When turning in your thesis, please make sure to include the following:

- A signed cover page
- A reader sheet, filled out by you and signed by your advisor
- A second reader sheet, filled out by you, with the signature blank (Draper provides the second reader)
- Your thesis abstract
- Your Draper Exit Questionnaire

MASTER’S THESIS GUIDELINES

To receive a master’s degree, the Draper Program and GSAS require that you successfully complete 32 points of course work and write a thesis. Please read the below thoroughly; these guidelines explain the thesis-writing process and related graduation requirements. We also offer thesis workshops, as listed on our Web site (http://draper.fas.nyu.edu/page/newsevents). If you then have further questions, please call the office at (212) 998-8070 or email draper.program@nyu.edu.

What is a master’s thesis?
The master’s thesis is a carefully argued scholarly paper of approximately 12,000 – 13,000 words (roughly 50 pages). It should present an original argument that is carefully documented from primary and/or secondary sources. The thesis must have a substantial research component and a focus that falls within arts and science, and it must be written under the guidance of an advisor. As the final element in the master’s degree, the thesis gives the student an opportunity to demonstrate expertise in the chosen research area.

When should I start thinking about the thesis?
You should be thinking about your thesis, if only abstractly, from your first enrollment in the Draper Program. At the latest, you should have a clear idea of your topic and have found an advisor by the end of the semester before the one in which you will complete the thesis (see the timetable and deadlines chart, below).

Who can be my advisor?
Any regular NYU faculty member can be your thesis advisor, although individual faculty are not required to advise master’s theses. It is your responsibility to find an advisor. Your advisor will provide general guidance, and will help you refine your topic and develop your argument. Most students choose faculty members they have worked with in courses. Thesis advisors must be approved by the Program (along with the thesis topic).

What is the process and protocol?
After doing the initial research on your topic, prepare a 1-2 paragraph abstract, a preliminary bibliography (approximately ten to fifteen books or journal articles), and a brief outline before approaching a possible advisor. These will help you to convince your future advisor of the value and interest of your project. Once a faculty member has agreed to advise you, discuss your anticipated graduation date and agree on a timetable for meetings and submission of drafts. It is your responsibility to keep your advisor apprised of your progress.

After you have refined your topic and your advisor has approved it, complete the “Application for Approval of Master’s Thesis Topic” (under the “Forms” link on the Draper website main page), have your advisor sign it, and submit it to the Draper offices. This form must be submitted by the thesis due date for the semester before the one in which you intend to graduate (e.g., December 16 for May graduation; see the chart, below). We will notify you via email when your topic has been approved by Draper. Do not start writing the thesis until you have an advisor who has approved your topic.

In most cases, students and advisors need to meet three or four times: initially, to finalize a topic, and to review the first or second draft. Keep in mind that your advisor must have enough time to read and evaluate your work before returning it to you with comments, and that you must have time to incorporate those comments. Don’t
expect your advisor to return your thesis in a day or two, whether it is an early draft or the final copy. It is appropriate to ask your advisor when you can expect comments, but not to pressure her or him to respond quickly. You should also be prepared for the possibility that your advisor will request substantial changes in the thesis. Do not expect that your draft will require only minor corrections, or that the proposed final version you submit will necessarily be approved without further changes. It is your responsibility to see that the final copy is free from spelling and grammatical errors; your advisor is not responsible for line-by-line editing.

HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH

Theses involving interviews, surveys, or other research on human subjects often require prior approval. Because approval can take time, you should begin the application process as early as possible. Further information is available at [http://www.nyu.edu/ucaihs/](http://www.nyu.edu/ucaihs/) or from the Office of Sponsored Programs, 212-998-2121.

- The cover page must include the thesis title, your name, and your student ID number; your advisor’s name and a space for her or his approval signature; the month and year the degree will be conferred (not the month in which the thesis is submitted); and the statement: “A thesis in the John W. Draper Interdisciplinary Master’s Program in Humanities and Social Thought in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts at New York University” (a sample cover page is provided under the “Forms” link on the Draper website main page).
- All sources for quotations and paraphrases must be documented. You may use any of the standard citation styles (MLA, Chicago, social science, etc.), subject to your advisor’s approval, provided you consistently follow a single style throughout the thesis.
- The thesis should be printed or typewritten on standard paper.
- We prefer unbound theses – a simple binder clip is sufficient. If you decide to bind your thesis, please make sure that your original, signed cover page is unbound.

What are the administrative requirements to graduate?

You must be enrolled in the semester in which you graduate, which means you must either take a course or maintain matriculation. Matriculation is not required during the summer term. You must also apply for graduation (set your graduation date) using Albert (www.albert.nyu.edu) within the period the Registrar has specified for that semester (see [http://www.nyu.edu/registrar/graduation/apply.html](http://www.nyu.edu/registrar/graduation/apply.html)).

How do I submit the thesis?

You must first give a clean copy of the finished thesis to your advisor. After your advisor has read and approved the thesis, it is your responsibility to submit the final copy, signed by your advisor on the cover page, to the Draper Program by the deadline listed below. You must also submit two Thesis Reader Sheets (one signed by your advisor, one blank), a thesis abstract, and the Draper Exit Questionnaire. Your advisor is the first reader and the Program will provide a second reader, usually the director or associate director. Students must have met all graduation requirements, including timely submission of the thesis, to participate in commencement ceremonies.

What is a typical thesis-writing timetable?

- **September-October**: Begin research; prepare abstract, bibliography, and outline.
- **October-November**: Meet with prospective advisor.
- **November-December**: Apply for graduation (set graduation date using Albert).
- **By December 16**: Submit Application for Approval of Thesis Topic, signed by advisor.
- **February-March**: Give first draft to advisor.*
- **April 1**: Give revised, final version to advisor.*
- **April 16**: Submit to Draper Program:
  - Final, clean copy of thesis, with title page signed by advisor;
  - Green “Thesis Reader Sheet,” signed by advisor;
  - Green “Thesis Reader Sheet” for second reader;
  - Draper Program Exit Questionnaire;
  - Thesis abstract.

*Schedule for submission of drafts and approval of the final version is at the advisor’s discretion.
### Thesis and Graduation Deadlines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation Date</th>
<th>Apply for Topic Approval</th>
<th>Apply for Graduation</th>
<th>Submit Final Approved Thesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>August 16*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>December 16*</td>
<td>See Registrar’s Web site: <a href="http://www.nyu.edu/registrar/graduation/apply.html">http://www.nyu.edu/registrar/graduation/apply.html</a></td>
<td>April 16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>April 16*</td>
<td></td>
<td>August 16*</td>
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</tbody>
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*Or the next day on which the Draper office is open, should these dates fall on a weekend or holiday.*