

## **Conflict and Dispute Resolution Master's Program**

### **Terminal Project**

#### **Description**

Each student must complete and successfully defend a Terminal Project that will be either a thesis-like academic paper or a practical project. This substantial Final Project embodies the knowledge and skills acquired in classroom and independent studies during the course of your Masters work.

The Terminal Project is intended to foster and reflect individualized integrative learning. The flexibility in format and content for the project allows you to choose between a formal academic paper or a project more practical in nature. Terminal Projects will vary depending on whether the work product is primarily theoretical or practical in orientation. The former typically will be a paper about the field, the latter a project of practice conducted in the field followed with a project report.

Thus, the Terminal Project may take various forms, including (but not limited to) a 40-60 page (double spaced) theoretical paper/study/literature review, a survey research and analysis project, the design and documentation of a systems-level dispute resolution instrument, the creation of a handbook, or an extended project evaluation based on the student's internship experiences. If you choose to do a practice oriented project rather than an academic paper, you must write and submit a project report of 20+ pages (double spaced) describing the project, its methodology, its rationale, its outcomes, implications for further research or practice, etc.

You must successfully complete the Research Methodology course before you can enroll in the Terminal Project course. (The Research Methodology course will assist you in developing your Project proposal, in developing or polishing your research skills, and in the written presentation of your Terminal Project.)

You will work under the supervision and with the support of a Terminal Project advisor and at least one additional Terminal Project committee member. (See below for more information on the Terminal Project committee.)

Successful completion of the Terminal Project requires an oral defense of your paper or project before your Terminal Project committee. (See below for more on the oral defense.)

You are not required to complete the work of your Terminal Project within a single term.

Concurrent JD/Master's students must have their Final Project completed and approved for a passing grade no later than the end of the term prior to the term in which they will graduate (graduating at the end of law school spring semester, a JD/Master's student must have their Final Project completed and approved for a passing grade by the end of the winter term). Master's only students must have their Final Project final draft to their advisor by the end of the 5th week of the term in which they plan to graduate.

Students who intend to use human subjects (interviews, surveys etc.) must gain advance approval to ensure *Research Clearance (Human Subjects Compliance)* University requirements are met.

A copy of all successfully completed Terminal Projects will become part of the CDR program and UO Jaqua Law Library permanent collections. Additionally, the Terminal Projects will be added to the UO digital repository known as the University of Oregon Scholars' Bank.

### **Terminal Project Advisor and Committee**

Your Terminal Project committee is comprised of your advisor, who chairs your committee, and at least one other committee member. Committee members may be selected from among the CDR Program Director, the CDR participating faculty, and the School of Law or other UO department or college faculty. Your committee may include a third member with expertise and experience in the subject area of your Terminal Project (for example, a practitioner, a researcher, or a faculty member from UO or elsewhere).

### **Steps in the Terminal Project Process**

1. As you move through the first year of your studies, think about what subject areas you would like to delve into more deeply.
2. When you have enough of an idea upon which to base the selection of your Terminal Project advisor, secure an advisor. (See below for more information on this step.)
3. Secure your additional committee member(s). (See below for more information on this step.)
4. Draft a Terminal Project proposal with input from your advisor, your other committee member(s), the Program Director, other faculty or others as necessary.
5. Review and finalize your Terminal Project proposal with your advisor and complete the Terminal Project Proposal Approval Form.

6. Enter the initial necessary information on the Terminal Project Tracking Form.
7. Submit a copy of the Terminal Project Tracking Form to the Program Director's assistant.
8. Register for the Terminal Project "course" for the term during which you will begin to work on your project or thesis, specifying the number of credits you expect to complete during that term. **You will not be able to register (registration will be blocked) until you complete steps 1-7.** You will register again in subsequent terms as you continue to work on your Terminal Project. It is important to pay attention to timing as you schedule the work of your Terminal Project so that you complete the process in your final term with time to schedule and conduct your oral defense and complete the graduation administrative process.  
Note again: Concurrent JD/Master's students must have their Final Project completed and approved for a passing grade no later than the end of the term prior to the term in which they will graduate (graduating at the end of law school spring semester, a JD/Master's student must have their Final Project completed and approved for a passing grade by the end of the winter term). Master's only students must have their Final Project final draft to their advisor by the end of the 5th week of the term in which they plan to graduate.
9. Continue to fill out the Terminal Project Tracking Form as you move through your Terminal Project work (mid-term and end of term sign offs by your advisor for any term during which you are working on your Terminal Project).
10. As you draft chapters of your paper, submit them to your advisor and to your other committee member(s) (if that was your agreement with them).
11. Complete your project and the draft project report or your paper and submit to your advisor and other committee member(s) for review and comment. If you have chosen to do an academic paper rather than a practical project, consult with your advisor who may have a preference for format (either APA or MLA guidelines). Practical project summary reports will not require the formal academic format but will still require that you document and formally reference the guiding principles/theories/authors that informed your project work.
12. Based on comments from your committee, produce the final version of your project report or your academic paper and deliver a copy to your committee members.
13. In co-ordination with your committee members, schedule your oral defense during the term at the end of which you will graduate.

14. Upon the successful completion of your oral defense, complete the Terminal Project Tracking Form and submit it to the Program Director's assistant for your file.
15. Provide the Program Director's assistant a copy of your academic paper or project summary report.

### **Selecting and Securing a Terminal Project Advisor**

Over the course of your first year of study, as you consider various subjects and options for your Terminal Project, you will consult with the Program Director and various faculty who can help you clarify what your Terminal Project will be. Once you have settled on at least the broad definition of your Terminal Project, you will identify and ask someone among the CDR Program Director, the CDR participating faculty, and the School of Law or other UO department or college faculty, to be your advisor.

In considering who might be a suitable advisor for your Terminal Project, consider experience and expertise relevant to the subject you are focusing on. It is helpful if your advisor has some knowledge of and experience with the sector of practice within which your subject matter falls. Your advisor must have the time and willingness to fulfill the responsibilities of committee chair. Your advisor does not need to be experienced in every aspect of your subject. You will be able to secure additional expertise in the selection of your other committee member(s).

### **Selecting an Additional Committee Member**

Similarly, your second committee member should have some experience or expertise relevant to the subject matter or area of investigation of your Terminal Project. Your second committee member must also be selected from among the CDR Program Director, the CDR participating faculty, and the School of Law or other UO department or college faculty.

You may select a third committee member if there is someone who you believe will be of particular help to you because of their expertise and experience. You may select a third committee member from a wider pool of potential candidates beyond the restrictions applied to your advisor and second committee member.

You will choose your additional committee member(s) after you have secured your advisor. Your advisor will often be able to help you identify suitable committee members.

Be sure that all your committee members will be available during the terms in which you will be working on your project. Ask them about their schedules and any plans they may have that might interfere with their ability to participate as committee members (for example, fellowships, sabbaticals, or research travel). This might be especially important if you plan to defend your project during the summer term as many faculty hold a nine-month appointment and may not be available during the summer.

It is your responsibility to inform a prospective advisor and committee member(s) of the program's expectations about their responsibilities. (See below.)

### **Responsibilities of Your Advisor**

As chair of your committee, your Terminal Project advisor will:

- Assist in developing your project proposal
- Help identify your other committee member(s) and clarify what their role(s) will be
- Sign off as necessary on the Terminal Project Tracking Form
- Be available for consultation and support during the progress of your work
- Assign and enter grade (pass/no pass) into the system at the end of each term during which you are working on your Terminal Project
- Review and comment on your draft chapters
- Provide final reading and approval of your Terminal Project work product
- Participate in scheduling the oral defense
- Conduct the oral defense

### **Responsibilities of Your Committee Member(s)**

The responsibilities of your additional committee member(s) will vary according to the committee. You may have a committee member with particular expertise upon whom you will rely during the course of your research or project development. Draft chapters of your project may be circulated to all your committee members for review and comment or only to your advisor, with only revised chapters going to your other committee member(s). At the least, your committee member(s) will read and comment on your final draft and will participate in your oral defense to approve your Terminal Project.

It is important to be clear with your committee member(s) from the beginning about the program's and your expectations of them.

### **Terminal Project Proposal Structure**

Your proposal should include:

1. An introduction describing the project you will undertake, or the subject you will explore in a thesis, and your rationale for choosing the subject or project. Include any relevant information about what has already been done related to your subject or project and how this work will complement that work.
2. A description of your intended methodology including any limitations you perceive to that methodology.
3. A description of the anticipated structure of your academic paper or project report (chapters, materials, etc.)

You will learn more about the Terminal Project proposal in the Research Methodology course.

### **The Oral Defense**

The oral defense is a conversation between you and your committee about your work. It is expected that your committee largely supports your work by the time you get to the oral defense. Your committee will not agree to an oral defense if they believe major revisions are necessary or that the work is fatally incomplete. It is possible that you will discuss minor revisions and suggestions for improvements during the oral defense.

The prospect of an “oral defense” can stimulate fears of some kind of ordeal, with the word “defense” suggesting that there will be an “attack”. But the oral defense is really just an opportunity to have a final collegial conversation about the work you’ve been involved in, its relevance to the field, its success in relation to your objectives, and what you have learned from the undertaking.

Approval of your work by all members of your committee is necessary in order to graduate. It is not uncommon that a committee will approve a work with changes and will list the changes needed.

Be sure to consult with your committee members to provide sufficient time for them to review your final project report or your thesis before the scheduling of your oral defense.

By tradition, oral defenses are open to the community and are announced (title, time, and place).