

Promotion from MES to PhD in Environmental Studies (New Version Accepted by SES unit Oct. 25, 2023)

Eligibility Criteria

MES students exhibiting *exceptional* progress and promise may consider applying for promotion to a PhD in Environmental Studies without completing the Master's thesis, providing:

1. The student must have been registered full time for at least two terms.

** The promotion procedure must be completed before the end of the fifth (5th) term, based on a normal September enrollment (i.e. April 30th).*

2. The student must have completed at least two courses towards the master's degree requirement, or equivalent. For students who have taken less than 2 courses for reasons beyond their control, but are otherwise good candidates for promotion, the final year of undergraduate studies will be taken into consideration of their qualification. All courses taken in the MES will be included as counting towards the PhD requirements.

3. Must have an overall first-class average (A-) in graduate courses completed.

4. Should have an undergraduate honours degree with a minimum overall average of B.

5. Must have a documented commitment from the proposed Ph.D. supervisor(s) of financial support, as well as an indication that there is a current Master's project that has the potential to be developed into a Ph.D. research project/dissertation.

6. Must meet departmental criteria for demonstrating promise and ability at research, which must be supported by documentation. Examples of evidence of research ability and/or potential could be: publications (conference or journal), undergraduate research experience and / or training, letter(s) of support from current supervisor and/or graduate course instructors.

7. Students may be considered for promotion from both research and course-based Masters. They are strongly advised to discuss the promotion with project / thesis supervisors, their advisory committees, and the graduate coordinator, well before the due date for applications.

Procedure

The possibility of promotion should be discussed with the supervisory committee first. If the committee agrees that the project is suitable and the student is prepared, the graduate coordinator will be asked to form an ad hoc Promotion Assessment Committee, consisting of the supervisor(s), one other faculty member from SES (to be chosen in consultation with the supervisor(s)), the Director, (or Director's delegate) and chaired by the graduate coordinator.

The student will prepare a 4-5 page proposal for the PhD thesis, including:

- Problem definition and proposed methodology
- Summary of completed work
- Research plan for future work

- Timeline outlining the main milestones and deliverables

This proposal will be submitted to the Promotion Assessment Committee at least 10 working days ahead of the committee's meeting.

The assessment meeting will include a short oral presentation by the student (ie. About 10 minutes). By asking questions based on the written proposal and oral presentation, the committee will evaluate the merit of the proposal and the student's ability to complete the PhD thesis within the four-year time period recommended by SGS. There are only two possible outcomes to the assessment Pass or Fail. If two or more members of the committee vote to fail the candidate, then that is the final decision. If the recommendation is negative, the student will remain in the MES program. In passing the application the committee can make recommendations, for example, that the student take a specific course.

The documentation necessary for this submission to SGSPA comprises:

1. All undergraduate and graduate transcripts (photocopies of originals are acceptable)
2. A letter of support from the SES Graduate Coordinator or Director.
3. A letter from the student to acknowledge that he/she agrees with the proposal to promote him/her.
4. A letter of support from the current research supervisor that addresses the student's outstanding research potential, as well as a statement of expected financial support and evidence that the current Master's project has the potential to be developed into a PhD research project/dissertation.
5. At least one other letter of support from a faculty member other than the current supervisor who has recently taught or supervised the student. A report from the supervisory committee or equivalent is acceptable in lieu of this letter.
6. An application to the Ph.D. completed and signed by the student. Departments or programs can contact the School of Graduate Studies for a **paper** application form (the application fee is waived).

NOTE Master's students promoted to PhD programs are not normally able to revert to the Master's program (see SGSPA regulations).

Those who successfully promote to PhD will usually be expected to complete their comprehensive exams before the end of the 4th semester after starting the PhD program.