

MATH 470: Thesis

Resources and schedule of departmental deadlines

Resources for thesis at Reed and in Math & Stats

Math & Stats resources page

<https://www.reed.edu/math/resources.html>

General resources for the Math & Stats program, including for thesis.

Schedule

*Week numbers refer to weeks classes are in session, skipping the weeks of Fall/Spring breaks.

First semester

- **Proposal**

Due: Monday of Week 2, (Fall '24: September 9)

During the first week of classes, consult with several professors in the department about potential projects. Then [complete the thesis proposal form](#), which requests the following information:

- In what general areas of mathematics or statistics would you like to write your thesis?
- If you have specific topics in mind, list them along with brief descriptions, ideally including the names of professors with whom you have discussed these topics. If you are an interdisciplinary major, describe the mathematical/statistical components of your proposed thesis topics.
- List **three** potential advisers, indicating degree of preference, if any.

Then the Math & Stats department will assign advisers, balancing the preferences expressed in the thesis proposals with faculty workloads and interests.

=> Submit your **proposal** using [this form](#).

- **Bibliography**

Due: Friday of Week 7 (Fall '24: October 18)

Assignment: Submit (via submission form) an initial bibliography in the thesis template. The bibliography must use either BibTeX or a bibliography environment, compatible with the `\cite` tag (rather than just a list; see for example, [Overleaf's "Bibliography management with BibTeX"](#)).

Thesis templates: <https://www.reed.edu/it/help/thesis/index.html#template>

=> Submit your **bibliography** using [this form](#).

- **Presentation (late first semester)**

Due: Between Week 8 and Finals week.

Assignment: Give a short presentation (10-20 minutes) on the background and status of your project. The format and venue for your talk is to be established with your adviser. Slides or talk notes are to be submitted to the department (via submission form).

=> Submit your **presentation note/slides** using [this form](#).

- **First semester file**

Due: Last day of finals (Fall '24: December 19).

Assignment: Submit a first-semester capstone file reflecting the state of your project, addressing background material, progress made, and trajectory. File to be submitted to the department (via submission form). The specific format is to be established with your adviser. *Example formats might include one or more of:* annotated bibliography, annotated outline, report on background/progress, rough chapter, letter-to-future-self: where to pick up next semester.

=> Submit your **first semester file** using [this form](#).

Second semester

- **Presentation** (Strongly encouraged)

Keep an eye out for opportunities to present the next block of your thesis in preparation for your oral defense. Two great venues include the Math/Stats/CS showcase (last week of classes; invitation to sign up will go out late in the semester) and the Math & Stats student colloquium (runs throughout the semester; contact SL(m)).

- **Recruit divisional and non-divisional orals board members**

Starting Week 9

Your orals board should consist of your advisor(s), one other math-stats department faculty member (or your second advisor if co-advised), one member of the Division of MNS (not in our department), and one faculty member from out of the department. Your advisor and first reader are assigned to you, and you are responsible for recruiting your last two committee members. A spreadsheet of the orals schedule and committed faculty will go out around week 8 or 9 to help you find folks who are available.

- **Penultimate draft**

Due: Friday of Week 11 (Spring '25: April 18)

Assignment: Submit a draft of your thesis that is complete and ready for a final round of major feedback. Draft to be submitted to the department (via submission form).

=> Submit your **thesis draft** using [this form](#).

- **Final version**

Due: Last day of classes (Spring '25: 3pm, May 2) (Fall'25: 3pm, Dec 5)

Assignment: Submit the final, polished version of your thesis to the Office of the Registrar. This submission must be approved by your adviser. From the Senior Handbook: "One electronic copy of your thesis in final form must be submitted to the registrar's office. 'Final form' means that no changes are to be made to the thesis after this time other than those that may be requested by your oral examination board, and that the thesis follows the required format guidelines." Submission instructions:

<https://www.reed.edu/registrar/electronic-thesis-submission-instructions.html>

- **Oral defense**

Due: Reading/orals week (Spring '25: May 5-May 9)

Assignment: Give a presentation for and engage in discussion with your oral exam board during your scheduled defense period. The orals schedule, together with your first additional orals board member (the departmental representative who isn't your adviser(s)), will be released a few weeks ahead of time to enable you to recruit the rest of your board.

<https://www.reed.edu/governance/faculty-code/index.html#iv.l.-comprehensive-oral-examination>

- **Library copy of the final final version**

Due: Friday after finals week, 12pm (noon) (Spring '25: May 16)

Assignment: Submit the final version of your thesis to the Library. Small edits may be made to your thesis after your oral defense and before submitting this file in order to accommodate requests or feedback from your oral examination board and/or library staff (e.g. concerning formatting). <https://libguides.reed.edu/thesis>

MATH 470: One semester thesis

Schedule of departmental deadlines

*Week numbers refer to weeks classes are in session, skipping the weeks of Fall/Spring breaks.

- **Proposal**

Due: Monday of Week 2

During the first week of classes, consult with several professors in the department about potential projects. Then complete the thesis proposal form, which requests the following information:

- In what general areas of mathematics or statistics would you like to write your thesis?
- If you have specific topics in mind, list them along with brief descriptions, ideally including the names of professors with whom you have discussed these topics. If you are an interdisciplinary major, describe the mathematical/statistical components of your proposed thesis topics.
- List **three** potential advisers, indicating degree of preference, if any.

Then the Math & Stats department will assign advisers, balancing the preferences expressed in the thesis proposals with faculty workloads and interests.

=> Submit your **proposal** using [this form](#).

- **Presentation (mid semester)**

Due: During Weeks 6-8.

Assignment: Give a short presentation (10-20 minutes) on the background and status of your project. The format and venue for your talk is to be established with your adviser. Slides or talk notes are to be submitted to the department (via submission form).

=> Submit your **presentation note/slides** using [this form](#).

- **Mid semester file and bibliography**

Due: Friday of Week 7.

Assignment: Submit a mid-semester file on the state of your project, addressing background material, progress made, and trajectory. File to be submitted to the department (via submission form). The specific format is to be established with your adviser, but must include an initial bibliography in the thesis template.

Bibliography: The bibliography must be embedded in the thesis template, using either BibTeX or a bibliography environment, compatible with the `\cite` tag (rather than just a list; see for example, [Overleaf's "Bibliography management with BibTeX"](#)).

Example content for the rest of this file: annotated bibliography, annotated outline, report on progress, rough chapter, detailed to-do list. This portion can be in the thesis template if appropriate; discuss with your advisor.

Thesis templates: <https://www.reed.edu/it/help/thesis/index.html#template>

=> Submit your **first semester file** using [this form](#).

- **Recruit divisional and non-divisional orals board members**

Starting Week 9

Your orals board should consist of your advisor(s), one other math-stats department faculty member (or your second advisor if co-advised), one member of the Division of MNS (not in our department), and one faculty member from out of the department. Your advisor and first reader are assigned to you, and you are responsible for recruiting your last two committee members. A spreadsheet of the orals schedule and committed faculty will go out around week 8 or 9 to help you find folks who are available.

- **Penultimate draft**

Due: Monday of Week 12

Assignment: Submit a draft of your thesis that is complete and ready for a final round of major feedback. Draft to be submitted to the department (via submission form).

=> Submit your **thesis draft** using [this form](#).

- **Final version**

Due: Friday of Week 13

(Fall: one week before classes end, Spring: last day of classes)

Assignment: Submit the final, polished version of your thesis to the Office of the Registrar. This submission must be approved by your adviser. From the Senior Handbook: “*One electronic copy of your thesis in final form must be submitted to the registrar’s office. ‘Final form’ means that no changes are to be made to the thesis after this time other than those that may be requested by your oral examination board, and that the thesis follows the required format guidelines.*” Submission instructions:

<https://www.reed.edu/registrar/electronic-thesis-submission-instructions.html>

- **Oral defense**

Due: Reading/orals period

Assignment: Give a presentation for and engage in discussion with your oral exam board during your scheduled defense period. The orals schedule, together with your first additional orals board member (the departmental representative who isn’t your adviser(s)), will be released a few weeks ahead of time to enable you to recruit the rest of your board.

<https://www.reed.edu/governance/faculty-code/index.html#iv.l.-comprehensive-oral-examination>

- **Library copy of the *final* final version**

Due: Friday after finals week, 12pm (noon)

Assignment: Submit the final version of your thesis to the Library. Small edits may be made to your thesis after your oral defense and before submitting this file in order to accommodate requests or feedback from your oral examination board and/or library staff (e.g. concerning formatting). <https://libguides.reed.edu/thesis>