

School of Fashion

MFA Fashion Merchandising and Management

Final Review Guidelines (Master of Fine Arts)

All Master of Fine Arts students are required to conduct a Final Review as part of the Master's program to present their Final Thesis. All final reviews must be completed in the term which the student completes the program units for their Master's degree. If thesis conditions are not met within two semesters of unit completion, students will be asked to apply for reinstatement into the graduate program.

Important Contact Information

Fashion Merchandising Department:
1-415-618-3907

Final Review Coordinator:
(415) 618-6297
Finalreview@academyart.edu

Eligibility

All Final Reviews must be held at the end of the semester in which you complete your regular program units.

Scheduling

Please review the [Midpoint and Final Review Handbook](#)

Deliverables

Portfolio

You must submit your Financial Worksheets in .xls format under the Portfolio section.

Online Students: Please review the [Online Technical Requirements](#) page for requirements relating to your submissions for upload

Thesis Book

FINAL THESIS BOOK: One (1) copy of your Final Thesis, professionally printed book must be submitted to the School of Fashion Merchandising when presenting. The book must be clearly labeled with your name, student ID number, date of presentation, major and project title.

FINAL COLLATERAL and PROTOTYPES:

- Collateral: Brand identity, business sites(e-commerce), branding elements, marketing collateral, and other branded or marketing material
- Product catalog or linesheet
- Products: Minimum three product samples of your Final Collection or Merchandise. Including labels, hangtags and all other packaging components.

UPLOAD: You must upload your:

1. Final Thesis Project: fully complete thesis project in PDF format to your student Homepage under Thesis Book
2. Collateral and prototypes: digital copies of collateral and photos of prototypes and samples in PDF format to your student Homepage under Portfolio or included in the Final Thesis as Appendix

Oral Presentation

Final Thesis Review Presentation: you formally present and defend thesis and the completed body of work to the committee. In addition to the fully written and printed thesis book, the visual presentation will include the synopsis of your final thesis project, summary of each part of the thesis, collateral and prototype samples. And you present and defend thesis with visual presentation.

For the final thesis presentation, prepare for;

- Visual presentation – a slide deck: summarizes and addresses key points of the thesis project
- Collateral, samples and prototypes
- Any multi-media components developed
- Oral presentation

During the final presentation, brand and marketing collateral, product samples and prototypes must be submitted and presented. These include but not limited to;

1. Printed brand and/or marketing collateral.
2. Product/service samples and prototypes: For the product development project, seasonal concept boards, line sheets along with 3 samples must be presented and submitted to the School of Fashion Merchandising when presenting. Service based project must include at least 3 case studies.

Due Date for Deliverables

Your thesis and portfolio must be uploaded to the LMS review portal at least one week before the date of your presentation, and the combined file size must not exceed 2048MB.

NOTE: Please note that Summer Final Reviews will be scheduled at the end of Summer semester. All printed books and PDF must be received by your department one week in advance of your final review.

Structure

Final Reviews are one hour in duration. Your presentation should be 20 minutes long.

The Final Review meeting will follow this structure:

Set up and Preparation	5 minutes
Introduction and Thesis Project	5 minutes
Final Thesis Presentation	15 minutes
Committee Question & Answer Session	15 minutes
Committee Discussion – closed door/offline	15 minutes
Committee Decision & Feedback	5 minutes

Final Review Preparation Timeline

Semester Prior to Presentation:	<p>Watch the Final Review Orientation</p> <p>Review department specific guidelines</p> <p>Review your Midpoint Thesis Book and review committee comments.</p> <p>Meet with your Academic Director to discuss feasibility of thesis ideas for feedback</p> <p>Identify whether you have made changes to the project that may require approval from the Department Director prior to your Final Review</p>
2 to 3 months prior	<p>Check graduate website for Final Review sign-up schedule</p> <p>Solidify your Thesis Project Concept</p>
6 Weeks Prior	<p>Prepare your thesis book</p> <p>Work with an editor or contact ARC to make sure your thesis book is grammatically correct and typo-free.</p>
1 month prior	<p>Print your thesis book and have it professionally bound</p> <p>Create your PowerPoint/PDF slide show</p> <p>Organize and create notes for your oral presentation</p> <p>Online students: Receive contact from an Online Learning Coordinator to setup your presentation room and practice session</p>
3 weeks prior	<p>Practice your oral presentation out loud and with a timer</p> <p>(Online students) Send one (1) bound copy of your Thesis Project to be received by the School of Fashion Merchandising by the due date</p>
2 weeks prior	<p>Review online presentation room with your Online Learning Coordinator</p> <p>Finalize your written Final Thesis Project to upload in PDF form</p> <p>Prepare any additional collaterals or prototypes to be presented to the committee during the presentation</p>
1 week prior	<p><u>Upload PDF of your written Final Thesis to your review page and submit all printed material.</u></p> <p>Plan your attire. Dress neatly and comfortably, though remember this is an important, formal presentation in front of your Director and industry professionals</p> <p>Practice your presentation in front of a live audience</p> <p>Finalize and check any additional collaterals or prototypes to be presented to the committee during the presentation</p>
Tips for the day of	<p>Get plenty of rest the night before</p> <p>If you will be using a cellphone, make sure the battery is charged</p> <p>Have a glass of water available during your presentation</p> <p>Arrive at your Final Review early and ready to go</p> <p>Greet your committee members prior to beginning your presentation</p> <p>Be prepared to address questions about your Thesis</p> <p>Listen to the whole question before answering</p> <p>Maintain professionalism during the entire session</p>
Following your review	<p>View your Final Review results here</p>

Portfolio, Thesis Book & Presentation Checklists

Portfolio Contents

You must submit your Financial Worksheets in .xls format under the Portfolio section.

You must submit any other presentation material such as collateral, prototypes and sample photos in PDF format under the Portfolio section.

Thesis Book Checklist

One final accumulation of all the thesis works including research and development process, professionally printed book must be submitted to the School of Fashion Merchandising when presenting.

The Thesis Final Book is the completion of the detailed thesis project developed. You will want to address the following in an articulate and well professional manner:

- Cover Page
 - Thesis title
 - Student information
 - Program and degree pursuing
 - Date and time of presentation
- Table of Contents: must indicate page and sections
- Thesis Abstract: Define your Thesis Project. Describe background information on your topic and how you researched and developed this product

- Business Concept and Overview
 - Business description
 - Missions, Visions and Values
 - Opportunities & Challenges
 - Justification and Business Goals

- Market Research and Analysis
 - Market overview
 - Industry research and analysis
 - Consumer research and analysis

- Location Research and Analysis

- Targeting and Customer Segmentations
 - Target customer research and analysis
 - Primary, secondary and tertiary customer profiles, persona and lifestyles

- Competitive Analysis
 - Competitor overview
 - Competitor research and analysis: direct and indirect competitors
 - SWOT analysis
 - Positioning strategy
 - Competitive advantages
 - Differentiation factors

- Merchandise Strategy and Plan
 - Buying or Product strategy: must include classification, seasonality analysis, vendor selection criteria and pricing strategy
 - Merchandising plan summary: by season, by brand, by product category, and etc for the first full year with multiple seasonal collections
 - Assortment plan by season
 - Pricing plan and price points
 - Vendor research
 - Merchandise and vendor selection
 - Cost sheets/techpacks
 - Merchandise/buying calendar

- Branding
 - Brand concept
 - Brand identity
 - Brand elements

- Merchandise Presentation Plan
 - Store concept
 - Visual merchandising plan
 - E-commerce: working website
 - Brick and mortar store: floor plan, branded windows, merchandise sections, store interior etc.
 - Vendor and suppliers

- Marketing Strategy and Plan
 - Marketing objectives
 - Marketing channels: branded and non branded channels
 - Marketing campaigns: must include marketing collateral prototypes and mock up
 - Marketing calendar
 - Marketing budget

- Operations Plan
- Financial Plan
- Growth Plan
- Appendix
- Work Cited http://elmo.academyart.edu/reference-help/mla_citation_guide.htm & http://arc.academyart.edu/writing/mla_examples.html

Note:

- You must present the fully developed content as proposed at your Midpoint.
- All work presented for the Final Review should be created after successfully passing the Midpoint Review.
- All work presented for the Final Review should be unique and original.
- The project presentation must exemplify your highest level of technical proficiency.

All the presentation materials should be written, edited and formatted professionally and academically. ***Committee can disregard the submissions if materials are not professionally written and presented.***

Oral Presentation Checklist

The Final Thesis presentation is a summation of the research and product development process with final outcomes of the Final Thesis. All materials should be original and unique to each thesis. Presentation must include visual materials, collateral and prototypes.

This is a formal presentation of a student's Final Thesis as proposed by the student and approved at Midpoint Review to the committee. Recap your full thesis in your presentation. Do not include heavy details from your written thesis book. Summarize and show that you have a thorough understanding of your business, product, marketing and financial strategies and execution plans. A student must present and communicate a project to the committee within the timeframe, keeping in mind that a visual presentation is a guide for the presenter, **not** the report of the complete thesis. A student must speak without reading the presentation slides. Practice your oral presentation in advance of your review to check the grammar, spelling and quality of images used and to ensure the timing of your presentation.

The Final Presentation slide deck PDF must address the following in an articulate and professional manner:

- Introduction Slide
 - The introduction/title slide must include the following items:
 - Your name
 - Your student ID
 - Department Name
 - Project Title
 - Date of the presentation
- Abstract Slide(s)
 - Summary of your thesis project to give committee members an overview of the project.
 - Also include the approved Midpoint Review topic, and modifications and evolution of the thesis progress during the course of directed studies.
- Thesis Project Slide(s)
 - Your thesis slides should be original, not a copy from your book.
 - No more than 20 minutes of contents
 - Prototypes and collaterals
 - NOTE: It is best to keep your written text in bullet-point format or very short sentences in the presentation slide deck. You don't want the Review Panel to have to read a lot of written information and listen to your oral presentation simultaneously.
- Closing Slide
 - This slide should clearly indicate that you are finished with your presentation. You may choose to include the following:
 - Your Name
 - Your Project Title
 - A Thank you

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When can I schedule my Final Review?

A. Once you have completed your eligibility requirements, you can contact the Final Review Coordinator to schedule your Final Review.

Q: How many pages should the thesis book be?

A: It varies but there is a minimum of 130 pages without inclusion of appendix for the completed Thesis Project. The written Report should be thorough in describing all aspects of your thesis, but you also want to think about how you can be concise and avoid redundancy of information in the content

Q: Will my materials be returned after my review?

A. You will receive your prototypes and samples if you include return shipping postage when you mail your final thesis book and collateral.