



## ABBREVIATED GUIDE TO OUR GRADUATE PROGRAM

### “The Cheat Sheet”

**1) You must complete 30 credits for the Thesis Plan (TP), or 34 credits for the Alternative Plan Paper (APP).**

- a. You are required to take Geog 678 (3) and Geog 680 (3)
- b. You need at least 24 (Thesis Plan) to 28 (Alternative Plan Paper) elective credits within 500/600 level curriculum.
- c. 50% or more of your courses must be at the 600 level and 15 credits must be taken within Geography’s curriculum.
- d. Make sure to take 3-6 credits of Geog 699 (Thesis) or 1-2 credits of Geog 694 (APP). These DO NOT COUNT towards your 600 level credit total, but are required.
- e. Make sure to fill out a **PLAN OF STUDY** that shows the courses you have and are taking. Ask Geography’s administrative assistant for this form.

- **THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT:** Make sure to indicate 50% or more 600 level classes in your Plan of Study form and that it shows a total of at least 30 (TP) or 34 (APP) credits. Make sure to include Geog 678 and Geog 680! Make sure to include Geog 699 (TP) and Geog 694 (APP)! **DO NOT SHOW MORE 500 level than 600**, even if you have taken the courses – just leave some of the 500 level off the form (don’t worry, they will show up on your transcript). Finally, get signatures from your committee and the Graduate Program Director and turn the form in to Geography’s administrative assistant. **THIS IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!**

**2) Speak with your advisor/thesis committee chair. Some require a “Proposal Defense” (thesis proposal defense) early on in your graduate education. MAKE SURE YOU SPEAK WITH YOUR ADVISOR ABOUT THIS.**

- a. A proposal defense is an oral presentation in front of your proposed committee that defends your rationale for conducting your research and outlines a plan/approach to complete your work.

#### DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

206 MORRIS HALL • MANKATO, MN 56001

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**3) You are required to complete a Comprehensive Exam before you graduate. Speak with your advisor/committee chair regarding this. They will explain how it works.**

- a. A comprehensive exam is a written examination that can be taken over a one day or multi-day period. Most choose the one day period.
- b. There is associated paperwork that must be filled out. Please contact Geography's administrative assistant regarding filling out this paperwork.

**4) You must apply to graduate! Make sure to fill out the Application for Graduation for the term you intend to graduate. If you cannot find this, speak to Geography's administrative assistant.**

- a. Before filling out your Application for Graduation, please discuss your timeline with your advisor/committee chair.
- b. Be cognizant of the deadlines! Check the university's website/College of Graduate Studies website to make sure you know when the Application for Graduation must be in!
- c. Make sure that you are enrolled in **AT LEAST ONE CREDIT** the term you intend to graduate.

**5) You must DEFEND YOUR THESIS before you graduate. This is called the Thesis Defense or Oral Examination. You will give an oral defense (a presentation) of your work and your findings in front of your committee. They will evaluate your work and determine whether you pass, need revisions/improvements, or fail.**

- a. This is a **PUBLIC EVENT**. Members of the public can attend this defense and ask questions.
- b. A completed first draft of your thesis **MUST BE AVAILABLE** at least two weeks, but preferably a month, before your defense date. Failure to do this will result in rescheduling your defense and potentially delay your graduation.
- c. If revisions are needed (based on your committee's evaluation during your defense), please complete those and review with your committee before you submit your thesis!

**6) Make sure to check the Thesis and APP submission deadlines!**

- a. Four copies of your thesis are due to the Graduate College by certain date if you wish to have printed copies made. You can choose to submit online for free, if you do not want printed copies. Failure to get your thesis/APP in on time will result in a delay of your graduation.

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b. Make sure to research the options of hard copy vs. electronic. Make sure to follow the appropriate guidelines for this.

c. Make sure that you have included a signature page in the front page of your Thesis. If you wish to have a hard copy printed, this signature page must be on watermarked paper and must have signatures from all committee members! Ask the Department's administrative assistant for this paper if you do not have any. And, make sure you have formatted it correctly before you submit. See the following website for details:

<https://grad.mnsu.edu/capstone/guidelines.html>

**7) Make sure that your advisor/chair and committee have filled out a *Recommendation for Awarding the Degree* form.**

a. You will not be able to graduate without this. This must also be turned in to the Graduate College before graduation. Please check the deadlines. Please ask Geography's administrative assistant for this form and help with submitting it.

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