



MASTER OF SCIENCE THESIS HANDBOOK DPHS

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
MILLER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
DEPARTMENT of
PUBLIC HEALTH SCIENCES



Graduate Programs in Public Health

This handbook contains information for students in DPHS Graduate Programs in Public Health requiring a master's thesis – MS in Public Health (MSPH); MS in Prevention Science; and MS in Climate & Health.

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INTRODUCTION

This Master of Science (MS) Thesis Handbook provides guidance for graduate students in the Department of Public Health Sciences (DPHS) who are required to complete a master's thesis. The Graduate Programs in Public Health (from here on referred to as "Graduate Programs") requires that all students completing a master's thesis must follow the University of Miami (UM) Electronic Theses and Dissertations ([ETD](#)) process established by the University of Miami Graduate School.

Completing a master's thesis is a journey that takes time. It is also an independent study in which students are responsible for their own progress. The faculty advisor and the thesis committee Chair mentor and guide students, but students completing a master's thesis are the drivers in this journey and must demonstrate self-reliance and time-management skills. The UM DPHS Graduate Programs, the Graduate School, the UM Library System, and the Writing Center, amongst others, offer a variety of resources to support students through their thesis journey. Resources include this Handbook, info-sessions, writing retreats, and data analysis workshops. Students enrolled in the thesis course must take initiative for their success and timely completion.

The thesis course (EPH 810) is worth 6 credits, allowing students time to progress throughout the thesis phases. Students must maintain regular communication with their faculty advisor and committee Chair and obtain authorization for the number of thesis credits they will enroll each semester. The thesis committee Chair may authorize a student to enroll in the final EPH 810 DEF section (Defense section) only when the student has demonstrated satisfactory progress and readiness to defend and to meet all ETD deadline in the semester of DEF enrollment. An approved readiness-to-defend form is required to enroll in the DEF section.

The MS thesis course includes these general milestones, which will be discussed in this Handbook:

- Formulate a research question and specific hypothesis
- Form a thesis committee
- Develop a thesis proposal
- Identify methods and materials needed to answer your research question
- Collect and analyze data, or conduct experiments and document and interpret results
- Complete your thesis draft
- Defend your thesis
- Submit the final ETD to the University of Miami Graduate School per deadlines

This Handbook contains hyperlinks directing students to the most updated information related to the ETD process and forms. It also contains additional Graduate Programs thesis requirements and provides guidance, ideas, resources, and appendices. Master of Science (MS) students are encouraged to take advantage of the resources offered by their program, their faculty advisor, the UM libraries, and the UM Graduate School. To assist with the management and completion of all tasks related to the master's thesis, the Graduate Programs has created an MS Thesis Checklist tool (see appendix). The student is responsible for managing and completing these required tasks and meeting the established deadlines.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI MILLER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AI POLICY

The University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (UMMSM) encourages the responsible and ethical use of AI tools among graduate students to enhance learning, productivity, and creativity. While ChatGPT and other Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) software can be valuable for brainstorming, information retrieval, and content creation, students are reminded of the inherent limitations of such tools. It is crucial to acknowledge that the internal processes generating AI output are not transparent, and biases may exist due to data harvested from unknown online sources. In light of these considerations, the following principles guide the use of AI among graduate students:

- **AI as an Aid, not a Replacement:** AI should assist in thinking, framing problems, and conducting research, serving as a starting point for personal analysis and discovery. Students should not use AI to complete assignments (e.g. reflective exercises, patient write ups) unless given explicit permission by faculty and must not present AI-generated responses as their own work.
- **Transparent Use of AI:** If allowed by faculty, students must openly declare and explain how AI has been used in their work. Undeclared use of AI, including text, images, or code, may be considered plagiarism.
- **Responsible and Ethical Engagement:** Students should engage with AI responsibly, critically evaluating outputs for biases and ethical implications.
- **Student Responsibility for Final Product:** Students bear full responsibility for the accuracy and credibility of AI-generated content. Any mistakes made by the AI tool become the responsibility of the user. Students should verify information, attribute ideas, and adhere to specific guidelines provided by faculty.
- **Guideline Variability/Class Specific Expectations:** The principles outlined apply unless specific guidelines for an assignment or exam are provided by the instructor. Students must be aware of variations in rules governing AI use across classes and disciplines. Staying informed about instructors' expectations and seeking clarification when needed is the student's responsibility. Course policies might fall into one of three categories:
 - Specific uses of AI are encouraged (generating ideas, editing, translating, outlining)
 - Specific uses of AI are allowed if students clearly distinguish between their original work and AI output (highlighting output, tracking changes in AI output)
 - Any use of AI constitutes academic misconduct.
- **Confidential Data Handling:** Students MUST refrain from entering confidential, personal, or patient data (HIPAA) into generative AI tools to avoid potential loss and/or compromise of important information. This precaution aligns with Responsible and Ethical Engagement described above.

AI is rapidly evolving as a tool. As it evolves, the administration will revisit and update policies related to AI as needed. UMMSM emphasizes the importance of ethical and responsible use of AI as an integral part of graduate medical education. Non-compliance with these principles may result in a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy and the consequences therein.

DPHS ACADEMIC PROGRAMS REQUIRING A MASTER'S THESIS

The Graduate Programs in Public Health offers several Master of Sciences (MS) degrees. The following MS degrees require the completion of a master's thesis:

Degree Programs Requiring a Master's Thesis	Degree Conferred	Required Thesis Credits	Program Director
Master of Science in Public Health	MSPH	6 thesis credits	Dr. Viviana Horigian
Master of Science in Prevention Science & Community Health	MS	6 thesis credits	Dr. Sara St. George
Master of Science in Climate & Health	MS	6 thesis credits	Dr. Naresh Kumar

DPHS MASTER'S THESIS COURSES

Effective Summer 2022, the Graduate Programs thesis course for master's students is EPH 810 – Master's Thesis (1-6 credits). Per University of Miami academic policy, any 800-level course that is required to complete a degree is equivalent to "full-time" enrollment. In addition, UM policy requires students to be enrolled full-time during the semester or summer session in which they defend their thesis. Students are considered enrolled full-time if they are enrolled in at least one (1) credit at the 800 level.

IMPORTANT: "For thesis and dissertation students, **full-time registration is required during the semester or summer session in which a candidate defends the thesis or dissertation.**" ([UM Academic Bulletin](#) – Full-Time Study)

- Students cannot self-enroll in thesis courses
- The faculty advisor or thesis committee Chair will authorize the number of thesis credits students are allowed to enroll in each semester by communicating in writing to the Director of Enrollment Services and the Senior Program Manager.

Details on enrollment in CaneLink and course sections, on Blackboard assignments, and on course grading, are discussed further in this handbook.

There are two courses that can be used to complete the master's thesis:

- EPH 810 – Master's Thesis (1-6 credits) – *this is required.*
- EPH 820 – Research in Residence (1 credit) – *only used as an exception if needed.*

Course: EPH 810 – Master’s Thesis (1 - 6 credits)

All MS students completing a master’s thesis are required to complete 6 credits of EPH 810-Master’s Thesis course. This course ranges between 1 to 6 credits, so students can enroll in it more than once until they reach 6 credits. The Graduate Programs recommends that students plan early in their program in consultation with their faculty advisor or committee Chair concerning how they will distribute the thesis credits of EPH 810 across semesters to meet their expected graduation date.

CaneLink Sections for EPH 810 – Section “01” And Section “DEF”

There are two sections of EPH 810 course in CaneLink: Section 01 and section DEF. Students must complete a total of 6 credits of EPH 810 per these instructions: Students may enroll in section “01” in increments of credits (e.g., 1 or 2 credits at a time) that can add up to 5 credits based on their personalized timeline for program completion. When students are ready to defend their thesis and to submit their ETD to the Graduate School repository, they will use the remaining thesis credits to enroll in the defense section “DEF” in the semester they will defend their thesis.

EXAMPLE: *A student who enrolled in section “01” for 2 credits in two different semesters, has already used 4 credits of thesis. When they are ready to defend their thesis, they must enroll in the remaining 2 credits in section DEF, so the total number of thesis credits adds to the required 6 credits of EPH 810. Students determine with their faculty advisor and committee Chair how to distribute the allocation of credits enrolled in the EPH 810 course.*

- **SECTION (01): General enrollment section.** Students enroll in section 01 as many times as needed and up to the first 5 credits of EPH 810, in increments, while they progress through their thesis proposal, data analysis, and initial writing of the thesis document.
- **SECTION (DEF): Defense section ONLY.** Students enroll the remaining thesis credits in the “DEF” section to sum up 6 credits of EPH 810. To enroll in this DEF section, students must submit a completed *Readiness to Defend – Attestation Form* (see appendix); multiple signatures are required for this form to be approved.

Blackboard for EPH 810

Enrollment in either section of EPH 810 in CaneLink automatically gives students access to the respective course in Blackboard for the term enrolled. Each course in Blackboard has specific assignments. Students must adhere to completing each assignment for their respective course section (i.e., 01 and DEF).

Blackboard Assignments for Section 01: Upload these assignments to Blackboard EPH 810-01.

- 4 CITI Certificates – (See “CITI Certification” section below and the Appendix for instructions)
- Thesis Committee Form – (See Appendix for this form)
- Thesis Proposal – (See Appendix for a Template)

Instructions for uploading: These three assignments will appear in every Blackboard course of EPH 810 section “01” regardless of how many semesters a student enrolls in section 01. Students are

responsible for completing and uploading these assignments only once in the semester they complete it. There is no need to re-upload an assignment if it had been uploaded already in a previous semester of Blackboard EPH 810-01 course.

Faculty advisors will assess their advisee's thesis progress each semester to determine when they are ready to enroll in section DEF. Students must work with their faculty advisor or thesis Chair to determine what constitutes suitable progress in their thesis credits.

Blackboard Assignments for Section DEF: Complete these assignments to Blackboard EPH 810 section DEF.

- Readiness to Defend Attestation Form (*required to enroll*) – upload form
- MSPH Faculty Advisor Evaluation (for MSPH students only) – complete this
- MS Thesis Chair Evaluation (for all MS students) – complete this

Course: EPH 820 – Research in Residency (1 credit)

This EPH 820 course is not required and it is to be used as a last resort for thesis completion in the event a student did not defend or did not meet the ETD deadlines while enrolled in the EPH 810-DEF section. Enrollment in EPH 820 requires program director approval.

IMPORTANT – If a student has used up all 6 credits of the EPH 810 – Master's Thesis course (including the DEF section) but did not complete the thesis defense, the student must enroll in EPH 820 – Research in Residency and pay tuition for an additional 1 credit. This will allow student to defend and to meet the UM requirement of being enrolled full-time in the semester of the defense. See the full-time study below policy:

- [UM Academic Bulletin](#) – Full-Time Study

Enrolling in Thesis Courses

Students cannot self-enroll in thesis credits. Each semester, students are required to meet with their faculty advisor for academic advising. Faculty advisors are responsible for reviewing the student's thesis progress and authorizing the number of thesis credits to enroll each semester by communicating in writing to the Director of Enrollment Services and the Senior Program Manager.

- The advisor's email requesting enrollment in a thesis course must be sent at least 2 business days prior to the last day to enroll for the semester. Students should consult the [UM Academic Calendar](#) when planning advising meetings with their faculty advisors.
- A completed and signed "Readiness to Defend – Attestation Form" is required to enroll in the DEF section of EPH 810 (see appendix). Students should keep in mind the time it may take to acquire all signatures when planning enrollment in the DEF section.

Grades for Thesis Courses

Both EPH 810 and EPH 820 are graded as “Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory” (S/U). Per the [Academic Bulletin](#) policy section *Grades and Credit Hours*, an incomplete (“I”) grade *“is not to be used for thesis or dissertation credit hours.”*

The expectation is that students make progress on their thesis during the semesters they are enrolled in thesis credits to earn a grade of “S.” Students should discuss with their faculty advisors and committee Chair to determine what is expected of them to earn a grade of “S” and to move to the next phase of their thesis.

MS THESIS REQUIREMENTS

There are several requirements to complete an MS thesis. Requirements may be mandated by the Graduate School, the Graduate Programs in Public Health, or each master's degree program. This MS Thesis Handbook outlines these requirements. Students are responsible for meeting each requirement promptly. Graduate Programs uses a course in Blackboard titled ***"One-Stop-Shop" for graduate public health students***, available to all active students, which includes forms, relevant documents, information, and several of the appendixes noted in this handbook – located in the "MS Thesis & Methods" tab.

Pre-Enrollment Requirements – Program Specific

Before enrolling in their first credits of the EPH 810-01 course, students must complete:

- A minimum of 9 credits of master's coursework , and
- Program-specific prerequisites– *see table below*, and
- Permission from their faculty advisor

In addition to having completed a minimum of 9 credits, each MS program requires the following prerequisites for the thesis course:

Degree Program	Pre-Enrollment Requirements for EPH 810 – Master's Thesis:
MSPH Master of Science in Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed EPH 601 • Completed EPH 621 • During data analysis phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enrolled or completed EPH 602 ○ Completed at least 1 methods course*
MS PSCH Master of Science in Prevention Science & Community Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed a statistical or methods course* prior to or concurrently enrolling in EPH 810 • Abide by the MS in PSCH Handbook timing of the thesis courses
MS CH Master of Science in Climate & Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed at least 3 core courses of the MS-CH program, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EPH 646 ○ EPH 727

**See "Methods Courses" section below and the Appendix for a list of approved DPHS methods courses.*

Students are also required to complete the CITI certification (see below and Appendix for instructions) as soon as possible and no later than in their first enrollment of EPH 810-01.

In addition, MS students requiring a thesis are required to attend some workshops and info-sessions (see "Workshop and Info-sessions" section below for specification). The requirements are in place to strengthen students' ability to successfully complete their thesis.

CITI Certification – Requirement

Graduate Programs master's students are required to complete the *Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative* (CITI) courses on the Protection of Human Research Subjects. Once students are enrolled in their first EPH 810-01 credits and they have access to the Blackboard course, they are responsible for uploading the four (4) required CITI Certificates of completion in Blackboard EPH810-01 in the *Assignments* tab.

Students must complete the following four (4) CITI Certifications to receive a grade of “S” in their EPH 810-01 thesis course. Instructions for completing the CITI certificates can be found in the Appendix. Students must upload their 4 CITI certificates only once in one of their EPH 810 section 01 Blackboard courses. The below CITI courses are required for all Graduate Programs master's students:

1. CITI Human Subjects Research (HSR) Series for Social or Behavioral Research
2. CITI Conflict of Interest Course
3. CITI Health Information Privacy and Security (HIPS) Series
4. CITI Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Series

WORKSHOPS, INFO-SESSIONS, AND RESOURCES

The University of Miami Graduate School, the UM Libraries, and the DPHS all offer a variety of sessions and workshops to support students with their research and thesis. Graduate Programs will advertise certain workshops as they become available, but students must show initiative in registering and taking advantage of all resources offered. Below is a list of resources. Those with an **asterisk *** are required.

*Graduate School – ETD Writing Resources Workshop**

***Attendance required** – At the beginning of each semester, the Graduate School offers the ETD Writing Resources Workshop sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Students in a program requiring a thesis must attend one of these sessions. Check the [Graduate School Events and Calendar](#) for semester dates.

Knowing the requirements that graduate students must fulfill to complete the electronic thesis and dissertation (ETD) submission process is key to a successful experience. Students join representatives from the Graduate School, UM Libraries, and the Writing Center for presentations about on-campus writing resources and the online submission process. Both sessions (morning and afternoon) are the same, so attendance in only one session is required.

*DPHS MS Thesis Info-Sessions**

***Attendance Required** – During the Spring semester, the Graduate Programs Senior Program Manager will offer an info session for students enrolled in the MS programs requiring a thesis. The thesis requirements, the enrollment process, and the Graduate School's ETD guidelines will be reviewed. Be on the lookout for emails, flyers, and calendar invites advertising the dates of these info sessions.

UM Libraries Data & Visualization Services

The [UM Libraries](#) offer a variety of services and opportunities to learn and create. Of unique interest for students completing a thesis is the [Data & Visualization Services](#) at the UM Libraries offering workshops and training resources for students in all three UM campuses. Graduate Programs often advertise these training and support services, but we encourage students to explore directly through the UM Libraries website to benefit from its many offerings.

The UM Calder Library located in the Medical Campus offers a variety of resources, consultations, and trainings, including a data analytics workshop offered in the fall and spring semesters. Please check the list of [Training Sessions](#) on their website for an up-to-date list of all available workshops. One-on-one consultations are available as well.

Graduate Writing Retreat

The Graduate Writing Retreat is hosted by the Graduate School and the [Writing Center](#). It is designed to bring graduate students and postdoctoral fellows from all disciplines together for dedicated writing time over four (4) intensive days. Retreats are designed to help improve writing skills and maintain a regular writing routine. There are three retreats offered per academic year. To learn more about these writing retreats and other events, consult the [Graduate School Events and Calendar](#).

Graduate School Three Minute Thesis (3MT®)

Each Spring, the Graduate School presents the [UM Three Minute Thesis \(3MT®\)](#) – an annual competition held in more than 200 universities worldwide. It is open to doctoral and master's students and challenges participants to present their research in just 180 seconds in an engaging manner that can be understood by a lay audience with no background in research. This exercise develops students' academic, presentation, and research communication skills and supports graduate students' ability to explain their work effectively and succinctly.

DPHS Professional Development Seminars

At various points throughout the year, Graduate Programs offer a variety of professional development seminars for all students in the program. All students are welcome to these seminars. Students in the MSPH program are highly encouraged to attend two (2) of these seminars throughout their academic program. These seminars are advertised via email to all public health students.

METHODS COURSES

The Graduate Programs developed a List of Research Methods Courses approved by the Curriculum Committee. Students in MS degree programs requiring a thesis must select courses from this list to satisfy their degrees research methods course requirements. These approved methods courses appear in the Academic Bulletin within the curriculum for each of these degrees, which feeds into the student's Degree Progress Report (DPR) via CaneLink. The most up-to-date approved list of methods courses is in Blackboard, **One-Stop Shop** in the *MS Thesis & Methods* section (see appendix for reference).

Students must plan accordingly, as many of these courses have prerequisites, and some courses are offered only once per year and in distinct semesters. This methods course list indicates prerequisites as well as the semester in which these courses are typically offered. Students are responsible for checking the Graduate Programs Course Schedule as on rare occasions, a course may be offered in a semester differently from the one listed.

ELECTRONIC THESES & DISSERTATIONS (ETD) OVERVIEW

All master's students completing a thesis must follow the Electronic Theses and Dissertations ([ETD](#)) guidelines and meet the deadlines, as required by the Graduate School. *

The ETD database submission program is a joint effort between the Graduate School and the University of Miami Libraries. The ETD establishes thesis formatting requirements, required thesis forms, and specific [ETD Deadlines](#) for thesis and doctoral defenses and submission – **these deadlines are firm** and are presented in the ETD website and in the [UM Academic Calendar](#). Students are responsible for knowing these dates and abiding by these requirements. The ETD webpage also provides tips and essential tools for both the defense day and post-defense essentials.

*** Required:** Prior to enrolling in EPH 810-01, all students must familiarize themselves with all aspects of the [ETD website](#).

MS THESIS – COMMITTEE

The Master's Thesis Committee must be formed with a minimum of three (3) members. The committee Chair and the second committee member must be Graduate Faculty of the University of Miami; see below sections for details. Per Graduate School, there is no maximum number of committee members, but it is not recommended to exceed six members. The Chair must approve all committee members of the thesis committee. Students are responsible for reviewing the details on [Forming the Thesis Committee](#) in the Graduate School website and knowing the program-specific details related to each committee member specified below – **See NOTE below on the Committee Chair section regarding Faculty Senate exception for Graduate Programs.*

The committee Chair must approve all committee members. View the list of [Graduate Faculty](#) on the Graduate School website, then scroll down to the "Public Health Sciences" section.

Committee Chair

The committee Chair must be Graduate Faculty of the University of Miami. The Graduate Faculty consists of the Regular Faculty of the University (tenured or tenure-earning appointments who hold the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor). A non-Regular faculty may become "Graduate Faculty" in the department via review and vote by the Department's Faculty. The Graduate Programs obtained approval from the Faculty Senate to allow the Chair of the thesis committee to be

Graduate Faculty from the student's program or department of concentration, which includes all DPHS faculty advisors (including secondary appointments) – ***NOTE:** this approval is an exception and it is different from the instructions written in the Graduate School website which state: "the committee Chair must be a *Regular Faculty* (faculty having tenured or tenure-earning appointments of a program or department)." – Please make a note of this exception.

It is beneficial that the student's Faculty Advisor serves as a member of the thesis committee, either as Chair or as a second committee member. The committee Chair, as such, becomes the student's *Research Mentor* for the thesis.

- MSPH Student's Faculty Advisor or expert agreed by advisor
- MS Prevention Science Student's Research Mentor
- MS Climate & Health Student's Research Mentor from DPHS, RSMAS or UM College

Second Committee Member

The second member shall be a *Graduate Faculty* from the student's program. View the list of [Graduate Faculty](#) on the Graduate School website, then scroll down to the "Public Health Sciences" section. A Graduate Faculty with secondary appointment in DPHS can serve in this role.

- MSPH Graduate Faculty in DPHS
- MS Prevention Science Graduate Faculty in DPHS
- MS Climate & Health * Graduate Faculty in DPHS or RSMAS, or UM College.

* MS in Climate & Health students must have at least one faculty from DPHS and one faculty from RSMAS as members of their thesis committee.

Outside Faculty Member

- Refer to the Graduate School website [forming the thesis committee](#): The outside member can be from a UM department outside the student's area of concentration or outside the University of Miami altogether. All committee members must be approved by the committee Chair.

Committee Responsibilities

The committee members are experts in their field and provide insight and feedback to the students on their research topic, methodology, analysis, and interpretation. The committee Chair may facilitate member selection and serve as a liaison between members and the student. Committee members must sign some required forms by the ETD deadlines, and all of them must be present at the time of the Defense.

MS THESIS – PROPOSAL

Students should meet with their faculty advisor and committee Chair to plan this phase of their thesis. The student should share the proposal with the thesis committee after their committee Chair has reviewed and approved the first draft. The student will continue to revise the thesis proposal based on feedback from the committee members. Once approved, the student should upload the final approved version of the thesis proposal to Blackboard EPH 810-01.

Thesis Proposal Phase – To Do

- ☐ Complete the required 4 CITI Courses and upload certificates to Blackboard EPH 810 section 01
- ☐ Review the [ETD](#) Website and become familiar with the requirements and deadlines
- ☐ Attend the ETD Writing Resources Workshop
- ☐ Develop a research question and testable hypothesis or hypotheses
- ☐ Form a thesis committee, discuss the feasibility of your research questions and hypotheses, complete the committee form, and upload it to Blackboard EPH 810 section 01
- ☐ Identify data sources or materials or methods needed to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses
- ☐ Suggestion: Write a “Specific Aims” page (maximum 1 page) and share it with your committee members for their feedback
- ☐ Write a Thesis Proposal – (check the appendix for sample templates)
 - NOTE: each MS degree may have its own proposal template. Please check with your program director.
- ☐ Present the thesis proposal to the Committee – *discuss with your advisor and Chair if this is a requirement*
- ☐ Develop and present a Timeline for thesis completion – *may be included within the proposal document or presented as a separate document*
- ☐ Upload final and approved thesis proposal to Blackboard EPH 810 section 01

RECOMMENDATIONS: The proposal is the primary framework that will help you organize your thesis. You should meet with your faculty advisor early in the program to develop a timeline for your thesis completion. When meeting with your faculty advisors and the committee Chair, discuss the pace of enrollment in EPH 810-01 (e.g., number of credits to enroll each semester) and the expected deliverables for each semester enrolled in thesis credits. This will ensure you are progressing steadily in your thesis.

MS THESIS – DATA ANALYSIS

Students will work closely with their faculty advisor and/or committee Chair to ensure they have a feasible plan to obtain a dataset or to collect data independently. Allocating sufficient time for data identification and data collection is extremely important, and students should ensure they have ample time allocated for this stage of their thesis.

The process of analyzing data takes time and students often need help with roadblocks while analyzing their data. When students are working on their data analysis, they must have completed coursework that provides them with the appropriate competencies and skills to analyze data independently. The resources and workshops previously mentioned in this manual from UM libraries may assist students during this phase.

Thesis Data Analysis Phase – To Do

- ☐ Continue to work with data collection, management
- ☐ Data analysis
- ☐ Begin drafting the thesis per ETD [formatting guidelines](#). We recommend that students utilize the ETD templates as they begin to draft their thesis. Templates are available for the following degrees:
 - M.S. – for MS Prevention Science degree, and for MS Climate and Health degree.
 - M.S.P.H. – for Master of Science in Public Health degree.
- ☐ Attend Graduate School thesis writing retreat – see workshop and resource section above
- ☐ Attend at least one (1) DPHS MS Thesis Defense presentation from another student
- ☐ Present a draft of the written thesis document to the committee to receive feedback on readiness to defend
- ☐ Complete the *Readiness to Defend Attestation Form* to enroll in EPH 810-DEF

RECOMMENDATION: While working on your data analysis and thesis writing, you will be enrolled in EPH 810 section 01. By now it is expected you have uploaded the required documents to the Blackboard section 01 noted earlier. At this phase of data analysis, no other deliverables are required to be submitted to Blackboard. However, we recommend that at the beginning of the semester you establish periodic meetings with your research mentor or advisor, to discuss expectations and your progress to demonstrate satisfactory completion of this enrollment at the end of the semester.

Once students have a draft of their thesis and are approved to enroll in the defense section (DEF), they must obtain the appropriate signatures on the “Readiness to Defend Attestation” form. This approved form is required to enroll in the EPH 810 DEF section allocating their remaining thesis credits. The semester in which they enroll in DEF section is when students complete the oral defense of their thesis and submit their written thesis to the Graduate School ETD following the Graduate School’s guidelines and deadlines.

MS THESIS – DEFENSE

The Graduate School ETD process follows strict deadlines, guidelines, and forms to be submitted. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with all deadlines, processes, and forms required for the EPH 810 “DEF” section course before and after the thesis defense.

IMPORTANT: Failure to meet ETD deadlines will result in Graduate School delaying student graduation until the following semester.

Additional forms may be required by the Graduate Programs in the EPH 810-DEF course. For your convenience, Graduate Programs developed an **MS Thesis Checklist** (see appendix) to assist students in managing the thesis deliverables and ensure that all assignments for the EPH 810 sections (01 and DEF) in Blackboard are completed. The student is responsible for managing and completing all tasks in this Checklist and meeting all required deadlines.

Preparing for the Defense

- ☐ Review the **MS Thesis Checklist** to meet requirements and deadlines.
- ☐ Select a date to defend when all committee members will attend.
- ☐ Coordinate with the Graduate Programs Senior Program Manager to ensure this date works.
- ☐ Create a zoom link and/or reserve a conference room for the defense and send the meeting invite to the committee and Senior Program Manager.
- ☐ Plan to present your thesis in 30-40 minutes with corresponding visuals.
- ☐ Send presentation to your committee members at least 1-2 weeks in advance of the defense for feedback.
- ☐ Important – the committee Chair must approve your readiness to defend. If determined that you are not ready, the Chair may request to postpone until you demonstrate readiness.
- ☐ Practice your defense and time it.
- ☐ The thesis defense is a formal and professional presentation in academia, plan accordingly.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI - TITLE IX NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

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University's Title IX Office
Maria Sevilla, Title IX Coordinator
6200 San Amaro Drive, Ste. 230 Coral Gables, FL 33146 Telephone: 305-284-8624
Email: titleixcoordinator@miami.edu Website: www.miami.edu/titleix

The nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located at titleix.miami.edu, under the "Policies and Procedures" tab.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please contact the Title IX Coordinator or file an online report through at titleix.miami.edu.

APPENDICES

Please, consult the following platforms to locate these MS Thesis appendices:

- **DPHS Website MS Thesis & Documents page** has the most up-to-date manual and some thesis appendices listed below so students can start reviewing prior to enrolling in the thesis courses. Note that some appendices are hyperlinked below.
- **Blackboard EPH 810** course – sections 01 and DEF – contain required thesis documents and templates relevant to each thesis course section, located in the *Course Documents* section.
- **“One-Stop Shop”** in Blackboard has additional documents and resource information in the *MS Thesis & Methods* section (e.g., approved methods courses, webinars, past examples, etc.).

List of appendices related to the MS Thesis:

MS Curriculum for DPHS programs requiring a master’s thesis - Links

- [Masters of Science in Public Health \(MSPH\)](#)
- [Masters of Science in Prevention Science & Community Health](#)
- [Masters of Science in Climate & Health](#)

CITI Courses – Instructions

UM Graduate School – [Forming a Thesis Committee](#)

UM Graduate School – [Electronic Theses and Dissertations \(ETD\) Process and Deadlines](#)

DPHS Approved List of Methods Courses

DPHS MS Thesis – Checklist

DPHS MS Thesis Committee – Form

DPHS MS Thesis Proposal (per MS degree) – Templates

DPHS Readiness to Defend – Attestation Form

DPHS Thesis Abstract and Defense Invitation – Template

DPHS Thesis Oral Defense – Assessment Form

DPHS MS Thesis Committee Chair – Evaluation Form

DPHS Faculty Advisor – Evaluation Form