

PROPOSAL: Non-Thesis Option for Master of Science students in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Medicine (alternative option to existing Masters of Science with thesis program)

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION: MS thesis requirements—the department is adding the **option for alternative publication format**. Candidates for the MS degree are generally required to submit a thesis on original research. However, if a student's program makes it desirable and if his/her advisor and graduate advisory committee approve, the MS thesis requirement may be waived. In such instances, the student must complete a research project under the guidance of his/her major advisor in lieu of thesis research. The project must be of the same quality as a traditional thesis project. Only the presentation format is different. The project shall be described in the style of a research paper and submitted to the MS final examination committee. The research paper must be approved by the Graduate Program Advisory Committee (GPAC) and the Department Head. The paper should be submitted and accepted for publication by a refereed scientific journal*. Four hours of VCM 592 (and up to 8 hours of VCM 598 credit, but not VCM 599 credit), may be earned for the alternative MS research project. The general requirement of 32 hours of graduate work for the MS degree remains unchanged under this option. (Note: if a student registers for VCM 599, a formal written thesis is required.)

*This requirement may be waived upon approval of the GPAC and the Department Head when a good faith effort to secure publication is not successful.

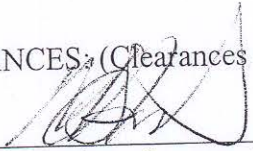
JUSTIFICATION: The faculty of the Department of Veterinary Clinical Medicine recently voted approval for the addition of a non-thesis option for Master of Science graduate students to better meet the needs of graduate students whose career goal is to work within a specialty practice. The careers of these students will be advanced by having a research publication in a refereed journal; however, the preparation of a formal thesis is not viewed as worthwhile by these students, and because of this, many of our current students do not complete their MS degree despite having completed high quality research projects and the other course work required for an MS degree.

BUDGETARY AND STAFF IMPLICATIONS:

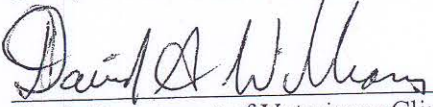
- a. Additional staff and dollars needed. none
- b. Internal reallocations (e.g., changes in class size, teaching loads, student-faculty ratio, etc.) none
- c. Effect on course enrollments in other departments and explanations of discussions with representatives of those departments. none
- d. Impact on library, computer use, laboratory use, equipment, etc. none

GUIDELINES FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION: n/a

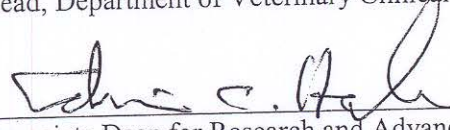
CLEARANCES: (Clearances should include signatures and dates of approval.)


Chair, VCM Graduate Program Committee

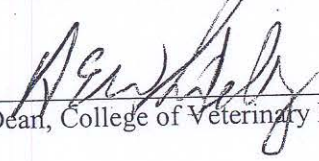
7/26/07
Date


Head, Department of Veterinary Clinical Medicine

7/12/07
Date


Associate Dean for Research and Advanced Studies, CVM

7/19/07
Date


Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine


7-19-07
Date

N/A
Program Subcommittee of the Executive Committee

Date

N/A
Chair, Graduate College Executive Committee

Date


Dean of the Graduate College

11/7/07
Date

STATEMENT FOR BULLETIN: Non-thesis option is also available for Masters of Science degree in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Medicine.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Fall 2007

Additional Information:

The faculty of the Department of Veterinary Clinical Medicine recently voted approval for the addition of a non-thesis option for Master of Science graduate students to better meet the needs of graduate students whose career goal is to work within a specialty practice. The careers of these students will be advanced by having a research publication in a refereed journal, the preparation of a formal thesis is not viewed as worthwhile by these students and because of this many of our current students do not complete their M.S. degree despite having completed high quality research projects and the other course work required for an M.S. degree.

Following is the information that will be listed in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Medicine's Graduate Student Handbook:

THE M.S. DEGREE

To obtain the Master of Science (M.S.) degree in the VCM department, the candidate must complete all requirements of the Graduate College and department and pass the stipulated examinations. The Graduate College requirements are stated in the *Handbook for Graduate Students and Advisers* and are available online (www.grad.uiuc.edu/grad_handbook/). The departmental requirements are: (1) completion of stipulated course work, (2) completion of a thesis or alternative publication that conforms to VCM requirements, and (3) passing the final M.S. examination. Training in teaching is considered to be part of graduate education and the student will participate in the teaching program; however, the extent of participation will be determined for each graduate student. Criteria for recommending granting of the M.S. degree are demonstrated understanding and application of the scientific method.

Minimum Requirements for the M.S. Degree

Course work and M.S. thesis requirements must be met, under normal circumstances, within five years of being admitted to the Graduate College.

Course work requirements: The credit requirements for the M.S. degree are in accordance with those of the Graduate College. The minimum is 32 hours, with no more than 12 hours of thesis research credit (VCM 599) included in any 32-hour program. At least 12 hours must be in 500 level courses (excluding VCM 590 [Seminar] and VCM 599 [Thesis Research]), and 8 of the 12 hours must be in the graduate student's major field of study. Students in a combined Residency/M.S. program can earn hours for advanced training in their clinical specialty through formal course work (such as VCM 679, 500, 522, 551, 577, 584, 585, 588, 591, 593); however, at least two graduate level courses of ≥ 3 hours must be successfully completed. One statistics course is required (such as VP 591, VP 591, EDPSY 490, CPSC 440, IB 488). A course in technical writing, grant writing (such as VP 513) or teaching is recommended but not required. The courses must be selected from those approved for credit by the Graduate College. To maintain good standing in the graduate program a student must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 (A = 4.0).

M.S. thesis requirements (with option for alternative publication):

Candidates for the MS degree are generally required to submit a thesis on original research. However, if a student's program makes it desirable and if his/her advisor and advisory committee approve, the MS thesis requirement may be waived. In such instances, the student must complete a research project under the guidance of his/her major advisor in lieu of thesis research. The project must be of the same quality as a traditional thesis project. Only the presentation format is different. The project shall be described in the style of a research paper and submitted to the MS final examination committee. The research paper must be approved by the Graduate Program Advisory Committee (GPAC) and the Department Head. The paper should be submitted and accepted for publication by a refereed scientific journal*. Four hours of VCM 592 (and up to 8 hours of VCM 598 credit, but not VCM 599 credit, may be earned for the alternative MS research project. The general requirement of 32 hours of graduate work for the MS degree remains unchanged under this option.

*This requirement may be waived upon approval of the GPAC and the Department Head when a good faith effort to secure publication is not successful.

If a thesis is submitted, it should conform to the specifications of the Graduate College as to typing, format, type of paper, etc.

Documentation of faculty availability: the addition of a non-thesis option will not result in any changes in faculty availability. The faculty of the department were overwhelming in support of the addition of a non-thesis option for M.S. students.

Justification: as above, increasingly our graduate students are entering private practice and a research publication to add to their national reputation is of more value to them than a traditional thesis.

This does not duplicate other programs available on campus and will be an addition to make the M.S. programs within Veterinary Clinical Medicine more relevant to the needs of the graduate students and also for the faculty who will also benefit from having their graduate students publish research manuscripts in refereed journals.