

Master's Degree Manual

Department of
Curriculum &
Instruction

The Pennsylvania State
University

September 1, 2017

Introduction

The purpose of this manual is to define policies and procedures related to the conduct and administration of master's studies in Curriculum and Instruction. This manual provides guidelines for successful completion of all stages of a master's degree from admission to graduation.

The information in this manual is drawn from current practices and statements of policy and procedures adopted by the graduate faculty of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and from publications of the Graduate School that contain university-wide guidelines. This manual summarizes departmental guidelines, which in some areas exceed those of the Graduate School. General graduate degree requirements are available in the *Graduate Degree Programs Bulletin*.

Master's students and graduate faculty are responsible for being self-informed of policies and procedures described here, as well as changes that occur between printings of this manual and are distributed through PSU email. Pertinent forms are described throughout the manual. Copies are included with the appendices. A checklist is provided for tracking progress through the various stages of the master's degree. Students are advised to keep detailed records of their successful completion of each stage of the program.

Organization of Curriculum & Instruction Master's Options

The information that follows pertains to all CI master's degree options, those offered through resident instruction at University Park and those offered through Penn State's World Campus.

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction (CI) is one of four administrative units within the College of Education. The department offers two master's degree programs. The Master's of Science in Curriculum and Instruction (M.S.) is a research-oriented degree, requiring completion of a formal thesis. The Master's of Education in Curriculum and Instruction (M.Ed.) provides preparation for increased professional competence in education. The M.Ed. requires completion of a master's paper or project. Neither degree in itself conveys certification to teach any subject or level in Pennsylvania or any other state; however, it is possible to complete many certification requirements as part of master's degree studies. If you are interested in pursuing certification as a graduate student, consult the resources online for your particular emphasis area (University Park) or emphasis (World Campus).

Master's students at University Park (M.S. and M.Ed.) choose among the following emphasis areas:

- Curriculum and Supervision (CS)
- Early Childhood Education (ECE)
- English Language Arts Education (ELA)
- Language, Culture, and Society (LCS)
- Mathematics Education (MTHED)
- Science Education (SCIED)
- Second Language Education (L2ED)
- Social Studies Education (SSED)

M.Ed. students enrolled through the World Campus choose among the following emphases:

- Children's Literature
- Curriculum and Supervision
- Elementary Education
- STEM Education
- Theory and Practice in English, Social Studies, and World Languages

Students who enroll in the Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate degree program offered by *Special Education* and *Curriculum and Instruction* earn an undergraduate degree in Special Education and an M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction, with specialty emphasis in Language and Literacy Education leading to certification as a Reading Specialist (see <http://www.ed.psu.edu/educ/epcse/special-education/programs/se-ci-iug> for more information).

Students enrolled in the Schreyer Honors College who wish to pursue an Integrated Undergraduate - Graduate degree program should contact both their Honors adviser and graduate program for more information.

Master's degree students also can enroll in the Dual Title degree programs in Curriculum and Instruction and either Comparative and International Education or Women's Studies. Additional information about dual title degree program in Women's Studies can be found at <http://ed.psu.edu/c-and-i/graduate/degrees/dual-degrees/wmnst> and information about dual title degree program in Comparative and International Education can be found at <http://www.ed.psu.edu/educ/eps/cied/degree>.

Role of an Adviser

The adviser-advisee relationship is critical to successful master's studies. The graduate program in Curriculum and Instruction encourages students to recognize that this relationship must be a mutually comfortable and productive one. Students may change advisers at any time during their program through consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies.

An initial adviser is assigned when a student is admitted to a CI master's program. The assignment is made according to a student's expressed goals for his or her studies. This adviser is expected to orient the student to the program and to advise the student in appropriate beginning course work. A student should make contact with his or her adviser soon after admission. During the course of a student's program, the adviser will assist in the development of a plan of study, may give vocational as well as academic counsel, supervise the thesis or paper/capstone experience, and oversee the student's progress until completion of all degree requirements.

Plan of Study (M.S.)

The Master's of Science in Curriculum and Instruction is intended for students who desire to strengthen their abilities to do scholarly work and research in a CI specialty emphasis area. Therefore, M.S. students must prepare themselves to conduct original research for a thesis. In consultation with their adviser, M.S. students outline a plan of study meeting the following conditions:

- Each M.S. student must complete at least 36 graduate credits.
- Graduate credits must be selected from graduate courses: 400-level or above.

- At least 18 credits must be at the 500-level or higher.
- Each M.S. student completes a 9-credit core.
- Each M.S. student completes a concentration of courses in the student's specialty emphasis area.
- Each M.S. student completes 6 credits of thesis research (CI 600) and submits to the Graduate School a research-oriented thesis.
- It is recommended—but not required—that M.S. students earn at least 6 credits in courses outside the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.
- Each M.S. student must complete 1 credit of CI 590 to satisfy the University's Scholarship and Research Integrity (SARI) requirement.
- If you have an assistantship, there are limits on the number of credits that you may take in a semester; see the *Graduate Bulletin*. Students NOT on assistantships may enroll in more than 15 credits in one semester only with the permission of the Graduate School (done by petition).

Completion of core area (9 credits)

Students and advisers select the three core courses based on students' backgrounds and goals:

- One course in curriculum (e.g., CI 550) (3 credits)
- One course in educational research (e.g., CI 501) (3 credits)
- One course in philosophical, social, psychological or historical foundations of education (e.g., EDPSY 421, EDTHP 4xx or 5xx) (3 credits)

Completion of the concentration required by the selected emphasis area (15 credits)

Courses fulfilling the major or emphasis vary according to the student's emphasis area. The student selects these courses in consultation with the adviser.

Completion of electives (5 credits)

The student selects electives in consultation with the adviser.

Completion of CI 600—Thesis Research (6 credits)—and the master's thesis

Students complete 6 credits of CI 600: Thesis Research to plan, conduct, and present their thesis research.

M.S. students must complete a research-oriented thesis in which a formal question is addressed through appropriate methods of inquiry. The thesis may be a presentation of empirical, theoretical, or philosophical work that has some direct relationship to some aspect of curriculum and instruction, broadly defined. If human subjects are involved in providing data for the thesis, University policy requires that approval of the research plan and procedures be secured from the Office of Research Protections (ORP) prior to beginning the study. Training related to research with human subjects is part of CI 590, which is why that course should be taken as early as possible in one's graduate program.

Each M.S. student must seek advice and consent of an adviser on the topic, questions, and methods before starting work on their thesis. The master's thesis adviser need not be the student's academic adviser, but must be a CI faculty member with Graduate Faculty status (a list of faculty is maintained at

the Graduate School website¹). A student must upload a draft of the thesis for format review to the eTD Web site by the format review deadline. Upon completion of the thesis draft to the adviser's satisfaction, the student and adviser seek a second faculty member to read and comment on the document. At the adviser's discretion, an oral examination of the thesis may be held before official approval is given. The adviser and reader demonstrate their acceptance of the thesis by signing the Master's Approval Page. With those signatures, the student submits the thesis to the CI Graduate Director for consideration and signature. Students must deliver a final version of their thesis with the three signatures to the Graduate School by the prescribed date in order to be considered for graduation at the end of that semester. A thesis fee (currently \$25) is also required. Complete instructions for steps to submitting a master's thesis and Graduate School calendars are available on the Graduate School's website.

The form of the thesis must follow the guidelines published in the Graduate School's Thesis Guide. Students can obtain this guide at the Graduate School Office in 114 Kern Building or at the Graduate School's website. The thesis may be written in a language other than English provided that: (a) the contents of the work are of value to a culture using that language, (b) the adviser can read the paper, and (c) a summary in English is included.

Completion of the SARI requirement in CI 590 (1 credit)

The university requires all graduate students to complete two aspects of Scholarship and Research Integrity (SARI) education. The first aspect is online training on Responsible Conduct of Research. The second aspect is discussion-based SARI education. Both aspects are part of CI 590, which should be taken during at the beginning of a student's degree program.

Plan of Study (M.Ed.)

The Master's of Education in Curriculum and Instruction is designed for students who wish to enhance their professional competence in education. M.Ed. students prepare themselves to address the practical problems of education intentionally and systematically. In consultation with an adviser, students develop a plan of study with the following features:

- Each M.Ed. student must complete at least 30 graduate credits.
- Graduate credits are selected from graduate courses: 400-level or above.
- At least 18 credits must be at the 500 level or higher.
- Each M.Ed. student completes a 9-credit core.
- Each M.Ed. student completes a concentration of courses in the student's specialty emphasis area.
- It is recommended—but not required—that M.Ed. students earn at least 6 credits in courses outside the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.
- Each resident instruction M.Ed. student must complete 1 credit of CI 590 to satisfy the university's Scholarship and Research Integrity (SARI) requirement. World Campus students satisfy this requirement through a 3-credit online version of CI 590.
- Each M.Ed. student must complete a master's paper or project.

¹ At <https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/>, select **Search Type = Faculty** and **Major = Curriculum and Instruction**.

Completion of core area (9 credits)

Students and advisers select the three core courses based on students' backgrounds and goals:

- One course in curriculum (e.g., CI 550) (3 credits)
- One course in educational research (e.g., CI 501) (3 credits)
- One course in philosophical, social, psychological or historical foundations of education (e.g., EDPSY 421, EDTHP 4xx of 5xx) (3 credits)

Completion of the concentration required by the selected emphasis area (15 credits)

Courses fulfilling the major or emphasis vary according to the student's emphasis area. The student selects these courses in consultation with the adviser. Note that advisers have flexibility in determining what "concentration courses" are, and they need not have the same label as the emphasis area. So, for example, although a student in SCIED is likely to complete courses like "SCIED 552," an approved concentration might also include a course like "CI 597" or even a course in another department, where appropriate.

Completion of electives (5 credits for resident instruction (RI) students; 6 credits for World Campus students)

Up to 3 credits of CI 596 or an emphasis-area 596 may be elected for the M.Ed. paper.

Completion of the master's paper or project

M.Ed. students complete a master's paper or project in which some an educational problem or issue is carefully addressed. The paper may be a report of a completed project, a review of the literature concerning a problem, a survey of practices, an essay, or any similar effort acceptable to the M.Ed. project adviser. Projects may include curriculum design, development of software, pedagogical performance, or other creative work. All projects must be accompanied by analytical and theoretical written commentary. If human subjects are involved in providing data for the paper or project, University policy requires that approval of the research plan and procedures be secured from the Office of Research Protections (ORP) prior to beginning the study. Information about ORP can be found at <http://www.research.psu.edu/orp/> and ORP can be contacted by email at ORProtections@psu.edu or at The 330 Building, Suite 205, University Park, PA 16802 (814-865-1775).

Before beginning an M.Ed. paper or project, each M.Ed. student should seek advice and consent of a faculty adviser on the topic and methods. The master's paper/project adviser need not be the student's academic adviser, but must be a CI faculty member with Graduate Faculty "R" or "P" status (a list of these faculty is maintained at the Graduate School website²). No specific course credits need to be included in the plan of study for the work of preparing M.Ed. papers or projects. After the student has prepared a draft of the paper or project, there is typically some back and forth with the adviser, with suggestions for revisions. When the adviser feels that the draft is close to completion, he or she identifies and solicits feedback from a second faculty reader and submits a *Review of Master's Project Draft* and a copy of the draft to the Graduate Program in CI. (Note: In some cases, the Director of Graduate Studies serves as the second reader). Please refer to the following summary of dates.

² At <https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/>, select **Search Type = Faculty** and **Major = Curriculum and Instruction**.

Deadline for submission of Review of Master's Project Draft (M.Ed.) form to the Graduate Program

Projects with adviser-assigned second faculty readers:

Mar. 15 (Spring semester), July 1 (Summer term), Nov. 1 (Fall semester)

Projects for which the Director of Graduate Studies serves as the second reader:

Feb. 15 (Spring semester), June 15 (Summer term), Oct. 15 (Fall semester)

It is the student's responsibility to submit to the adviser and graduate program the **final** master's paper or project two weeks before the end of the semester in which he or she intends to graduate. Graduate School Calendars are found at: <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/index.cfm/calendars/events/>.

The form of the M.Ed. paper or project may follow the guidelines published in the Graduate School's Thesis Guide. The paper or project may be represented in a language other than English provided: (a) the contents of the work must be of value to a culture using that language, (b) the advisor must be able to read the paper, and (c) a summary in English must be provided.

Completion of the SARI requirement in CI 590 (1 credit)

The university requires all graduate students to complete two aspects of Scholarship and Research Integrity (SARI) education. The first aspect is online training on Responsible Conduct of Research. The second aspect is discussion-based SARI education. Both aspects are part of CI 590, which should be taken during at the beginning of a student's degree program.

Graduation

At the beginning of the semester (during approximately the first two weeks) in which a student intends to graduate, she or he must file an Intent to Graduate through eLion. During that semester, the student should meet with his or her adviser to complete a *Student Progress Record* and checklist and to check that emphasis area and Graduate School requirements will be completed according to Graduate School prescribed dates for graduation that semester. The adviser demonstrates his or her concurrence that the student will complete the requirements by signing the *Student Progress Record* and submitting it to the Curriculum and Instruction Graduate Office. The form should be submitted by the end of the sixth week of the semester (or the end of the first summer session) of intended commencement.

The CI Department requests that graduates leave a forwarding address, non-Penn State e-mail address (if available), and telephone number with the CI Graduate Office so that they may be contacted in the future, if necessary.

Appendix A: Student Progress Report & Checksheet

M.S. in CI – 36 credits

M.Ed. in CI – 30 credits

<u>Courses</u>	<u>Sem</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>
<u>Core (9 credits)</u>			
Curriculum _____	_____	_____	_____
Research _____	_____	_____	_____
Foundation _____	_____	_____	_____

<u>Courses</u>	<u>Sem</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>
<u>Core (9 credits)</u>			
Curriculum _____	_____	_____	_____
Research _____	_____	_____	_____
Foundation _____	_____	_____	_____

<u>Emphasis (15 credits)</u>			
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

<u>Emphasis (15 credits)</u>			
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

CI 590 (1 credit) _____

CI 590 (1 credit) _____

<u>Electives (5 credits)</u>			
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

<u>Electives (5 credits)</u>			
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

<u>Thesis (6 credits)</u>			
CI 600 or CI 610 (3) _____	_____	_____	_____
CI 600 or CI 610 (3) _____	_____	_____	_____

Paper
 _____ ***596 (3) may be elected for M.Ed. paper**

Checklist:

- _____ All credits are 400, 500, or 600 level
- _____ 18 credits are at 500 or 600 level
- _____ 6 graduate cr. are outside CI (optional)
- _____ 6 credits are in CI 600 or CI 610
- _____ Thesis is approved and signed by advisor, another CI graduate faculty member, CI Graduate Director and submitted to Graduate School.

- _____ All credits are 400, 500, or 600 level
- _____ 18 credits are at 500 or 600 level
- _____ 6 graduate cr. are outside CI (optional)
- _____ Master’s paper is approved and signed by advisor & CI Grad. Director
- _____ Report of master’s paper and copy of master’s paper submitted to CI Grad Director.

In the semester the program is completed or the student intends to graduate, the advisor verifies the accuracy of the entries on this document and submits to the CI Graduate Coordinator.

Candidate’s Name: _____ **PSU ID#** _____

Advisor’s Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Student’s Signature: _____ **Date:** _____