



## Ideal MA timeline

The processes reflected here are *ideal* but not standard. Some students may move through some stages more quickly; some students may move through some stages more slowly. During an MA student's first annual review, you should map *their* ideal timelines for finishing the program as a *guideline* for the coming year.

### YEAR ONE

| ACTIVITIES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | DELIVERABLES (student)                                                | DELIVERABLES (assistant director)      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be advised by assistant program director</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                       | advising form                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enrolled in WRA 886</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                               | professional milestone-setting document and work management plan      |                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete Responsible Code of Research (RCR) year 1 requirements (in part in WRA 886)</li> </ul>                                                                                                              | CITI completion verification sent to Melissa                          |                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>take coursework</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                       |                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>annual reporting</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                  | Annual Report Form A filed and CV sent to Melissa by January deadline |                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>form guidance committee</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                       | RoGC signed and filed by April 15      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>produce annual review and plan for year two, including determining whether to pursue <b>Plan A</b> (thesis) or <b>Plan B</b>; if Plan B, determine in which month student will present prospectus</li> </ul> | annual portfolio                                                      | Annual Report Form B filed by April 15 |

### YEAR TWO

| ACTIVITIES                                                                                                                   | DELIVERABLES (student)                       | DELIVERABLES (chair)                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete RCR year 2 requirements</li> </ul>                                           | CITI completion verification sent to Melissa |                                                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>finish coursework</li> </ul>                                                          |                                              |                                                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>regularly touch base with guidance committee chair</li> </ul>                         |                                              |                                                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>if <b>Plan A</b>, present thesis prospectus to chair and then to committee</li> </ul> | prospectus                                   | ideally, written committee response to thesis prospectus |

|                                                                                                                                                      |                             |                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if <b>Plan A</b>, enroll in thesis credits (3–6, WRA 899)</li> </ul>                                        |                             |                                                                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• find a writing group to work with on thesis or portfolio</li> </ul>                                         |                             |                                                                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete requirements, including either thesis defense, exam submission, or portfolio completion</li> </ul> | thesis, exams, or portfolio | MA completion paperwork to Melissa by Grad School completion deadline |

**MA Portfolios**

- Start student drafting synthesis/reflection early in the final semester.
- Advise student that portfolio needs to both serve as a program capstone, but should also be aimed at the *next* audience (grad schools, jobs, etc.).
- Suggest that student look for job ads to consider the qualities, skills, job titles they need to have or illustrate.
- Encourage students to back up claims with examples and specific, concrete support (including draft documents, documents that show process, a range of genres).

**MA Thesis**

- Remind student—and yourself—that this is *not* a dissertation.
- Think carefully about scope and purpose.
- Consider approaches: Writing a traditional long essayistic piece, drafting a manuscript toward a particular journal audience, producing a media piece with supplemental written piece.
- This is practice: Practice in writing an extended piece for a particular audience.
- This is a tiny piece of a larger project; not all of what you want to say for your career.
- Get a writing group, attend regularly.

**MA Exams**

- Remember that these are not PhD students.
- Help student really narrow questions—can only answer in 10 pages each in 1 week!
- Outline potential answers to questions in preparation.
- Question development needs to happen in time for students to prepare (typically, should happen over at least 4–6 weeks).