



# **Graduate Student Handbook**

Department of Exercise Science and Health Promotion

Boca Campus

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Within each of these tracks students may elect  
THESIS or NON-THESIS option.

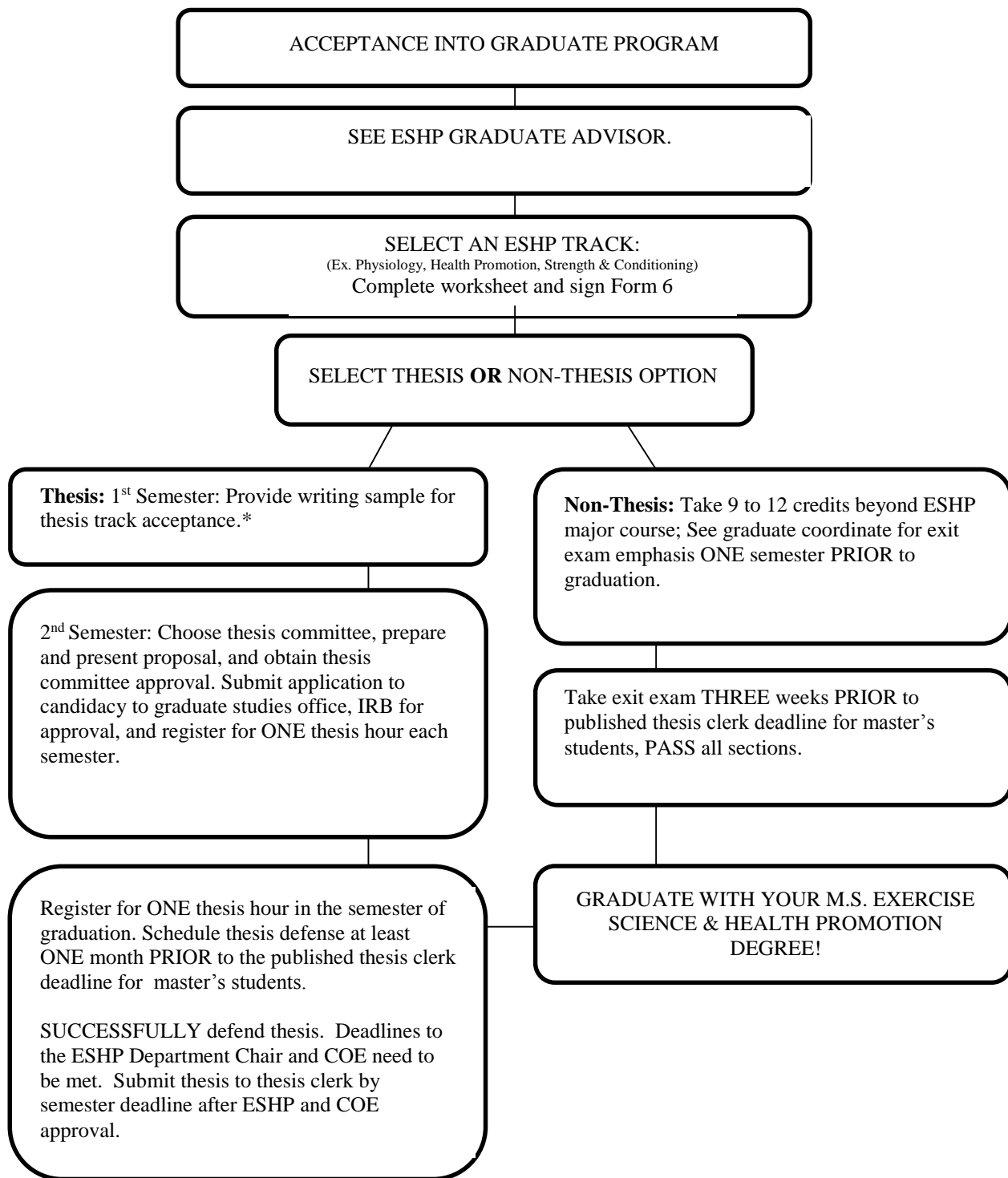
Three tracks are available (choose one):

Exercise Physiology

Health Promotion

Strength and Conditioning

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\*if writing sample is not provided during the 1<sup>st</sup> semester, a timely graduation may be delayed

Students planning on seeking enrollment in the master's degree program in Exercise Science and Health Promotion should become acquainted with Department, College and University policies governing graduate enrollment.

1) General Departmental Policies

All courses must be completed with a "C" or better. A "C-" is not passing, and must be repeated.

Students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0. All graduate classes and UG 4000 level classes count in your graduate GPA. See FAU graduate policy manual.

Students must maintain a current CPR certification.

Undergraduate pre-requisite courses cannot be used as graduate program electives.

Directed Independent Study (DIS) cannot be used to replace a required course, unless a required course was canceled or not offered, and, thereby, may delay your graduation (one or two years). **Failure by the student to consult with their faculty advisor and thus not register for a scheduled course, or failing a course, does not constitute grounds to substitute a DIS for any course.** Graduate course offering schedule is posted on the ESHP website.

The Department of ESHP has high expectations of its students. Students are expected to display professional and cordial behavior and become involved in class discussions/work, current research projects, and outside searches for knowledge.

Upon acceptance to the graduate program students must meet with an assigned advisor (See departmental secretary to be assigned an advisor) and sign a graduate program contract. Students should meet with their advisor prior to registering every semester.

- 2) All graduate students must select one master's track in which to major and whether or not they wish to conduct a thesis.

Current MS tracks:   Exercise Physiology  
                              Health Promotion  
                              Strength and Conditioning

All graduate students may turn in the worksheet for the track in which they choose the first semester of entering the graduate program. The worksheet can be found on the department website at <http://www.coe.fau.edu/academicdepartments/eshp/grad.aspx>. You must be with your advisor to ensure appropriate classes and electives are being taken.

Graduate students must fill out a Form 6 prior to completing two semesters of coursework. You may want to complete the worksheet for your track prior to the Form 6, per the above paragraph. The procedures for the Form 6 can be completed electronically as of May 2013.

- If you sign on to MyFAU, you go to the graduate faculty tab, click on it.
- Go to the College of Education link, under the Plan of Study and follow the directions.
- You will need to know who your official ESHP advisor is.
- In order to ensure the student graduates on time, this form must be completed and signed.
- Remember, the advisor list is posted in the ESHP Department or call the main office number, 561-297-2938, to find out who it is.
- Set up an appointment with your advisor to fill out the form correctly.

#### A.    **Non-Thesis Option**

Students selecting the non-thesis option are required to complete an additional 9 to 12 credit hours of elective course work relating to the major of study. These electives may be offered in the Department of Exercise Science and Health Promotion, or any other FAU department provided at least thirty credit hours are at the 5000 level or higher and approved by your ESHP advisor.

#### **Exit Exam Requirements**

Students selecting the non-thesis option are required to pass an exit exam during their last semester of classes. The exit exam consists of essay questions from five (5) core courses of the graduate ESHP curriculum and are graded pass/fail by the faculty member, who taught that course. You must to contact the ESHP graduate coordinator the first week of classes for your last semester of your graduate classes. You will be given areas of emphasis from these five core courses, which will encompass the exit exam questions. You will receive these areas of emphasis by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week

of that semester. The graduate coordinator can inform you of the 5 core courses currently used for the exit exam at any time during your program.

**The student is responsible for notifying the graduate coordinator for ESHP of intention to graduate the semester prior to graduation so the above information can be disseminated to them.** Failure to notify the graduate coordinator of your expectation to take the exit exam the semester prior to your anticipated graduation may result in taking the exit exam with little or no preparation OR delaying your graduation one semester.

Each semester the exit exam will be given at a date and time determined by the Department of ESHP, usually two to three weeks prior to the FAU published deadline for graduation. No retakes of any section of the exam will be given. The student will have to retake the course if they fail. Students are encouraged to meet with the faculty member responsible for the section(s) failed for purpose of review. If a student fails a course from which an exit exam question is taken, the student will not be able to take the exit exam for that section (course) until the course has been completed with a C or better.

Students who fail the exit exam for one track may switch to another track, complete the course work for that track and then take the exit exam for that track, if they so choose. Some exit course sections are chosen by the student. Students who fail the exit exam and thus will not graduate do have the option to switch to the thesis option and complete a thesis for graduation, if appropriate. See section B “thesis option” for requirements for the thesis.

All students must complete all course work counting towards the Masters degree within 7 years of the first course taken. If earlier courses are older than 7 years, students must petition the College of Education in order to have them count for graduation. If the petition is not approved, student must retake the courses.

## **B. Thesis Option**

Students selecting the thesis option are required to complete a written thesis on a topic of their choice and within the scope of faculty expertise and department resource feasibility. A student may complete a thesis based on a topic selected by a faculty member, if the student chooses.

Upon selection of the thesis option students must apply to be accepted to this option, see thesis chair. As part of the application, students will complete a ten-page written review of literature, with references, on a topic of their choice, or their thesis topic. **This writing sample should be**

**completed during the first semester in the program.** This writing sample is to assess the students writing ability, and will be evaluated by the ESHP departmental graduate committee. The committee will review the writing sample and provide a “Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory” evaluation within one month of submittal. Failure to obtain a “Satisfactory” on the writing sample by the graduate committee will result in the student not being admitted to the thesis option. It may be possible for the student to take additional writing courses to enhance their writing skills, however, this may add an undetermined amount of time until graduation.

Students may approach any ESHP faculty member, who has graduate faculty status, to be the chair of their thesis committee. Upon faculty acceptance of the chair role, the student and the committee chair will assemble the remaining two members of the committee, who must also hold graduate faculty status in the ESHP department. Students then file an application to candidacy form to the Department of Graduate Studies on the Boca campus. A sample timeline is included at the end of this section.

**Application to candidacy should be done during the second semester, after the successful thesis proposal. During the second semester, the student, in conjunction with the committee chair, will prepare a thesis proposal to be presented to their thesis committee for discussion and approval. After approval of proposal and the student presentation of this proposal is successfully done, the student will submit an IRB form for approval to use human subjects for research. Students also must log onto the CITI website and complete a use of Human subjects test, print this diploma and include it in your IRB submission, plus provide a copy for the department file.** The chair of the thesis committee will provide the majority of the day-to-day guidance to the graduate student during the entire thesis process. **See the thesis advisor for registering for thesis credit.**

**Required sections of the thesis will include:**

- 1) Introduction (present the issues that are significantly relevant and its nature of importance. State what is to be done (research question).
- 2) Review of literature (include what is known based upon other published research studies).
- 3) Methods (how the research is going to be conducted. Selection of subjects and specific data collection procedures). Detail statistical procedures used to analyze study data.
- 4) Results (describe what was found).
- 5) Discussion (explain the results and how they relate to current literature. Discuss new findings).

For proper thesis format - follow university guidelines available at:  
<http://www.fau.edu/graduate/currentstudents/thesisanddissertation/>.

Student needs to ensure these guidelines are followed in any draft(s) submitted to the thesis committee. Student is responsible for meeting all thesis deadlines.

Defense of the thesis will normally be conducted during the last semester of student enrollment. The thesis defense must be scheduled a minimum of six (6) weeks prior to the University published Master's Thesis deadline. Also, the thesis defense date must be scheduled with a minimum of one (1) month's advanced notice to the committee members. Students must provide all thesis committee faculty members with a finalized COMPLETE copy of the thesis to be defended a MINIMUM of 14 days prior to the scheduled thesis defense date. Other deadlines may exist, so the student must work closely with the thesis chair, committee members, and department chair, if necessary.

If the student fails to pass the oral defense of their thesis, the student will be allowed to present an additional defense, either during the same semester or during the following semester based on the guidance of the committee chair. If a student fails to pass the defense a second time, they must petition the ESHP graduate committee for a third attempt. Failure of the third attempt, or disapproval of the petition for the third attempt will result in failure to graduate. Students wishing to change to the non-thesis option after failure to pass the thesis defense may do so, provided they take the additional nine (9) credit hours of electives and pass the exit exam described in the non-thesis option section of this handbook.

Students, who pursue a thesis, then subsequently decide to proceed with the non-thesis option, **cannot** use thesis credit hours as elective credit for the non-thesis option requirements.

Students must provide the chair of their thesis committee a complete draft of the manuscript/publication version of their thesis within 3 months of graduation, if agreed upon by the student and thesis chair.

All students must complete all course work counting towards the Master's degree within 7 years of the first course taken. If earlier courses are older than 7 years, students must petition the College of Education in order to have them count for graduation. If the petition is not approved, student must retake the courses. **In addition to this requirement, thesis students, once admitted to candidacy, must remain continuously enrolled until graduation (at least 1 credit each Fall and Spring, Summer does not count).**



## Sample Thesis Timeline, FAU ESHP students

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Writing sample (2 week turnaround) Approved: Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

### Accomplish\*

### Anticipated date of completion Include month, date, year

1. Complete CITI requirement. Place copy in department file. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Select thesis chair and committee. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Submit Form 6 with thesis chair and committee. \_\_\_\_\_

### **See Graduate College thesis/dissertation guidelines online, FOLLOW THEM**

4. Prepare first three chapters with chair. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Proposal to committee (2 week turnaround). \_\_\_\_\_
6. Oral proposal. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Sign up for IRBNet ([www.irb.net.org](http://www.irb.net.org)). \_\_\_\_\_
8. IRB Submission (2-4+week turnaround). \_\_\_\_\_
9. Conduct study, recruit/testing (\_\_\_\_ weeks). \_\_\_\_\_
10. Data analysis, write Chapters 4-5 (\_\_\_\_ weeks). \_\_\_\_\_
11. Final draft to thesis Committee (2 week turnaround). \_\_\_\_\_
12. Oral defense (at least 6 to 8 weeks prior to grad college). \_\_\_\_\_
13. Thesis committee signatures (per guidelines). \_\_\_\_\_
14. Submit final copy to ESHP Depart.Chair (1 wk turnaround). \_\_\_\_\_
15. Submit to final copy to the COE Dean (3 weeks prior to Grad College deadline). \_\_\_\_\_  
**(See firm date set with COE)**
16. Last day to submit Master's Thesis to Graduate College.  
**(See firm date set on academic calendar)** \_\_\_\_\_
17. Graduation **(firm date set on academic calendar.)** \_\_\_\_\_

\* Your responsibility is to know ALL deadlines (academic calendar, graduate college, COE, and department).

**"By signing this document, I approve the above deadlines, but realize the deadlines may be subject to change."**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Thesis Committee Chair Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

## Questions for students by former graduate students

**Q.** How long does the ESHP MS program take?

**A.** That really depends on the student. The program generally takes about two years with summer sessions, the student could finish sooner.

**Q.** What opportunities does ESHP offer me?

**A.** ESHP at FAU offers three fast-paced tracks. With an exercise physiology lab that can stand amongst the best, and a faculty involved in current relevant research, students have the opportunity to learn and get involved.

**Q.** How is this program different from an undergraduate exercise science program?

**A.** Students will not just learn different methods (be it research, labs, etc.), they will learn them and apply them throughout the program. Graduate students will quickly become comfortable with all the different tools in the lab. In addition, the student will be able to use those skills for research and tests. FAU is unique in this fact that the lab is almost always open.

**Q.** How long does the ESHP MS program take?

**A.** That really depends on the student. The program generally takes about two years with summer sessions, the student could finish sooner.

**Q.** Why should I get my master's in ESHP?

**A.** In today's world, a bachelor's degree is becoming more and more obsolete. Depending on the student's interest within the field, a master's degree will give the knowledge needed to be on top in that field. A strength and conditioning coach almost always needs the master's these days. If you want to work in a laboratory setting or go on for the Ph.D., FAU will prepare you for that. Even if one wants to be a personal trainer, the knowledge of physiological principles, strength and conditioning fundamentals, and health or wellness concepts, will help in the students' success.

--Above submitted by previous students, Spring 2012.

If you have questions concerning any information in this handbook, contact the ESHP graduate coordinator or other ESHP faculty member. (561-297-2938; fax 561-297-2839, ESHPinfo@fau.edu).