



UNIVERSITY OF  
ARKANSAS

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**College of Education  
& Health Professions**  
*Recreation & Sport Management*

**Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Recreation & Sport Management  
GRADUATE MANUAL**

**(Updated: July 2023)**



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## Introduction

The Master of Education in Recreation and Sport Management prepares students to enter the work force in entry-level administrative positions in college athletics departments. However, many of the skills and knowledge elements from the M.Ed. transfer to other areas of recreation and sport management. The M.Ed. provides students with the advanced knowledge and skills needed to work in a variety of college athletics settings, but also community recreation, university recreation, and professional sports settings, including sport marketing, administration, and facility management.

Students have the opportunity to collaborate with faculty in theory, research and field-based experiences. This shared learning creates a dynamic environment for students to explore the boundaries of knowledge in the recreation field and sport industries.

All students pursuing RESM master's degrees are required to take a 6 credit-hour Research and Statistics core along with the 21 hours of management core courses and 9 hours of electives. Students also take either a comprehensive exam or complete a thesis (with 6 hours of electives dedicated to work on the thesis).

## Admission Requirements

The RESM program undertakes a holistic review of applicants' admissions files, including any GRE test scores submitted (optional), applicants' overall undergraduate grade-point average, and GPA on the last 60 hours of undergraduate course work. The program requires applicants to submit both a statement of interest and resume.

## Advising

Once admitted to the degree program a student will be assigned an academic advisor. Advisors work with the students to develop an academic plan (program of study) and appropriate committees. It is expected that the academic advisor and student meet periodically each semester to discuss degree progress and program expectations. It is the student's responsibility to register for courses that are appropriate for the Master's program in Recreation and Sport Management, as well as become familiar with course rotation sequences. Graduate reviews involving both the academic advisor and student are conducted annually and submitted to the University of Arkansas Graduate School.

Occasionally, a student may select to change an academic advisor. The process of formally changing an advisor requires (1) the previous advisor and new advisor agreeing to the change, and (2) the student sending an email to the HHPR Graduate Coordinator requesting the change. Failure to know or follow program guidelines is NOT considered a legitimate reason for not completing program requirements. Students should maintain regular contact with their advisor in order to ensure smooth progress through the degree program.



### **Time Limit for Degree Completion**

All requirements for a master's degree must be completed within six consecutive calendar years from the first semester of enrollment in that program.

### **Transfer of Credit**

A maximum of 6 hours of course work may be transferred from another institution toward a master's degree at the University of Arkansas. A form is required and may be obtained from the Graduate School. In addition, an official transcript must be on file with the Graduate School.

The following are the criteria for acceptable transfer credit:

- The course must have been regularly offered by a regionally accredited graduate school.
- The course must have been a bona fide graduate level course, approved for graduate credit and taught by a member of the graduate faculty.
- The student desiring to transfer graduate credit must have been enrolled as a graduate student in the graduate school at the institution offering the course.
- The course must appear on an official transcript as graduate credit from the institution offering the course.
- Only graded courses are subject to transfer and the course grade must be a "B" or "A."
- The course must be recommended by the student's major adviser and be applicable to the degree requirement at the University of Arkansas.
- The student must have satisfied the 24-hour residence requirement.

**Program of Study / Course Offerings Schedule**

*This is an anticipated schedule and is designed as a planning tool. Actual schedule may vary.*

**Required Research Core (6 hours)**

<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Fall</i>	<i>Spring</i>	<i>Summer</i>
ESRM 5393 - Stats in Educ. & Health Professions	X	X	X
HHPR 5353 - Research in HHPR	X	X	

**Required Management Core (21 hours)**

<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Fall</i>	<i>Spring</i>	<i>Summer</i>
RESM 5293 - Athletics and Higher Education	X		
RESM 5813 - <b>Social Issues</b> in Sport		X	
RESM 5853 - <b>Capstone</b> in RESM		X	
RESM 5873 - <b>Leadership</b> in RESM Services	X (odd years)		X
RESM 5883 - Rec. and Sport Services <b>Promotion</b>	X		
RESM 5893 - Public and Private <b>Finance</b> in RESM		X	
RESM 6533 - <b>Legal</b> and Political Aspects		X	

**Electives (choose 9 hours)\***

*In addition to the courses listed below, students may propose course(s) outside of program area to satisfy elective credits (advisor approval).*

<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Fall</i>	<i>Spring</i>	<i>Summer</i>
PHED 5753 - Sport Psychology (online)			X
RESM 5023 - Outdoor Adventure Leadership			May
RESM 5093 - Diversity & Inclusion in RESM	X	X	
RESM 5463 - Sports Facilities Management			May
RESM 5803 - NCAA Gov, Legislation & Compliance	X		
RESM 574V - Internship (1-3 credits; 3 credits max.)	X	X	X
RESM 600V - Master's Thesis (6)	X	X	X
RESM 605V - Independent Study Project	X	X	X

*\*Workshops (RESM 560V) are also regularly offered to provide opportunities for students to explore additional content areas. Several workshop topics that were offered in recent years include Sport Event Management and Revenue Generation.*



### **Satisfactory Grades**

Students are expected to receive satisfactory grades in order to continue in the program. The HHRP Department adheres to the University of Arkansas' Graduate School guidelines in regard to probationary status and program dismissal. The official Graduate School policy states, "Whenever a regularly admitted graduate student earns a cumulative grade-point average below 2.85 on graded course work taken in residence for graduate credit, he/she will be warned of the possibility of academic dismissal. When a graduate student has accumulated a minimum of 15 hours of graded course work taken in residence for graduate credit with a cumulative grade-point average below 2.85 and has received at least one warning he/she will be academically dismissed from the Graduate School." (UA Graduate Catalog)

A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is required for graduation. Grades of either "D" or "F" count toward grade point average but do not satisfy degree requirements and must be either re-taken or another course substituted in place of it with advisor approval.



### **Comprehensive Assessment (Capstone Experiences)**

Students will choose between one of the two following options for their “Capstone Experience”.

#### **Option 1 – Master’s Thesis Option**

Students complete a rigorous research project according to the strict guidelines for thesis research established by the Graduate School. All Graduate School regulations and deadlines must be adhered to in the completion of the thesis. Those presenting a master’s thesis as a part of the requirements master’s degree must register for a minimum of six semester hours of master’s thesis.

Registration beyond six hours carries no degree credit. However, students must be continually enrolled for a minimum of one credit hour until the thesis is completed. The Master’s Thesis Committee consists of a Thesis Director and at least two other members of the graduate faculty. Consult your thesis director regarding registration for thesis credit hours.

#### **Option 2 – Comprehensive Examination**

Any student who does not choose the thesis MUST take a Comprehensive Examination. Students should consult with their advisor concerning the topics to be covered on the exam.





## Master's Thesis Guidelines and Procedures

### Thesis Chair and Committee

The thesis is designed to provide students with a significant research experience. For this option 6 hours of thesis credit is required. Students should familiarize themselves with, and follow all procedures set forth in the Graduate School's Guide for Preparing Thesis, available through the Graduate School's web page (<https://graduate-and-international.uark.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-info/index.php>).

The student should begin the process by selecting a qualified thesis chair. Thesis chairs must be from the student's academic discipline and have either Graduate Faculty I or II level status. It is the student's responsibility to form a Master's Thesis Committee, which serves to give guidance and direction to the student in regard to the thesis. The composition of the thesis committee must include a minimum of three faculty of which two must be from the student's academic program area, including the chair.

After the formation of the Thesis Committee, the next step is the development of a proposal (original research idea). The proposal includes Chapters 1 (Introduction), 2 (Review of the literature) and 3 (Methodology) of the thesis. During the preparation of the proposal, the student may consult with members of the committee for advice and direction. At least two weeks prior to the proposal presentation, and AFTER receiving permission from their Chair, the student submits the proposal to each committee member. The presentation of the proposal is considered a rigorous procedure because the approved proposal will serve as a contract between the committee and the student. Approval of the proposal indicates that if the students complete the project as described (and appropriately interprets the results), the student will be in favorable standing at time of defense. The proposal presentation will be open to all departmental faculty and students.

Students will make a formal presentation and will respond to questions from thesis committee members. The thesis committee will then discuss the proposal, recommend how the student should proceed with the thesis, and indicate changes to be made within the proposal. The committee chair and the student prepare a written list of changes, which is attached to the proposal along with the committee approval page. With the approval of the committee, the student should begin data collection.

After the Master's Thesis Committee has approved the thesis, the final step is completion of the study. If necessary, chapters 1-3 are revised according to comments made by the committee at the proposal meeting. Students should follow the procedures approved in the thesis proposal meeting to collect data, analyze data, and prepare the thesis.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Approval  
IRB or IACUC approval is required PRIOR to collecting data. Students may not begin thesis research until the IRB or IACUC protocol has been approved by the University. All necessary forms are available online. The Protocol Form must be signed by the student's Thesis Chair. Also, the IRB or IACUC application (protocol) should be submitted after (not before) a committee-approved thesis proposal (first three chapters).



If necessary, during the data collection and analysis process, the student may request a meeting of the Thesis Committee to review procedures, discuss problems, and/or approve modifications. After completing data collection and analysis, the student writes chapter 4 (results) and chapter 5 (discussion, implications, and suggestions for future study). Any major deviations from the proposal should be presented in writing and approved by the Thesis Committee.

### **Changing or Revising a Committee**

If a committee has been approved and is on file with the Graduate School, any proposed changes or revisions to the committee must be submitted to the Graduate School for approval. Each member leaving or being removed from a committee must submit authorization agreeing to the change. The only exception to this pertains to the chair of the thesis committee. The Graduate School considers the thesis to be based on a mutual agreement between the faculty member and the student to work cooperatively on a research project of shared interest. Either the graduate student or the faculty member may dissolve this relationship by notifying the other party, the departmental chairperson, and the Graduate Dean. However, the student and the advisor should be warned that this may require that all data gathered for the thesis be abandoned and a new research project undertaken, with a new faculty advisor. See the Graduate Student Grievance Policy. NOTE: Leaving the employment of the University does not constitute automatic removal from approved committee assignments. Most faculty members complete their graduate committee responsibilities; therefore, removal from an approved committee must be initiated by the departing faculty member.

### **Thesis Defense**

The defense of the completed thesis should follow the guidelines established at the University of Arkansas, College of Education and Health Professions. At least two weeks prior to the defense, and AFTER receiving approval from their Chair, the student provides a complete thesis draft to the committee that includes all 5 chapters, as well as tables, figures, appendices, and reference notes. The defense presentation will include aspects of chapters 1 and 2, but will primarily focus on the methods, results, and conclusions. Approximately 2 weeks prior to the formal defense, the student will announce the presentation to be open to all departmental faculty and students. When the thesis is successfully defended, the Chair should inform the Graduate Coordinator for degree audit clearance. The student then makes final changes on the thesis manuscript and submits the final completed copy to the Graduate School. Required Documents for completion can be found here:

- Thesis Title: <https://graduate-and-international.uark.edu/resources/forms/td-title.pdf>
- Intellectual Property Disclosure: <https://graduate-and-international.uark.edu/resources/forms/intellectual-property-disclosure.pdf>
- Thesis Submission Form: <https://graduate-and-international.uark.edu/resources/forms/thesis-dissertation-submission.pdf>



## **Comprehensive Exam Guidelines and Procedures**

All students not writing a Master's Thesis in the Master of Education in Recreation and Sport Management program are required to sit for a written comprehensive exam in order to complete their program of study.

### **Eligibility for Sitting for Exam**

Students will meet with their academic advisor toward the end of their coursework to determine when they will be permitted to sit for the examination. Generally, the Comprehensive Exam will be taken during the student's last regular semester (i.e., fall or spring) of coursework. Notification of intent to sit for the exam should be given to the program coordinator by the deadline announced by the program faculty. To sit for the exam, all required Management core coursework and all Research core coursework should have been successfully completed prior to sitting for the exam, unless taken during the semester in which the student takes the exam. In rare occasions, a student may be permitted by the student's advisor and program coordinator to take the exam despite not having completed all remaining required coursework (e.g., a student seeks to take the exam in the spring yet has one remaining required course that the student will complete in the summer).

### **Exam Committee**

The Recreation and Sport Management program committee will participate in the writing of specific content areas of the exam. Members of the program committee will grade questions in their area of expertise. Each question is graded by a minimum of 2 faculty members.

### **Timing of the Exam**

Comprehensive Examinations are usually held around the first Monday in April for spring semester and the first Monday in November for fall semester, but may vary, depending on the Academic Calendar. The Comprehensive Exam is scheduled for a 3 ½ hour time period and is scheduled each semester by the RESM program coordinator. A student who is not able to sit for the exam during their last semester of coursework, for whatever reason, should attempt to take the exam at the next scheduled exam time. Once the student submits notice to sit for the exam in a particular semester, the exam must be taken at the assigned date, time, and place. A student may take the exam in a remote location only with a legitimate reason as determined by the program coordinator. In that event, the student will be responsible for setting up an acceptable location that is monitored. If the student does not sit for the exam at the assigned time, they will be given a score of zero (0) on the exam and it will count toward one of their attempts at passing the exam. Students are responsible for notifying the program coordinator of intent to utilize Center for Educational Access accommodations.



### **Purpose of the Exam**

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to demonstrate their ability to synthesize the depth and breadth of knowledge gained in the Master of Education in Recreation and Sport Management program. The exam will focus on the student's ability to apply the concepts, theory, and skills learned throughout the program to pertinent recreation/sport industry situations.

### **Content of the Exam**

Questions are generally designed to allow the student to demonstrate their ability to synthesize, apply, and communicate competencies in Recreation and Sport Management. Although students may discuss general content of the exam questions with their advisors, students will not be made aware of the exact question(s) prior to the examination.

### **Preparing for the Exam**

The Comprehensive Exam is designed to test the graduate student's breadth and depth of the core content areas of study. The exam consists of seven (7) questions corresponding to the classes/areas listed below:

- |                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1) Research and statistics        | 5) Finance       |
| 2) Athletics and higher education | 6) Promotions    |
| 3) Leadership                     | 7) Social issues |
| 4) Law                            |                  |

All students are required to answer five (5) questions. It is recommended that students review the objectives of all course outlines contained within their course of study. Particular attention should be given to the content of assignments, exam questions, lecture/classroom materials and activities. Students are encouraged to create a study group of peers to review the content of courses. Students are also encouraged to contact program faculty if there are any questions regarding how or what to study.

### **Exam Evaluation Procedure**

Students may not place their name, or any other identifying information (e.g., referencing the student's hometown or alma mater in a response) on the exam. Students will be assigned an exam number, which they are required to indicate on each page of the exam. The exam numbers are kept closed until exam grades have been tabulated. The Comprehensive Exam will be read by the RESM program committee, who may consult with any appropriate content faculty in evaluating responses. The program committee will read the responses individually and independent of one another.

In addition to assessing accuracy and thoroughness of content, committee members will evaluate students' writing style. Each student must demonstrate the ability to produce advanced organized thought and an ability to communicate ideas so that they are easily understood (i.e., be able to write in a clear, concise, and grammatically accurate manner that is representative of graduate level competency).



### **Exam Rating Scale**

As indicated above, the exam consists of five (5) total questions. Each question is worth two points, yielding a total of ten (10) possible points to be earned. In order to pass the exam, the student must earn at least seven (7) points. The following three categories are used to evaluate the Comprehensive Exam. Each question will be rated individually on its quality, according to the following criteria:

- **Pass (2 points awarded):** The student displays exceptional knowledge in the area through their introduction/discussion of relevant concepts. The student is successful in solving the problem posed by the scenario by providing relevant, well justified applications based on appropriate concepts/theory.
- **Marginal/Questionable (1 point awarded):** The student displays thorough knowledge in the area through their introduction/discussion of relevant concepts. The student introduces an appropriate solution to the scenario but does not adequately justify their choices or sufficiently connect concepts/theory to practice.
- **Fail (0 points awarded):** The student does not reflect an adequate or appropriate level of understanding of the relevant concepts. The student does not adequately apply their knowledge to develop an appropriate solution to the scenario.

### **Notification of Results**

Within two (2) weeks of completing the exam, students will be informed of the results by the student's academic advisor and/or the RESM Program Coordinator.

### **Failure to Pass Exam**

If the student earns six (6) or fewer points on the Comprehensive Exam, the student fails to pass the exam. After the initial unsuccessful attempt, the entire exam may be repeated up to two times. If the student fails to pass on their first or second attempt, they may sit for the entire exam again in a future semester of their choosing. After three total unsuccessful attempts, the student is not permitted to retake the Comprehensive Exam and will consequently not matriculate through the program.

Both the RESM program coordinator and the HHPG Graduate Coordinator will be available to meet with the student, should the student have any questions or concerns about the exam or the exam process.



### Required Forms to Graduate

For the Master’s degree, the graduate school requires that the following forms be completed by the student: IRB or IACUC approval form if the student selects option I and is collecting data. Required graduate forms for a Master’s student who completes a thesis include: Master’s Advisory Committee form, Master’s Thesis Committee form, Master’s Thesis Title form, Intellectual Property Disclosure form, Thesis Submission form, and IRB or IACUC approval form.

Note – Chair must inform the Graduate Coordinator of dates for successful completion of comprehensive exams and capstone project or thesis. The Graduate Coordinator will clear these items on the degree audit. The Master’s Record of Progress form is no longer required.

### Master’s Program Completion Guidelines

REQUIREMENT	DEADLINE	HANDLING	PROCEDURE
Program of Study (Recommended, but not required)	Immediately following admission to program.	Major Advisor Student	First advising session
Comprehensive Exam (For non-thesis students)	Last semester of coursework	Major Advisor Student	Fall or Spring Dates
Comp Pass/Fail (For non-thesis students)	Following examination	Major Advisor Advisory Committee	Major Advisor informs Graduate Coordinator of pass/fail date.
Graduation application	Deadline typically early in the semester. Check dates on graduate school website.	Student	Pay fee through UA Connect.



**Additional Guidelines for Thesis Option**

REQUIREMENT	DEADLINE	HANDLING	PROCEDURE
Selection of Thesis Committee	6 months prior to the date of the defense	Student Thesis Director Committee Members	Form available on graduate school website. Obtain signature of committee members. Return form to graduate coordinator.
Thesis Title Approval	After Thesis Proposal meeting	Student Thesis Director Committee Members	Form available on graduate school website. Obtain signature of committee members. Return form to graduate coordinator.
IRB/IACUC approval if human/animal subjects are involved in research/ intellectual property disclosure if anything was created or invented for research	After Thesis Proposal meeting and before data collection	Student Thesis Director	Form available on RSSP website.
Intellectual property disclosure and thesis submission.	Intellectual property disclosure and thesis submission - Prior to thesis defense	Student Thesis Director	Forms available on graduate school website. Obtain signatures and return forms to graduate coordinator.



### **HHRP Department Policies**

1. Faculty agreed that the two week (10 working days) reading time requirement of thesis be enforced among all graduate students.
2. Two formats have been approved for thesis. Both use APA style and one that conforms to a discipline specific journal format.
3. Thirty-six credit hours is the minimum number of hours required to complete a Master of Science degree in the HHRP Department. A maximum of six credit hours from Master's coursework may be transferred into the program if approved by the student's advisor and the University of Arkansas Graduate School.
4. A minimum cumulative G.P.A. of 3.0 is required for graduation. "D" or "F" grades count towards grade point average, but do not satisfy degree requirements and must be either taken again or another course substituted in place of it with advisor approval. The graduate school allows only 6 credit hours to be transferred in or completed in addition to the required 36 hours for the degree.
5. HHRP Department policy regarding walking at graduation ceremonies: masters students are only allowed to walk at graduation ceremonies if they have signed up for all final coursework during the semester that they are planning to graduate and either have passed their written and or oral comprehensive exam or successfully defended their thesis. Note – a successful defense of the thesis implies that all committee members have agreed that the student has passed the defense even though the student may have to make minor corrections/changes to the document. Also, all committee members may not have completely signed off on either the student's thesis or record or progress.
6. Students need to be sure to follow all Graduate School procedures, timelines, and deadlines to successfully matriculate through the degree program. This includes deadlines for thesis submission and graduation. Lastly, Master's students must apply for graduation at the UA Graduate School Office early in the semester in which they plan on graduation and must meet the official thesis deadline date established by the graduate school each semester.