Guidelines for PM 594 Thesis Courses

**PM 594a:** Full-time students begin working on their thesis at the beginning of their second year and register for PM 594a/b over two consecutive semesters. When you are enrolled in PM 594a, you will select a Committee Chair (or thesis advisor), that will help you form your thesis committee and guide you through your thesis project. The thesis is written like a scientific paper which is typically about 30-40 pages double spaced, although there is no page requirement. A thesis defense is not required for MS students, only the submission of your final manuscript that must be approved by each of your committee members and submitted to the Graduate School by the posted deadlines.

**ACTION ITEMS FOR PM 594a**

- **Thesis Center Website:** Become familiar with the Thesis Center Website early on so you have plenty of time to ask questions. The email address for the Thesis Coordinator is thesisdc@usc.edu.

- **Form a Thesis Committee:** The beginning of PM 594a should be dedicated to forming a thesis committee that includes a Committee Chair and at least two other Committee Members. Your committee must be formed in enough time to complete the Appointment of Committee Form. Please contact your program director if you need assistance with forming a thesis committee:
  - MS Applied Biostatistics and Epidemiology Program Director: Dr. Mariana Stern, marianas@usc.edu
  - MS Biostatistics Program Director: Dr. Trevor Pickering, tpickeri@usc.edu
  - MS Clinical, Biomedical and Translational Investigations: Dr. Cecilia Patino-Sutton, cecilia.patino-sutton@med.usc.edu
  - MS Molecular Epidemiology Program Director: Dr. Mariana Stern, marianas@usc.edu

- **Appointment of Committee Form:** The Appointment of Committee Form must be completed by the 9th week of classes. D-clearance for PM 594b will not be granted until the Appointment of Committee Form is complete. To complete the Appointment of Committee form, please click on the DocuSign link below for your respective program to automatically send the form to your committee members and then to your respective program directors and dean for signature. This process should be started as soon as your thesis committee is confirmed because signatures can take at least two weeks to complete.
  - MS Applied Biostatistics and Epidemiology (POST Code: 1083) DocuSign Form
  - MS Biostatistics DocuSign Form (POST Code: 1084) DocuSign Form
  - MS Clinical, Biomedical and Translational Investigations (POST Code: 1201) DocuSign Form
  - MS Molecular Epidemiology (POST Code: 1022) DocuSign Form

- **Thesis Center Profile:** After you receive the completed Appointment of Committee Form with all required signatures, you are now ready to create your Thesis Center Profile. Detailed instructions are available in Step 1 of Guidelines for Submission.

- **Guidelines for Thesis Formatting:** Review the Guidelines for Format and Presentation which provides general formatting guidance to ensure consistency across the university.
PM 594b: This is the semester of your intended graduation and when your final thesis manuscript will be submitted before the semester’s midterm. It is VERY important to become familiar with the following web pages and meet each submission deadline on time. **Even one minute late will push your degree conferral date to the next semester!**

**ACTION ITEMS FOR PM 594b**

- **Submission Deadlines:** Review the Submission Deadlines early in the semester and be sure to send the final draft of your thesis to your committee members at least two weeks before the first Checklist deadline to allow enough time for (1) your committee to review your thesis and provide feedback and (2) make any final changes required by your committee. **All deadlines are at 12 PM NOON Pacific Time on the designated day and late submissions will NOT be processed until the following semester.** Please follow the Regular deadlines posted.

- **Deadline #1-Checklist Submission:**
  - **Appointment of Committee Form - Part 1 of Checklist:** Your Appointment of Committee Form will have already been completed in PM 594a. Confirm your Appointment of Committee Form is uploaded and your committee member information has been entered in your Thesis Center Profile.
  - **Approval to Submit - Part 2 of Checklist:** As part of the checklist process, each committee member must complete the digital approval prior to the Checklist Submission deadline. You as the student will initiate this process from Thesis Center after uploading your committee form and entering the name and details of the committee members. Once you initiate the approvals, an automated email will be sent to the committee members to approve your submission. The subject of the email sent to your committee members is: Action Required: Approval to Submit form for <Student Name> from Vice Provost for Graduate Programs at vpgp@usc.edu.

    If every committee member has not submitted their approval by 12 PM NOON Pacific Time on the day of the Checklist Submission deadline, you will NOT be eligible to submit your manuscript for that semester, which will delay your graduation term. Please be sure to follow up with your committee members to confirm a timely Checklist completion.

    **Refer to Thesis Center: Guidelines for Submission for full instructions**

- **Deadline #2-Manuscript Submission:**
  - After the Checklist submission, the Thesis Center will begin the review process and make sure all Checklist items are complete. You will receive an email from the Thesis Center once you are ready to upload your final manuscript. Your final manuscript must be uploaded no later than the posted Manuscript Submission Deadline unless otherwise told by the Thesis Center.

  - After your manuscript submission, be sure to respond promptly to any emails from the Thesis Center pertaining to formatting changes, etc. that may need to be corrected before your thesis submission is considered complete.

    **Refer to Thesis Center: Guidelines for Submission for full instructions**
**PM 594z:** For students enrolled in PM 594b and miss the Regular deadlines, please notify your program administrator at your earliest convenience. Enrollment in PM 594z may be required for the following term to meet the continuous enrollment requirement as outlined in the USC Catalogue. Please note enrollment in PM 594z is **NOT** required for the Summer semester but is required for **Fall** and **Spring** thesis submissions. PM 594z is a thesis course with no academic credit and will require payment of 2 units of tuition.

To review the general requirements for the Master’s Degree, you may refer to the USC Catalogue.

**Additional Resources**

USC Writing Center: [https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/](https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/)

USC Writing Center for individual appointments: [https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/appointments/](https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/appointments/)

USC Dornsife Writing Center Handouts: [https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/handouts-and-video-tutorials/](https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/handouts-and-video-tutorials/)

Kortschak Center for Learning for student resources and writing tips: [https://kortschakcenter.usc.edu](https://kortschakcenter.usc.edu)

UNC Chapel Hill Writing Center (video tutorials): [https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/](https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/)