Every department with a graduate program has a Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) with primary responsibility for administering graduate programs in that department. Our department also has an Associate Director of Graduate Studies who serves as advisor to students in the M.A. program. Generally, questions about the Ph.D. program should be directed to the DGS and questions about the M.A. program to the Associate DGS. The Graduate Program Advisory Council (GPAC) ranks applicants for admission and generally advises the DGS.

There are a number of important graduate student positions that are filled every year; the students who take these roles are elected by the Philosophy graduate student group, Graduate Students in Philosophy (GSiP). GSiP elects a graduate student representative to the Graduate Student Council (GSC), which represents the interests of graduate students to the University administration, faculty, and the Student Government Association; a faculty/student representative who attends Department meetings, and a representative to the Department Diversity Committee. A graduate student is also elected to be a voting member of the department GPAC, but s/he is excused when the GPAC ranks applicants for admission and discusses individual graduate students.

Faculty Officers, 2014-2015 (beginning Fall 2014)

Kristi Sweet, Director of Graduate Studies / Ph.D. program advisor
Office: YMCA 402C; Tel: 979-845-2247; email k-sweet@tamu.edu

Benjamin McMyler, Associate Director/MA Program Advisor
Office: YMCA 301; Tel: 979-862-4856, email: mcmyler@tamu.edu

In addition to Kristi Sweet and Benjamin McMyler the following faculty members have been appointed to the GPAC for the 2014-15 academic year: (TBD)
Graduate Student Officers, 2014-15

GSiP President: Patrick Anderson, YMCA 305, anderspa@tamu.edu

GSiP Vice President: Wendy Bustamante, YMCA 422, wmariel@tamu.edu

GSiP Secretary: Zak Fischer, YMCA 305, zakmarchant@tamu.edu

GSiP Faculty Student Representative: Ana Olivares, YMCA306, aolivares@tamu.edu

GPAC Representative: Karen Davis, YMCA408, k-davis@tamu.edu

GSC Representative: Kristin Drake, YMCA306, kdrake3@tamu.edu

Diversity Committee Representative: Andrew Soto, YMCA 407, andsoto123@tamu.edu

§2 Key dates/timeline for MA students planning to graduate in May 2015. These deadlines also apply to PhD students completing Masters in other departments at TAMU who want to graduate in May 2015

1. The first milestone of the 2nd MA year is to File your Degree Plan. To fill this out you must list all your courses for past, current and future semesters (with grades for the courses you’ve completed) and make sure they meet department and university requirements (this includes Department area requirements). You will also need to have acquired a complete committee, including one member from outside the Department. You will need electronic signatures from all three committee members as well as the graduate director and Head of Department. Final Due Date: Oct. 17, 2014. However, please try to complete this earlier than the due date to allow us to check for problems and to give all your committee members time to sign off. Recommended Degree Plan Date: Oct. 10, 2014. Information about the Degree Plan can be found at: http://ogs.tamu.edu/current-students/submit-degree-plan/

2. Before you start writing anything like a draft of your thesis, make sure you prepare it properly. Check out instructions at http://ogs.tamu.edu/current-students/thesis-dissertation/prepare-your-document/ This will give you general instructions and take you to a link from where you can download the Thesis Manual. YOU MUST read this carefully! A new edition of the Thesis Manual was issued in June 2012 and requirements have changed, so looking at existing theses will not necessarily help you. The Thesis Manual requires you to model your style on that of a single scholarly journal well known in the field. Where your chosen style model conflicts with the Thesis Manual, though, the Thesis Manual wins. Keep your footnotes, spacing, page-numbering, chapter titles, etc. in accordance with the Thesis Manual and your selected journal from the start. The Thesis Manual requires the first
chapter of your thesis actually to include the word "Introduction" and the last must include the word "Conclusion."

3. **Apply for your Degree** and pay the graduation fee ($47.50). If you miss the date, there’s a $50 late fee. To apply for graduation go to [http://howdy.tamu.edu](http://howdy.tamu.edu) and under the My Record tab, select the "Apply for Graduation" link in the Degree Evaluation channel. **Last Day to Apply without incurring a late fee: Fri. Feb. 20, 2015.**

4. Consult with your thesis Advisor about your thesis plan. You need to create a **Thesis Proposal** for the Office of Graduate Studies. You must acquire the proper "title page" from the Office of Graduate Studies, complete it, and have it signed by all members of your committee and the department head. The title page is available here: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/getting-a-degree/masters-degree-requirements/](http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/getting-a-degree/masters-degree-requirements/)
The nature of the proposal itself may be decided by your committee. However, you need to submit 5-6 pages of the proposal to the Office of Graduate Studies (the OGS does not require your full proposal, if it is longer than this). You should also include a preliminary list of the sources you will be consulting on your project. You must submit the **Thesis Proposal** at least 15 working days prior to submitting the form ‘Request and Announcement of Final Exam’ (see below). **Last Day this can be done for graduation in Spring 2015: Mon. Feb. 9, 2015.**

5. Consult with the members of your committee some way ahead of time about a date and time for the defense (OGS calls the thesis defense the Final Examination). When a date and time is agreed, make sure that a room has been booked. **The latest date on which you can have this defense for May graduation is: Friday, March 13.**

6. Submit the form: **Request and Announcement of the Final Examination.** This must be submitted at the latest by **Friday, Feb. 27th,** or 10 working days prior to the examination, whichever comes first. This form can be found at [http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/](http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/) and should be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies.

7. Prior to your thesis defense, you should schedule a one-hour pre-submittal meeting with the thesis office. (This is “strongly recommended”.) On online version is also now in existence, but is supposed to supplement the in-person meeting, though could be a replacement for it if necessary. Information about available pre-submittal conferences is here [https://academicevents.tamu.edu/ogs/](https://academicevents.tamu.edu/ogs/) and the online conference is here: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/current-students/training-and-tutorials/etd-online-pre-submittal-conference](http://ogs.tamu.edu/current-students/training-and-tutorials/etd-online-pre-submittal-conference) This needs to happen in the week of your final defense. At this point you should have a complete version of the thesis that meets the requirements of the Thesis Manual.

8. Defend your thesis. This is an oral examination with your whole committee. Obviously, they will need to have read your thesis first, so you will need to have completed it and circulated it to all your committee members a reasonable time
(probably two weeks) before the date of the defense. To repeat: The last day on which you may defend your MA thesis in 2015 for May graduation is: Friday, March 13.

You need to ensure that all the members of your committee sign the Approval form after you have made any corrections they request. This form is available at: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/#thesis](http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/#thesis)

9. After the defense, reread your entire thesis carefully, looking for any typographical errors, poorly written sentences, and working in any new ideas gained by the defense. Once again, read the Thesis Manual and be sure that your thesis conforms to its standards.

10. You must submit a signed Approval form and a PDF file of the thesis at the latest by **5pm on Friday, March 27**. The signed approval form is submitted to the Thesis Office. Again, the approval form is available at: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/](http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/) this should be prepared by you. You also need to fill in a Copyright and Availability Form, which is available on the same web page. The committee should also complete the Report of the Final Examination Form (generally this is prepared by OGS and provided to your department; the department should return it to OGS within ten days of your defense). The PDF file of your thesis must be submitted via the web to [http://ogs.tamu.edu/current-students/thesis-dissertation/submit-your-document/](http://ogs.tamu.edu/current-students/thesis-dissertation/submit-your-document/)

11. The thesis office will get back to you with corrections. You must submit final corrections to the Thesis Office **by: Wed. April 29**. The thesis office has information on various places that can bind your thesis for you.

12. If you plan to attend graduation, you need to make arrangements ahead of time (eg to acquire graduation attire) as detailed at: [http://graduation.tamu.edu](http://graduation.tamu.edu)

**§3 August 2015 MA Graduation**

It is possible to graduate in August. The dates for deadlines in 2015 are not yet available. In 2014, if all of one’s paperwork cleared the Thesis Office by June 5th, one could graduate in August 2014 without having to register for the Summer semester. We don’t recommend this route, but if you end up needing the extra time, it is possible. Please speak to the DGS/Associate DGS before deciding to do this.

**§4 Thesis Guidance for MA students planning to graduate in May 2016**

1. While taking courses during your first two semesters, begin to think about what area you’re interested in working on for your thesis.

2. During late Spring/early summer, identify a Thesis Advisor. The earlier you can do this the better. One reason for this is that the College has been offering MA Thesis Development Grants, providing some funding for research expenses during the summer of your first year – but to access this funding you must have an Advisor who
can write you a supportive letter by the end of April.

3. Discuss your proposed topic with your chosen Thesis Advisor, and ask the advisor for reading recommendations. Read what’s recommended during the summer of your first year, taking extensive notes with an eye toward narrowing your thesis subject, and if you can, begin writing. At the very least, write three or four well-developed paragraphs summarizing the plan for your thesis. Think of each paragraph as a plan for a chapter.

4. Give these paragraphs to your Thesis Advisor and discuss the possibility of restricting your topic further. This will possibly involve the elimination of one or more of the planned chapters.

5. Read in a more focused way, restricting your notes and plans to the newly focused area of study. This will involve rereading some of the previous materials and also reading new texts. Then, take the paragraphs you have decided to keep and expand them into a new three to four paragraph outline.

6. The more work you can do on your thesis during the summer of 2015, the better, both in terms of getting the topic focused and carrying out background reading. You will need to have your MA thesis complete by March of 2016 to graduate in May 2016, and you will be acting as a TA and taking courses during Fall of 2015 and Spring of 2016.

7. You will need to have a full committee, including one member from outside the department, by the time you file your degree plan in October 2015. So, you may want to start approaching possible committee members during summer 2015.

§4 Key dates/timelines for PhD students planning to graduate in May 2015

1. You need to ensure that your completed degree plan is submitted (whichever is the earliest) no later than 90 days prior to the date of your preliminary examination. The last day to submit a degree plan in order to graduate in May 2015 is October 17, 2014. Given the required lag time between the prelim and the final defense, however, filing the degree plan earlier than this is a good idea.

2. You should pass your Preliminary Examination: the Office of Graduate Studies requires your Preliminary Exam results at least 14 weeks prior to the date of your final exam. You need to complete the Preliminary Exam Checklist, and your committee needs to complete and sign the Report of the Preliminary Examination. These two forms are both found at http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/ and should be returned to OGS.

3. You must file your dissertation proposal a minimum of 15 working days prior to filing “Request and Announcement of the Final Examination”, which must in turn be done at least ten working days before the examination occurs. (You may have filed
your dissertation proposal much earlier, around the time of your preliminary exam. The latest date you could submit your dissertation proposal to graduate in May 2015 is: Monday, Feb. 9.
The proposal form and the cover sheet for signatures are available at http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/getting-a-degree/doctoral-degree-requirements

4. Check that you have met all Department and OGS requirements for receiving the doctorate, including satisfying both the residence requirement and the continuous registration requirement; having had your dissertation proposal approved, passed the prelim, completed all formal coursework, completed your master's degree and passed two comps.

5. You must apply for your degree and pay the graduation fee ($47.50). If you miss the date, there’s a $50 late fee. To apply for graduation go to http://howdy.tamu.edu and under the My Record (Spring 2015) tab, select the "Apply for Graduation" link in the Degree Evaluation channel. Last Day to Apply for May graduation: Friday, Feb. 20.

6. You need to prepare your document properly. Check out instructions at http://ogs.tamu.edu/current-students/thesis-dissertation/prepare-your-document/ This will give you general instructions and take you to a link from where you can download the Thesis Manual. YOU MUST read this carefully! A new edition of the Thesis Manual was issued in June 2012 and requirements have changed, so looking at existing theses will not necessarily help you. The Thesis Manual requires you to model your style on that of a single scholarly journal well known in the field. Where your chosen style model conflicts with the Thesis Manual though, the Thesis Manual wins. Keep your footnotes, spacing, page-numbering, chapter titles, etc. in accordance with the Thesis Manual and your selected journal from the start. The Thesis Manual requires the first chapter of your thesis actually to include the word "Introduction" and the last must include the word "Conclusion."

7. You need to find a dissertation defense/final exam date that your whole committee can make. Once this date is agreed, you need to submit the form "Request and Announcement of the Final Examination" to OGS. For graduation in May 2015, the last date this form can be submitted is Friday, Feb. 27, or ten working days prior to the examination, whichever comes first. The form to request your final examination is at http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/ You should check that a room has been booked for your thesis defense. The last day you can schedule your actual examination to graduate in May 2015 is Friday, March 13.

8. Prior to your thesis defense, you should schedule a one-hour pre-submittal meeting with the thesis office. (This is “strongly recommended”.) On online version is also now in existence, but is supposed to supplement the in-person meeting, though could be a replacement for it if necessary. Information about available pre-
9. Now you need to pass your final exam/thesis defense. The Thesis Approval Form that your committee will have to sign is available at: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information](http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information) (You need to keep going to the bottom of this web page to find the form). This form is signed by all members of the committee after you have made any changes they request. You also need to fill in a copyright form, available on the same page. The committee should also complete the Report of the Final Examination Form (generally this is prepared by OGS and provided to your department; the department should return it to OGS within ten days of your defense). **Again, the last date for this defense to happen in order to graduate in May 2015 is Friday, March 13.**


11. The thesis office will get back to you with corrections. You must submit final corrections to the Thesis Office **by 5pm on Wed. April 29.** The thesis office has information on various places that can bind your thesis for you.

12. If you plan to attend graduation, you need to make arrangements ahead of time (eg to acquire graduation attire) as detailed at: [http://graduation.tamu.edu](http://graduation.tamu.edu)