

## MS Geography Abbreviated Guide (i.e., “The Cheat Sheet”)

- 1. Establish your major advisor and examination committee (typically your first semester)**
  - a. An examination committee consists of at least three members
  - b. At least two members of the examination committee should be from Geography
    - i. One member can be from another department or an external member
      1. External members must have at least a master’s degree
    - ii. All committee members (including external members) must hold Graduate Faculty status at Minnesota State University, Mankato
  - c. Meet with your major advisor to establish expectations and timeline for graduation
  - d. Establish thesis or APP option and topic of your capstone
    - i. Determine if you need IRB approval for your research
    - ii. Determine if a proposal defense is required
  - e. Discuss and complete a *Plan of Study* form (available in Geography Office)
    - i. Indicate all the courses you have taken or plan to take at the graduate level
    - ii. Do not indicate more 500-level credits than 600-level credits
      1. If you have taken more 500-level credits simply leave some off the form if necessary (don’t worry, they will show up on your transcript)
    - iii. Get signatures from your major advisor, examination committee, and Graduate Program Director and turn in to Geography Office
- 2. Complete at least 30 credits for the Thesis option or 34 credits for the APP option**
  - a. Take GEOG 678 (3 credits; fall semester) and GEOG 680 (3 credits; spring semester)
  - b. Take at least 24 (Thesis) to 28 (APP) elective credits at 500/600 level
  - c. Ensure at least half of your total credits are at the 600 level
  - d. Ensure at least half of your total credits are within Geography
  - e. Take 3-6 credits of GEOG 699 (Thesis) or 1-2 credits of GEOG 694 (APP)
    - i. These do not count towards your 600-level credit total
  - f. You must be enrolled in at least one credit during fall and spring semesters and at least six credits during fall and spring semesters to be considered full time
  - g. You must enroll at least one credit during summer if you receive summer funding from a graduate assistantship, internship, or paid hourly position
- 3. Complete a Written Comprehensive Exam (typically third or fourth semester)**
  - a. Discuss your comprehensive exam with your advisor at least one month before you would like to take the exam and they will provide you with their exam guidelines
  - b. Complete the *Written Comprehensive Examination Request and Report* form (available in Geography Office) at least two weeks before your exam
    - i. Your major advisor must sign
    - ii. Turn form into Geography Office
- 4. Complete the *Application for Graduation* form (your final semester)**
  - a. Available at: <https://grad.mnsu.edu/globalassets/college-of-graduate-studies-and-research/files/documents/forms/application-for-graduation.pdf>
  - b. Due the near the beginning of the semester you intend to graduate
  - c. Requires signatures from major advisor, examination committee, and graduate program coordinator

5. **Complete an Oral Examination (i.e., “defend” your thesis or APP capstone) (typically your final semester)**
  - a. Should be completed at least six weeks before the end of the semester
  - b. Provide a complete draft of your thesis to your examination committee and the Geography Office at least two weeks before your oral examination
  - c. This is a public event, and anyone can attend and ask questions
  - d. If revisions to your thesis or APP are required (based on your committee’s evaluation), you must complete those revisions and receive your major advisor and examination committee approval before you submit your final thesis or APP
  - e. Once all revisions are made,
6. **Submit your thesis or APP report(s) (typically your final semester)**
  - a. Submit final thesis to Office of Graduate Studies (*typically due ~4 weeks before end of final semester*)
    - i. <https://grad.mnsu.edu/capstones/thesis-or-dissertation/theses-or-dissertations/>
    - ii. Requires Endorsement/Signature page that includes your major advisor and examination committee signatures
      1. Should only be completed after a successful oral examination and all revisions have been approved by your major advisor and examination committee
    - iii. You may submit an electronic or paper/print version of your thesis
      1. Electronic copies are submitted online, and the Endorsement/Signature page is unsigned
        - a. Submit a signed paper copy of the Endorsement/Signature page to the Office of Graduate Studies by the semester deadline
      2. Print copies must be hand delivered to the Office of Graduate Studies by the semester deadline
        - a. Must submit at least four print copies
        - b. Must pay \$20.00 per copy for binding
        - c. Print copies must adhere to formatting and style requirements
  - b. Formal APP submission is not required
    - i. You submit all APP assignments to your major advisor and examination committee
    - ii. All APP assignment should follow the proper Format and Style Guidelines
7. **Complete Recommendation for Awarding the Degree form (typically your final semester)**
  - a. Available at: <https://grad.mnsu.edu/globalassets/college-of-graduate-studies-and-research/files/documents/forms/grad112fr-reccomendation-for-awarding-masters-degree-form-04-21.pdf>
  - b. Due no later than the last week of the semester you intend to graduate
  - c. Submit to Office of Graduate Studies (or you can turn in to Geography Office)
  - d. Requires your major advisor, examination committee, and graduate coordinator signatures