

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF LAW

LLM THESIS SUPERVISION GUIDELINES

- The submission of a thesis approved and graded by a member of graduate faculty by July 31st, is a primary requirement of the thesis-intensive LLM program (short or long thesis).
- The LLM thesis must be written under the guidance of a faculty supervisor – the expectation is that the supervisor will be involved throughout the year in providing feedback and advice to guide the direction of the LLM thesis. (It is not open to you to submit a thesis for the first time by the deadline.) An LLM thesis must be the product of give-and-take between the student and the supervisor over the course of the entire year. To this end, we have set out a timetable below for measuring satisfactory progress on the thesis. You must maintain this timetable.
- The main work for the thesis is to be done under the direction of your faculty supervisor. However, in order to facilitate your progress, we will assign each of you an SJD advisor, who will work with you on devising a reading list, focusing your area of interest, developing an argument, and preparing a substantial outline in narrative form (~15 pages).

By October 12th, all LLM students should have met with Mariana Mota Prado, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, to discuss their proposed LLM thesis topics and potential supervisors. By that date you will also have been assigned an SJD advisor. If you are in a Concentration, your thesis topic must be related to the Concentration.

- **Between October 12th and November 29th** you will be required to meet with your supervisor and the SJD advisor, respectively, to discuss your thesis plan. With the assistance of the SJD advisor, you will establish a plan for focusing your thesis and submit a two- to three-page thesis proposal (at least), plus an annotated research bibliography. The SJD advisor will complete an **LLM progress report** by **November 29th**, **confirming that you have submitted the required materials (with adequate time for review beforehand by the SJD advisor)** and that the meeting has taken place. The progress form will be provided by the SJD advisor to the office of the Assistant Dean, Graduate Program, with a copy to the faculty supervisor. Please be advised that continued enrolment in the LLM program in the second term (including the second installment of your scholarship, if any) may be jeopardized if you do not establish satisfactory progress on your LLM thesis.
- **Between November 29th and February 26th**, you will meet again with your SJD advisor to prepare a 15-page narrative outline of your thesis and/or draft chapter. You must submit this material and a further detailed plan (with dates) indicating how you will complete your LLM thesis by July 31st. **You will submit this outline to the SJD advisor by February 26th. By March 7th**, the SJD advisor will prepare a progress report for the office of the Assistant Dean, Graduate Program, with a copy to the faculty supervisor, confirming whether the LLM student has prepared a viable outline and plan for completion of the LLM thesis. The SJD advisor will also give feedback to you by this date. LLM students who have not met this deadline will be required to meet with the Assistant Dean to explain their lack of progress.
- When written work is handed in to the SJD advisor, the LLM student may reasonably expect that it is returned with oral and written comments **within one week**. The SJD advisor will give fairly precise

indications about how to improve the work. When the SJD advisor provides feedback and suggestions, you are expected to respond in writing within 2 to 3 weeks. Failure to maintain regular contact with the SJD advisor may result in the withdrawal of SJD assistance and a report to your faculty supervisor.

- While you will be expected to work intensively with your SJD advisor during this period, the point is not to supplant your relationship with your faculty supervisor. Your supervisor should continue to ensure that the *substantive* development of your proposal is in line with his or her sense of what is appropriate, given your interests. Hence, we encourage you to keep in touch with your supervisor even as you are working with your SJD advisor.
- Please keep in mind as well that SJD advisors have been assigned a specific number of hours they may spend with you. As a result, you should use their time wisely.
- **From March 7th onward**, your main point of contact will be your faculty supervisor. Once you have provided your 15-page narrative outline or draft chapter to your supervisor, you can reasonably expect that it will be returned to you with written and/or oral comments within 2 to 3 weeks. If the work is handed in at an inconvenient time for the supervisor, this may cause a longer turn-around time. In such cases, the supervisor must give the student a firm commitment for a later response/meeting.
- **By May 30th, you must have provided a full draft of your thesis** (if you are in the short-thesis option), or as many chapters of your thesis as required by the supervisor (if you are in the long thesis option), to your supervisor. **You must submit an LLM progress report form** to the Graduate Program Coordinator by May 30th, confirming the submission of your draft thesis/chapters to your supervisor. Students who have not met this deadline will be required to meet with the Associate Dean to explain their lack of progress.
- The months of **June and July** are intended for substantive research and revisions on your submitted draft thesis/chapters based on your faculty supervisor's comments.
- Once your supervisor confirms in writing (with an email copy to the Graduate Program Coordinator) that your thesis meets the minimum requirements of an LLM thesis, thesis-intensive LLM students may submit the final copy of the thesis to T-Space, plus two additional cerlox-bound copies and required forms (in accordance with SGS guidelines) to SGS and the Graduate Program Coordinator. Details about "finishing up" are distributed in late April.
- In the **long thesis option, LLM theses must also be approved by a second reader**. The supervisor is responsible for lining up a second reader. The long thesis must be completed and approved (in writing, with an email copy to the Graduate Program Coordinator) by the supervisor in sufficient time (generally by the beginning of July) to permit the second reader to read and confirm (in writing, with an email copy to the Assistant Dean, Graduate Program) that the thesis meets the minimum requirements, and to give any additional feedback. Only after the second reader has so approved, may the student submit the final copy of the thesis to T-Space, along with the two additional bound copies and required forms (in accordance with SGS guidelines) to SGS and the Graduate Program Coordinator.

- Many faculty supervisors take vacations in June or July, so you must set up a timetable by early May for submitting your thesis to your supervisor to accommodate both of your schedules. The onus is on the student to work out the schedule.
- **The final deadline for submitting the LLM thesis is July 31st.** If you do not meet this deadline, you may be obliged to seek an extension (with requisite fee payments for an additional term) in order to complete the thesis.

NOTE: if any of the dates above or below fall on a weekend or statutory holiday, the deadline is the last working day BEFORE the original deadline.

BY	TO DO
October 12	LLM student has met and discussed potential supervisors with Associate Dean, Graduate Studies.
October 12	SJD advisor assigned to each LLM student.
November 29	LLM student has met with supervisor and SJD advisor; SJD advisor submits LLM thesis progress report form.
February 26	LLM student has prepared a 15 page narrative outline or draft chapter of thesis and submitted to SJD advisor.
March 7	SJD advisor submits LLM thesis progress report form and gives feedback to LLM student.
May 30	Draft of complete thesis/chapters submitted to faculty supervisor. LLM student submits thesis progress report form.
July 1	Second reader lined up (only for long thesis students).
July 31	Deadline for submission of final, approved thesis by all LLM students.

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