Exit Interview with the ARS Graduate Program Director

³ <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/Declaration-of-Advisor.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/program-of-study.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.unr.edu/grad/graduation-and-deadlines>

⁶ <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/notice-of-completion-master-degree-updated.pdf>

	✓ Upon graduation, take the Graduate School's Exit Survey ⁷
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Notes:

1. Although three committee meetings are indicated in the suggested timeline, more can be scheduled as needed at the discretion of the student, advisor and committee.
2. You can find an updated list of Graduate School forms and requirements here: [Forms and Deadlines Website](#)⁸

The following timeline is based on expectations of the Graduate School and the ARS Ph.D. Program. While every student does not progress through their graduate program at the same rate and often more than 6 semesters are required to complete the Ph.D. degree, students should seek to minimize substantial delays. Please note the Graduate School requirement that all course work must be completed within six years preceding the awarding of the degree (i.e. course work from more than six years ago cannot be applied towards the Ph.D. degree). Formal approval of all student advisory committees is made by the Graduate Dean.

Recommended Timeline:

<u>Suggested Deadline</u>	<u>Milestone</u>
End of first semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of Declaration of Advisor/Major Advisor/Committee Chair form⁹ • Schedule Entrance Interview with the ARS Graduate Program Director • Formation of advisory committee
End of second semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First committee meeting. Present a dissertation proposal and develop program of study (Program of Study form¹⁰) • <i>Graduate school deadline for declaration of advisor form</i>
End of third semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Graduate school deadline for program of study form</i> • Second committee meeting: update committee on thesis research progress
End of fourth semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take and pass a 1-credit comprehensive examination (written and oral components)
End of fifth semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third committee meeting: update committee on thesis research progress • Complete course work • Continue research and writing dissertation
End of sixth (or final) semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule a date for a dissertation defense. The date of the defense should be at least three weeks prior to graduate school deadline for graduation

⁷ <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines/exit-survey>

⁸ <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines>

⁹ <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/Declaration-of-Advisor.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/program-of-study.pdf>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit graduation application form, at least several weeks in advance of the deadline for graduation (Graduation Application¹¹) • Submit draft of complete dissertation to committee members at least one month before scheduled dissertation defense date • Defend dissertation (public presentation and fourth committee meeting); revise thesis as needed • Submit Committee Approval Page found at Doctoral Dissertation Filing Guidelines¹² • Submit the dissertation final review approval form (Doctoral Final Review Approval¹³) • Complete the UMI dissertations submittal form (Submittal Form¹⁴) • Schedule Exit Interview with the ARS Graduate Program Director • Upon graduation, take the Graduate School's Exit Survey¹⁵
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Notes:

1. Although four committee meetings are indicated in the suggested timeline, more can be scheduled as needed at the discretion of the student, advisor and committee.
2. [Doctoral degree admission to candidacy form](#) ¹⁶
 - For doctoral students who completed all requirements except for the dissertation
3. You can find an updated list of Graduate School forms and requirements here: [Forms and Deadlines Website](#)¹⁷

5. Committee Selection Guidelines

Because there are few required courses, the graduate advisory committee plays a particularly important role in the ARS Master's and Ph.D. programs. The committee is responsible for assisting the student in designing a program of study that is tailored to career goals of the student, fills in any academic gaps that may exist in the student's prior academic background, and provides the needed knowledge for successful completion of the thesis or dissertation research. The committee is also responsible for guiding the thesis research and ensuring that it meets the standards of the graduate program. Therefore, the committee should be carefully selected by the student in close coordination with the advisor.

Consistent with rules of the Graduate School, each ARS Master's committee requires at least

¹¹ <https://www.unr.edu/grad/graduation-and-deadlines>

¹² <http://www.unr.edu/grad/forms/dissertation-filing-guidelines>

¹³ <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/dissertation-final-review-approval-form.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/dissertation-publishing-agreement.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines/exit-survey>

¹⁶ <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/17doctoral-degree-admission-to-candidacy-updated.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines>

three advisory committee members, including the advisor. The advisor must be an ARS graduate faculty member. All members of the committee must be listed as members of the UNR graduate faculty. At least one (the graduate school representative or “outside” member) must be from a department or program different from the department or program from which the student is graduating. Each Ph.D. graduate advising committee consists of at least five members of the graduate faculty, including the advisor, at least one other member from the advisor's department, a member representing a closely allied discipline to the area of specialization, and one member serving as the Graduate School Representative. As stated on the Graduate School website, *“The Graduate School Representative protects the interests of the student, the advisory committee, and the Graduate School. The Graduate School Representative should also act as an “unbiased person” to whom the Dean may turn for judgment and counsel. The primary responsibility of the Graduate School Representative is that of an observer.”* However, the Graduate School Representative may also play an important role in guiding the student, particularly if he/she has expertise in the student’s area of specialization.

The membership of the committee should be finalized by the end of the second semester, and is indicated to the Graduate School through the signing of the student’s Program of Study form. Formal approval of all student advisory committees is made by the Graduate Dean.

6. Thesis and Dissertation Requirements

The objective of writing a thesis (Plan A) or professional paper (Plan B) is to demonstrate the ability of a student to complete kinds of tasks he or she will be expected to perform in their professional career. While these typically include novel research, they can also include synthesis or re-evaluation of existing material. In sum, the thesis must demonstrate the ability to independently utilize the scientific method to address questions and hypotheses.

In general, the thesis must be of a quality that is publishable in a peer-reviewed journal of a scientific field relevant to the student’s area of expertise, as judged by the advisory committee or demonstrated by acceptance for publication in such a journal. While there is no length requirement to the Master’s thesis, the thesis must consist of at least one chapter suitable for publication, plus Introductory and Concluding chapters. The professional paper produced by the Plan B (non-thesis) student will be of sufficient quality to demonstrate a high degree of scholarship, as judged by the student’s advisory committee.

The thesis should include note of chapter authorship and journals to which chapters will be submitted. This may be done on the title page or via footnotes, or by including a Preface between the Table of Contents and the introductory chapter.

In general, the Ph.D. dissertation chapters must be of a quality that is publishable in peer-reviewed journals of a scientific field relevant to the student’s area of expertise, as judged by the advisory committee or demonstrated by acceptance for publication in such a journal. While there is no length requirement to the Ph.D. dissertation, the dissertation must consist of at least two chapters suitable for publication, plus Introductory and Concluding chapters. It is expected that the science performed in developing this new knowledge demonstrate scholarship through integration of existing knowledge and creation of new knowledge. Creativity is reflected in the

questions, hypotheses, methods, synthesis, and/or applications.

The formatting and other guidelines for the thesis and dissertation are dictated by the Graduate School and must be followed precisely, as indicated on their website:

- [Master's Thesis Filing Guidelines](#)¹⁸
- [Doctoral Dissertation Filing Guidelines](#)¹⁹
- (Doctoral students only) [Dissertation Title Form](#)²⁰

The ARS Master's program does not maintain its own requirements for the thesis/dissertation format. Students should consult with their advisor and advisory committee.

Once all requirements have been met, students must submit a Final Review Approval and Notice of Completion form in order to graduate.

- Final Review Approval – Obtain sign-off from advisory committee chair
 - [Master's Final Review Approval](#)²¹
 - [Doctoral Final Review Approval](#)²²
- Notice of completion – completed form should be submitted after all requirements have been met.
 - [Master's Notice of completion](#)²³
 - [Doctoral Notice of completion](#)²⁴

Successfully completing a thesis or dissertation will typically include meeting the following guidelines:

1. The first draft of the thesis/dissertation should be provided to the Committee Chair or Major Advisor at least eight weeks prior to the date the thesis is due to the Graduate College. The Advisor will work with the student directly to revise the thesis, which may take several revisions.
2. Submit the revised thesis/dissertation to the Committee at least 6 weeks prior to the date the thesis/dissertation is due to the graduate college. The Committee should review the thesis/dissertation and return any comments, criticisms, or suggestions to the student within two weeks.
3. The student should carefully and thoroughly address comments made by the Committee and return the revised thesis/dissertation to the Committee four weeks prior to the due date.
4. This timeline represents the minimum acceptable time for each step, and can be modified given consent of student, committee, and advisor.
5. It is possible that individual chapter(s) in the form of publishable journal articles be submitted to the journal whenever they are ready. Generally, these articles would be reviewed by the advising committee prior to final revisions for submission. This will allow the advising committee to provide constructive input, retain their role in student advising

¹⁸ <http://www.unr.edu/grad/forms/thesis-filing-guidelines>

¹⁹ <http://www.unr.edu/grad/forms/dissertation-filing-guidelines>

²⁰ <http://www.unr.edu/grad/graduation-and-deadlines/dissertation-title-form>

²¹ <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/thesis-final-review-approval-form.pdf>

²² <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/dissertation-final-review-approval-form.pdf>

²³ <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/notice-of-completion-master-degree-updated.pdf>

²⁴ <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/notice-of-completion-doctoral-degree.pdf>

and thesis/dissertation review, and prevent surprises later. The individual chapters of the thesis/dissertation can thus be papers designed to be submitted, papers submitted and in review, or papers accepted for publication or published. While publication ahead of the defense is encouraged, it is not expected nor required by ARS. It does allow timely publication of new knowledge.

7. Graduate Assistantships

Research Assistantships: Most ARS Master's students are supported by graduate research assistantships derived from research grants administered by individual faculty members. Therefore, it is important that prospective students contact potential advisors early in their application process, to identify ARS graduate faculty members with both willingness to serve as mentors, and with grant funding for research assistantships.

Teaching Assistantships: Opportunities for ARS Doctoral or occasionally Master's students to be supported by teaching assistantships are fairly limited, but sometimes are made available through the ANVS Department to help teach ARS courses or the Graduate College to support the graduate Program. These are usually part-time teaching assistantships that are offered in combination with part-time research assistantships.

Graduate students are also encouraged to apply for outside funding to help support their graduate research. Many such opportunities are listed here, [Research Funding Website](#)²⁵. UNR's Graduate School Association also provides scholarships, small grants and other funding opportunities (including for travel to conferences): [GSA Website](#)²⁶.

Per policy of the Graduate School, all graduate students holding an assistantship (teaching GTA or research GRA) are considered Nevada residents for tuition purposes. Non-resident tuition is only waived for the duration of the assistantship. To be eligible for an assistantship, students must be admitted to a degree-granting program and be in good academic standing. The student must have an overall GPA of at least 3.0 and must be continuously enrolled in at least 6 graduate level credits (600-700) throughout the duration of the assistantship.

State-funded assistantships (GTA/GRA) may be held for a maximum of three (3) years for master's degree students.

Refer to the Graduate School website for the most updated information on graduate assistantships:

[General information](#)²⁷

[Graduate Assistantship handbook](#)²⁸

²⁵ <https://www.unr.edu/eecb/research/funding>

²⁶ <https://www.unr.edu/gsa/gsa-student-services/need-based-services>

²⁷ <http://www.unr.edu/grad/funding/graduate-assistantships>

²⁸ http://www.unr.edu/Documents/administration-finance/hr/hr-graduate/GA_handbook.pdf

8. Health Insurance

All domestic degree seeking graduate students, who are enrolled in six or more credits (regardless of the course level) in a semester, will be automatically enrolled and billed for the University sponsored health insurance for each term they are eligible (fall & spring/summer). If a student has other comparable coverage and would like to waive out of the student health insurance, it is the student's responsibility to complete the [University online waiver form](#)²⁹ prior to the deadline. If approved, a health insurance waiver is good for the current academic year only. A new waiver must be submitted each academic year. All international graduate students are required to carry student health insurance, and the cost will be automatically added to your student account. Any international graduate students with insurance questions must contact the [Office of International Students and Scholars \(OISS\)](#)³⁰ directly. [Information on Graduate health insurance](#)³¹.

9. Enrollment Requirements and Leave of Absence

Continuous Enrollment: To maintain “good standing” all graduate students are required to enroll in a minimum of three (3) graduate credits each fall and spring semester until they graduate. International students may be required to enroll in nine graduate credits each fall and spring semester depending on the requirements of their visa. All students holding assistantships (whether teaching or research assistantships) are required to enroll in a minimum of six (6) graduate credits each semester they hold the assistantship.

Leave of Absence: Students in good standing may request a leave of absence by completing a [Leave of Absence form](#)³² during which time they are not required to maintain continuous registration. Usually, a leave of absence is approved for one or two semesters. The leave of absence request may be extended by the student filing an additional leave of absence form. Students applying for a leave of absence should not have any “incomplete” grades which could be changed to “F” and have a detrimental impact on their cumulative GPA. Requests for leave of absences must be received by the Graduate School no later than the last day of enrollment for the semester the leave is to begin.

Reinstatement: When a student has been absent for one semester or more without an approved leave of absence, he or she may request reinstatement via the [Reinstatement form](#)³³. This form allows the program the option to recommend the student be re-admitted to their graduate program based on their previous admission OR require the student to re-apply for admission which would require students to submit a new application for admission and pay the application fee. The Notice of Reinstatement to Graduate Standing must be received by the Graduate School no later than the last day of enrollment for the semester the reinstatement is to begin.

²⁹ <https://studentinsurance.usi.com/UNR/unr-grad>

³⁰ <https://www.unr.edu/oiss>

³¹ <http://www.unr.edu/grad/health-insurance>

³² http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/leaveofabsencer_9.23.pdf

³³ <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/Notice-of-Reinstatement-Graduate-Standing.pdf>

10. Graduate Student Association

The [Graduate Student Association \(GSA\)](#)³⁴ represents all graduate students and promotes the welfare and interests of the graduate students at the University of Nevada, Reno. The GSA works closely with appropriate university administrative offices, including the Graduate School and Student Services and reports to the President of the University. The GSA government functions through the Council of Representatives, Executive Council and established committees.

11. Graduate School Forms

Please refer to [Forms Website](#)³⁵ for all forms available at The Graduate School.

³⁴ <https://www.unr.edu/gsa/>

³⁵ <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines>