

# Guidelines and Resources for Master Thesis and Project

## Digital Transformation and Innovation (DTI) Graduate Program

The following guidelines are intended to provide general information for the students of the Digital Transformation and Innovation (DTI) graduate program. You will also find links to useful resources at the University website for graduate studies here:

<https://www.uottawa.ca/study/graduate-studies/thesis>

### 1. Searching for a supervisor

You need to find a supervisor for your project or thesis. For this, you need to identify professors whose areas of research match your interest and background. First, you should research the professors' home page, their publications, courses taught, and projects they might have available. When you identified the potential professors, email them on an individual basis to schedule an appointment to discuss your qualifications, and obtain more information about the professors' areas of research and activities.

In your email to the potential supervisors, include, at the minimum, the following information:

- (a) your CV
- (b) a short paragraph about your research areas of interest (keep your scope wide and general, not too narrow and focused)
- (c) the start date of your program
- (d) the expected date of your graduation
- (e) how many (which) courses you have taken during your program
- (f) how many (which) courses remained to be taken

This information will help the professors to assign you projects that are mutually interesting to both of you, and fit your and their timelines.

For additional guidelines on searching for a supervisor, visit the following page:

<https://www.uottawa.ca/study/graduate-studies/thesis/thesis-supervision>

### 2. Project

A project is 6 credits. It requires the effort and dedication equivalent to, at least, a 6 credit course. A project should be well circumscribed and provide an authentic and pertinent learning experience. It usually takes about 216 hours of work AFTER your project supervisor has approved the proposal and agreed to supervise the project. Quite often, students will have discussions with professors and participate in their research teams for one semester, before officially registering and starting to work on the project in the following semester.

The project should have clear goals and at least one concrete “deliverable” (e.g. data collection, conducting a survey, developing a software module, literature review). It should also identify some regular milestones as this will afford opportunities for both the supervisor and student to chart progress and to receive feedback.

## **2.1. Project Proposal**

In coordination with your supervisor, you are required to prepare a proposal for your project and submit it to the graduate office.

The project proposal should include, at the minimum, the following components

- (a) title of the project
- (b) objectives and goals (or the problem statement and the proposed solutions)
- (c) tasks that need to be accomplished during the project
- (d) the outcome (or goals) to be achieved (e.g. data collection, conducting a survey, developing a software module, literature review)
- (e) a work plan (timetable) that identifies the milestones and the progress to be achieved at each milestone

Note: Your project supervisor may have additional requirements that you must fulfill in order to successfully complete your project.

## **2.2. Project Submission and Evaluation**

The deliverables of the project, as well as the final project report must be submitted to the project supervisor by the last week of the last semester in which you are registered for the project. You must be registered to the project a minimum of 1 semester.

Your supervisor will evaluate your final project report and the deliverables, and accordingly, submit a final grade to the graduate office.

As a general guideline, the project should be approximately 50 pages in length including figures and tables and appendices. It is recommended to use 1.5 line space, Calibri (font size 11) or Times New Roman (font size 12). As a general guideline, the project report might include:

- Abstract or Executive summary (an abstract version of the project report from introduction to conclusion, including goals, approach, results and a discussion of any challenges encountered and solutions applied. If applicable, it may also be interesting to comment on future possibilities for further developing the project.
- Introduction (background, scope of the study)
- Main body (this is where you explain the activities undertaken in the project backed up with figures, charts, tables, etc.)

- Conclusion (a summary of the study, why it was valuable, how it could have been improved, your own opinion, comparisons, future trends, any other comments that the student would like to raise in connection with the learning experience)
- Bibliography (properly cited and referred in the body of the report). See Section 4 “Referencing and Plagiarism” for more information.
- Appendix (If applicable, it may be useful to append the deliverable (or an extract) to the project report)

### 3. Thesis

A thesis is worth 12 credits of work AFTER your thesis proposal has been approved by your supervisor and submitted to the program director. It requires significant research preparation and an approved thesis proposal before it officially starts. A thesis carries a significant academic and research merit, and in particular, it is an important requirement to fulfil for those who intend to continue their study towards a doctoral degree.

Students typically spend one full year on thesis-related work from the time they complete all courses (including the Research Methods course). This can be reduced if the student starts thesis work part-time with their supervisor immediately upon entering the program while they are also taking the required courses for their program. Most students take at least two semesters to complete and defend their thesis AFTER completing the thesis proposal. Most students will have participated in a research team for at least two semesters before they officially start their thesis.

For normal progress towards a thesis:

- (a) All thesis students are expected to take DTI7101&2 Research Methods in the first year that they are supervised.
- (b) All thesis students are expected to register for AND complete their thesis proposal in the same semester they take DTI7101&2 Research Methods.

Students who have not completed a thesis proposal will be required to file a progress report with their supervisor every semester after taking DTI710&2 before they are allowed to register.

Students who have not completed their thesis after 6 semesters of registration will be required to file a progress report with their supervisor every semester as well before they are allowed to register.

#### 3.1. Thesis Proposal

Thesis proposal is compulsory for the students who opt to do a Master thesis. The thesis proposal, prepared in coordination with your thesis supervisor, must be submitted to the graduate office at the end of the semester you are registered for the proposal. Your thesis proposal must be approved by your supervisor and the director of the DTI graduate program before you can officially register for the thesis. Normally students complete the Thesis Proposal the same semester as the Research Methods course.

The proposal for a thesis should include, at the minimum, the following components

- (a) title of the thesis
- (b) objectives and goals (or the problem statement)
- (c) motivation

- (d) literature review (background study)
- (e) methodology (and proposed solutions)
- (f) validation of the proposed solutions
- (g) a work plan (timetable) that identifies the milestones and the progress to be achieved at each milestone

Note: Your thesis supervisor may have additional requirements that you must fulfill in order to successfully complete your thesis.

### **3.2. Thesis Submission and Evaluation**

As per the guidelines of the Faculty of Graduate and Post-doctoral Studies (FGPS), a thesis needs to be examined by a committee comprises of, at least, two professors in addition to your supervisor(s). The thesis needs to be submitted to the “Thesis Examining Committee” at least 30 days before the date of the oral defence exam. An oral defence exam will be scheduled by the graduate office in coordination with your thesis supervisor.

For further information on writing and defending the thesis, visit this page:  
<https://www.uottawa.ca/study/graduate-studies/thesis>