MINNEAPOLIS
COLLEGE of ART and DESIGN

The Master of Arts in Sustainable Design Program Handbook*

Updated for AY 2023-2024

*For reference in conjunction with the MCAD Student Handbook

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The Master of Arts in Sustainable Design Program Handbook has been developed by the sustainable design program for use by graduate students enrolled in the Master of Arts in Sustainable Design (MASD) degree program at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD).

The information found in this handbook is accurate to the best of our knowledge as of the revision date. The information and policies contained in this student handbook are presented as a matter of information only and are not intended to create, nor is the handbook to be construed to constitute, a contract between MCAD and any student. MCAD has the right to alter, amend, modify, deviate from, or otherwise terminate any privileges, provisions, or obligations contained in this handbook at any time if it so chooses, with or without notice to a student. If you have any questions about the contents of this handbook, please contact the MASD program at sustainable_design@mcad.edu.

This handbook is intended for use in conjunction with the **MCAD Student Handbook** available under the Student Affairs section on the MCAD Intranet. The MCAD Student Handbook covers many policies, procedures, and services of the college not specifically mentioned here, including issues related to image use copyrights and plagiarism. Please consult the MCAD Student Handbook for more information on these and other important and relevant MCAD policies.

NOTE: Email is the primary form of communication for the MASD program. **All students are required to check their mcad.edu email at least once every twenty-four hours (when classes are in session) and respond immediately to all official requests.**

MCAD's Master of Arts in Sustainable Design is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

Section 1: MASTER OF ARTS IN SUSTAINABLE DESIGN PROGRAM

MCAD's Master of Arts in Sustainable Design (MASD) degree program is a 30-credit, course-based degree of advanced study offered completely online that culminates with a thesis project, presentation, and review. The MASD was designed exclusively for busy working professionals and an online platform.

MCAD's MASD program blends theory, practice, and leadership courses into a holistic, hands-on training experience. Throughout this 5-semester program, students will gain in-depth and actionable knowledge and experience. Students will have opportunities to put sustainable design theories into practice, develop fundamental problem-solving skills, explore collaborative innovation techniques and processes, and gain entrepreneurial training, creative leadership, and environmental stewardship experience.

- Intake occurs twice per year (fall and spring semesters).
- Courses are offered during the fall and spring semesters (no summer semester).
- Semesters have 15 weeks.
- The degree was designed to be completed within 5 semesters and at the pace of two 3-credit courses per semester. Exceptions to any program requirements must be approved by the Director of the MASD program.
- Of the 30 credits, 24 credits are required and 6 credits are electives.
- In online courses, 1 hour of credit requires approximately 3 hours of work per week for all activities (i.e. reading, viewing, making, scanning, responding to discussion threads, collaborating, etc.). Therefore, a 3-credit online course requires approximately 9 hours per week to complete the necessary activities.
- **Each 3-credit course is designed to be completed in 135 hours. Students should expect to spend 9 hours each week *per course* for 15-week semesters.** (Note: More hours may be required per week if a student's first language is not English, if a student has a learning disability, and/or during the culminating thesis project and paper, etc.)
- Students move through the program by taking building-block courses that culminate in the Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project course (taken as two 3-credit courses, for 6 credits total), where students direct an independent, sustainability-focused project in the field that pertains to their specific personal and professional aspirations with the support of their thesis advisor and thesis committee.
- Theses may be the development of a sustainability-focused product, material, system, service, comprehensive research paper, or detailed business plan. Other options may also be considered with the approval of the Director of the MASD program.

Master of Arts in Sustainable Design Framework
Students must **successfully pass a total of 30 credits (10 courses) to complete the MASD degree**, with specific requirements as follows:

Students must take the **3 Core courses** listed below (total of 12 credits):

- Fundamentals of Sustainable Design (SD-6500) – 3 credits
- Systems Thinking (SD-6510) – 3 credits
- Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project (SD-7021) – 3 credits
- Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project (SD-7022) – 3 credits

Students must take **4 out of the following 5 Specialization courses** (total of 12 credits):

- Creative Leadership (SD-6750)
- Making the Business Case for Sustainability (SD-7530)
- The Practice of Sustainable Design (SD-7620)
- Collaborative Product Design (SD-7630)
- Graduate Sustainability Practicum (SD-7010)*

Students must take **2 Elective courses** (total of 6 credits). Any 2 courses of the following classes may be taken. Also, options from other MCAD departments may be acceptable with the approval of the Director of the MASD program. Potential electives**:

- Innovation Tools and Techniques (SD-6600)
- Biomimetic Design (SD-6610)
- Visual Communications for Sustainability (SD-6700)
- Packaging Sustainability (SD-6810)
- Graduate Sustainability Practicum (SD-7010)*

**Note: Elective courses are subject to change. Students may not get to choose which electives they take.

In addition to 30 credits of coursework, students must also successfully pass the following two **reviews** to complete the MASD degree:

- Mid-program review
- Final thesis review

***Practicums**
Graduate Sustainability Practicums are supervised practical work experiences akin to internships. Students may find practicums a useful part of their graduate study, although it is not a requirement of the program. Three practicum credits may be earned toward a student's *Specialization* or *Elective course* credits. Before beginning a practicum or engaging in work that will count toward their practicum credits, students must register for the 3-credit class Graduate Sustainability Practicum (SD-7010). Practicums require that students document their work hours, for a total of 120 hours over the course of one semester, and make periodic submissions to the Director of the MASD program. The Graduate Sustainability Practicum is a Pass/Fail course.

Purpose of the Practicum Proposal

Practicums are academic learning experiences where students work under the mentorship of an experienced professional, a supervisor, either embedded in a company or organization, or with a MASD instructor when doing independent research. Whether working on site, remotely, or doing an independent research project, students apply their skills to real-world projects while learning about the industry/topic, enhancing their skills, networking, and building their portfolios.

There are two types of practicums that are permitted in the MASD program and both have a requirement of having a sustainability focus: 1) Supervised temporary work position (remote or in person) where student takes on a project for a company or organization, and 2) Supervised research or learning experience with a MASD instructor. Supervisors are expected to provide direction, supervision, and feedback on the student's work and work habits. (Please note, in both cases, supervisors are not compensated for their extra work as a practicum supervisor. Students need to be respectful of the time they are asking of their supervisors, be prepared for meetings, and stay on task.)

Process of the Practicum

Students register for Graduate Sustainability Practicum during the regular advising period (one semester before practicum work takes place). Students then explore opportunities for practicum work, based on their interest and goals. Many students find (virtual or in-person) practicum placements through personal and professional contacts, the Director of the MASD program, or the MCAD Career Development Office. Some students will decide to conduct an independent research or guided learning experience with a MASD instructor instead of a traditional work placement.

Once students have decided on a project, they must receive preliminary approval of the practicum placement and project. To do so, students schedule an appointment with the Director of the MASD program before beginning the practicum and craft a ~400 word practicum proposal (proposal guidelines available from MASD director) that provides a detailed overview of the student's goal and objectives for the 120-hour practicum. Students are required to manage their own practicum hours, workload, and relationship with their practicum supervisor. It is the student's responsibility to check in with the supervisor and stay on task. It is recommended that students submit work regularly for feedback from supervisors.

Students are required to:

- Register for 3-credit class Graduate Sustainability Practicum (SD-7010).
- Find their own placements/projects with the support of MASD Director and/or Career Development.
- Submit project proposal for approval to MASD Director.
- Receive practicum supervisor and MASD Director approval.
- Document all work hours (for a total of 120 hours) in a time log.
- Check in regularly with the supervisor. Recommended that students submit work regularly for feedback from supervisors.

- Complete mid-term and final surveys through the online classroom.
- Submit time log through the online classroom.
- Submit a final report (no more than 5-pages) to the online classroom.

Section 2: ACADEMIC POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Registration and Advising
Each fall and spring semester, students are **required** to schedule an advising meeting via online video chat (e.g. Skype, Google Hangout, etc.) or phone with the MASD academic advisor (who also currently serves as the Director of the MASD program) during the designated advising period determined and announced via email by the Director of the MASD program. (Note: Advising period for fall courses occurs during the spring semester prior. Advising period for spring courses occurs in the fall semester prior.)

Students must read and submit the MCAD Disclosure and Enrollment Form *each semester and prior to registration*. The form is available through their MyMCAD account (https://my.mcad.edu/). Students must read through the disclosure agreement, click "I agree" and hit "Submit". A copy of the disclosure will be emailed to student MCAD email addresses. **Students will be unable to register for courses until the MCAD Disclosure and Enrollment Form is submitted.**

After meeting with the MASD academic advisor to discuss course selection and progression in the MASD program, students will register for chosen and approved courses by logging into their MyMCAD account. Once registered, **students must ensure that their new course schedules are correct each semester** by reviewing it on their MyMCAD account.

Part-Time Students
Students have a **maximum of five years** to complete the MASD program; however:

- The MASD was designed to be completed within 5 semesters and alteration of MASD timeline may lead to complications with course availability, etc.
- In order to make changes to approved course registrations (drop/add/withdraw), students must receive approval from the Director of the MASD program, as well as the instructor of the specific course.
- The official **Drop/Add period ends on the last day of the first week of classes** each semester. Approval to drop or add a course must be obtained by the Director of the MASD program as well as the instructor of the specific course. Contact the Director of the MASD program to process the appropriate paperwork.
- In order to register for *less than* 6 credits per semester, students must receive approval from the Director of the MASD program. To begin this process, students must schedule an appointment with the Director of the MASD program.
- Students should always check with the MCAD Financial Aid Office for specifics related to their situation (refer to Section 14: Support Services).
- **Students must be taking at least 3 credits per semester to be eligible for financial aid.**

Citations
The MASD program requires the usage of the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS) for all works cited in courses, assignments, and thesis work. **All images, claims, quotations, and/or data not originally generated by the student must be properly cited using the CMS citation style guide.**

Class Attendance
Registration for an online course presupposes that the student will attend and fully participate in all online activities as detailed in individual courses. **Each student is responsible for meeting all course requirements.** Individual course instructors will detail their specific policies and/or the penalties related to late work submission in their respective syllabi. Note that many course instructors will not accept late work (with the exception of family or medical emergencies). Each student is required to carefully review course syllabi at the beginning of each course and contact individual course instructors with questions.

Grading Criteria

A+	4.00	A	4.00 Excellent	A- 3.67
B+	3.33	B	3.00 Very Good	B- 2.67
C+	2.33	C	2.00 Average	C- 1.67
D+	1.33	D	1.00 Poor	D- 0.67
		F	0.00 Failing	

Notes: A letter grade of C- is the minimum for course credits to count toward the MASD degree. In a pass/fail course, a grade of C- (70%) is the minimum required to pass.

Pass/Fail Option
Students may opt to switch from a letter grade to pass/fail in up to two courses (6 credits). This is in addition to courses that are already pass/fail, including Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project and Practicum. This switch must occur by the date assigned as the last day to withdraw from classes, typically three weeks before the end of the semester. Program Director approval is required to switch from a letter grade to a pass/fail. Once a student switches to pass/fail in a course, they may not switch back.

Notes: All courses taken as Pass/Fail, e.g. Graduate Sustainability and Practicum, do NOT count towards GPA as no letter grade is assigned. Only courses taken for letter grades can affect, i.e., raise or lower, the GPA. In a “Pass/Fail” course, the equivalent to a grade of C- (70%) is the minimum required to pass.

Graduation Requirements
Successful completion with a **grade of C- or above is required for all courses applied toward the MA**, and all coursework must be taken for credit. Failure to meet course requirements of a C- grade minimum will be recorded with the representative letter grade,

credit hours will not be accumulated, and the student will be placed on academic probation (see below). “Incomplete” and “Withdrew” will be recorded in appropriate instances.

Students must successfully complete the following to graduate from the MASD program:

- Complete all credit requirements.
- Earn a minimum grade of C- in all courses applied to the MASD
- Earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0.
- Complete all missing or incomplete grades.
- File an Intent to Graduate form (available from the Records Office).
- Pass Final Thesis Review.
- Submit final thesis project presentation to library (via online library portal) for archival purposes.
- Meet all financial obligations.
- Participate in an exit interview with the Financial Aid Office for all loan recipients.
- Complete the online Exit Survey.

Academic Probation

According to college policy, a semester **GPA of 2.0** (this is equivalent to the letter grade “C”) or lower places an MASD student on academic probation for the subsequent semester.

Being on academic probation may change a student’s eligibility for financial aid. Students should check with the MCAD Financial Aid Office for specifics related to their situation. **If the student’s overall GPA does not become satisfactory (GPA over 2.0) the semester following academic probation, dismissal from the program is automatic.**

Incompletes

Reasons for requesting an incomplete grade from MCAD’s records office include personal or family medical emergencies or other extreme events outside of the student’s control. Lack of prior planning is not an adequate reason for requesting an incomplete.

In the event that an incomplete is recorded, the incomplete **must be resolved by the fifth week of the succeeding semester or a permanent standing grade of F will be recorded for the Incomplete course.** Approval to request an Incomplete from the records office must be attained by the Director of the MASD program as well as the instructor of the specific course. Contact the Director of the MASD program to process the appropriate paperwork.

Note: Students who are on academic probation may not request Incompletes during their probationary semester.

Withdraw from Class

Students may officially withdraw from a course and receive a “W” notation on their transcript that does not contribute to their semester GPA. The last day to withdraw from classes is

typically three weeks before the end of the semester. Program Director approval and signature is required to withdraw from a course.

Withdrawal from Program
Students who wish to "drop" more than 50% of their course load after the Drop/Add period has passed, must officially withdraw from the college. The withdrawal period may last for the duration of the current semester or for up to five years.

In order to make a request to withdraw from the program, students are required to schedule an appointment with the Director of the MASD program and must receive approval to withdraw from both the Director of the MASD program and MCAD's student affairs office, as well as complete a notification of student withdrawal form. (Note: the withdrawal form is available under the Student Affairs section of MCAD's Intranet. See Section 14: Support Services for more information.) An official letter grade or "W" (for "withdrew") will appear on a student transcript for all credits attempted but not completed. Contact the Director of the MASD program to discuss options and process the appropriate paperwork.

Readmission
Readmission following dismissal may be granted upon recommendation of the Director of the MASD program after a period of at least one semester. A meeting between the student and the Director of the MASD program begins the process of consideration of readmission.

Progress to Degree
In addition to evaluations within individual courses and other important academic milestones (see Section 12), there are two required reviews for students that assess and determine a student's status in progress toward the MASD degree:

- Mid-program review (see Section 5) and
- Final thesis review (see Section 10)

Receiving Diploma
Graduate diplomas are not automatically mailed to MASD graduates, but will be mailed to a graduate's physical address upon written request in the form of an email to the MCAD Record Office.

After all MASD requirements have been completed and commencement period has passed, any MASD graduates that are unable to pick up their diploma in person from the Records office, and who have emailed a current mailing address to records@mcad.edu, will be sent their diploma (in the absence of any holds or missing grades) *upon email request by the student.*

Section 3: THESIS PROJECT OVERVIEW

The thesis project and corresponding thesis project presentation (see Section 9) are the capstones to the MASD program and an indication of the MASD candidate's development as a sustainability leader as a result of the graduate experience. In order to best prepare MASD students for their thesis work, students will begin their thesis project work as early in the program as possible, from the earliest idea stage (thesis project brief; see Section 4) to the final stages (thesis project presentation and final thesis review; see Sections 9 and 10, respectively). Refer to Section 12 for important academic milestones and Section 13 for general assessment guidelines.

Definitions

The ***Thesis Project*** is the "what" of the student's thesis work. All MASD graduate sustainability thesis projects will result in either 1) he design of an innovative [new or improved] product, system, or service with a sustainability focus or 2) original sustainability research [format of an article, journal publication, series of blog posts, business plan, etc.]. The thesis project is an evaluated component of the final thesis review. Thesis projects are managed and monitored through the development of the thesis project presentation.

The ***Thesis Project Presentation*** is the vehicle by which the MASD student communicates their thesis project work. The thesis project presentation (see Section 9) cannot be created without conducting a thesis project. The thesis project presentation is the means for evaluating the thesis project work during the final thesis review (refer to Thesis Project Presentation Rubric for evaluation criteria; see Appendix).

Purpose of the Thesis Project

The purpose of the thesis project is for the MASD student to demonstrate that they are capable of leading an independent piece of work with a sustainability focus with clear parameters, goals, objectives, process, and oversight from concept to completion, under the guidance of their advisor and committee members (see Section 7).

The required course Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project (total of 6 credits, taken as two courses) is designed to foster independent research, writing, and discussion of ideas toward the development of the thesis project and thesis project presentation, which are the final outcomes of the course.

Process of the Thesis Project

The thesis advisor and committee oversee the creation and approval of the thesis project work. It is the thesis advisor's responsibility to help set the conceptual and formal structure for the thesis project in conjunction with the MASD student.

Thesis projects vary widely with each MASD student and will pertain specifically to the project goals, objectives, parameters, etc., determined by the MASD student and their advisor.

The thesis project is worked on simultaneously with preparation of the thesis project presentation. Thesis projects are managed and monitored through the development of the thesis project presentation.

Section 4: THESIS PROJECT BRIEF

Definition
The ***Thesis Project Brief*** is a document (**one page maximum**) that presents the student's early ideas for their potential thesis project.

The ***Sustainable Design Academic Committee*** (SDAC) serves as a team to review thesis project briefs and to perform MASD mid-program reviews. The committee is formed by the Director of the MASD program and comprises the Director of the MASD program, one or more MASD faculty member(s), and/or one other MCAD academic program Director (or equivalent). Refer to Thesis Project Brief Rubric for evaluation criteria; see Appendix.

Purpose of Thesis Project Brief
The purpose of the thesis project brief is to demonstrate the student's early ideas and intentions regarding their thesis work. The review of the thesis project brief provides the opportunity for the Sustainable Design Academic Committee to assist individual students with the development of their early ideas, to provide feedback on the ideas and scope of the project, and to suggest potential thesis committee members. (See Section 3 for an overview of the Thesis Project and Section 9 for specifics of the Thesis Project Presentation.)

Process of Thesis Project Brief
Students who have completed 6 credits or more toward their MASD degree are required to develop and submit specific items (detailed under "Requirements of Thesis Project Brief") to the Director of the MASD program, before the start of the following semester, for review by the Sustainable Design Academic Committee. The Director of the MASD program sets the thesis project brief deadline date for each semester, typically one week before the semester begins. After reviewing and assessing the thesis project brief, the committee provides feedback on the thesis project brief to the student.

Requirements of Thesis Project Brief
The Thesis Project Brief should include the following **five sections,** and address the questions presented under each. It should include a few key citations (in CMS endnote format).

- **Sustainable Design Problem:** What is the meaningful sustainability problem or issue that your thesis project will help solve or address?
- **Impact:** How might solving or addressing this problem lead to a more sustainable world? How might we measure the impact of solving or addressing this problem?
- **Strategy:** What is currently being done to solve or address this problem? How might we improve upon the existing solutions, approaches, or models?
- **Thesis Project Ideas:** What are your initial ideas for innovative and impactful solutions to the sustainable design problem you've chosen?
- **Professional Goals:** How might your thesis project work contribute to your growth as a sustainability leader and help to attain your goals as a sustainability professional?

Section 5: MID-PROGRAM REVIEW

Definitions

The ***Mid-Program Review*** is the process of assessment of a student's mid-program review package, conducted by the Sustainable Design Academic Committee. The mid-program review occurs after the MASD student has completed 12 credits. The ***Mid-Program Review Package*** is the compilation of 1) portfolio work, 2) portfolio work overviews, and 3) thesis project proposal (see Section 6 for definition and further details).

Purpose of Mid-Program Review

The purpose of the mid-program review is to demonstrate the student's progress in the MASD program, their potential career path, and indicate a student's potential to produce solid thesis work in a timely and professional manner. The mid-program review provides the opportunity for the Sustainable Design Academic Committee to evaluate individual student progress and degree candidacy status.

Process of Mid-Program Review

Students who have completed 12 credits or more toward their MASD degree are required to compile and submit specific items (detailed under "Requirements of Mid-Program Review") to the Director of the MASD program for review by the Sustainable Design Academic Committee. The Director of the MASD program sets dates each year for mid-program reviews. After reviewing and assessing student work, the committee provides a critique of the mid-program review package and a pass/no pass grade.

Requirements of Mid-Program Review

The creation of a mid-program review package includes the following items:

- ***Portfolio Work:*** A portfolio that contains ONLY **one 'portfolio piece' for every course** during student's tenure in the MA. (A piece could be one image, a series of images, or an entire student project.) These course-based portfolio pieces are often the results of final project work, but are not limited to final projects. **It is up to the student to select pieces of work that best represent their growth as a sustainability professional. Pieces should be easily viewed and read by the reviewer.** (Be sure text size and image quality are appropriate.) Only courses that students have completed and received a final grade for are required to have representative work. Refer to Section 8: Web-based Portfolio to learn more about the purpose of this collection of work.
- ***Portfolio Work Overviews:*** A brief overview for *each portfolio piece* of work (3 sentences or less for each) that includes the:
    - Year, semester, and course title the work was developed within
    - Sustainability focus of the piece
    - Objective of the piece
- ***Thesis Project Proposal (see Section 6 for specific details)***

Detailed Mid-Program Review Process

By **5:00 p.m. CT** of the due date of the mid-program review (set by MASD Director):

1. The mid-program review package will be submitted as a **single PDF file** via email with the subject line "STUDENT NAME: Mid-Program Review Package" to MASD director.
2. The Sustainable Design Academic Committee meets to review individual mid-program review packages.
3. The student **may** be contacted for a meeting to clarify any information about their mid-program review package and/or about their progress in the program.
4. The committee 1) assesses the package, 2) provides a critique of the package, and 3) provides either of the two following grading options (note: transcripts may also be reviewed during this time to aid in decision-making):
    1) Pass, or
    2) No pass
5. The recommendation of the committee is presented to the student in writing via email from the Director of the MASD program. The written statement indicates the decision of the committee and the critique of the package for future use as part of the student's web-based portfolio (see Section 8).
6. The Director completes the mid-program review process by submitting the committee recommendation (pass/no pass) to the registrar for filing as part of the student's academic file.
7. Students who pass the mid-program review will advance to the thesis committee stage (see Section 7) and are considered MASD candidates.
8. Students who do not pass their first mid-program review will be scheduled for a re-review during the same semester and continue course work as scheduled.
9. Students who do not pass their second mid-program review will be asked to leave the program. These students may petition to the Director of the MASD program to be reinstated to the program after a period of one semester.

Section 6: THESIS PROJECT PROPOSAL

The MASD candidate's thesis project proposal will stem directly from the ideas the MASD student put forth in the thesis project brief and the feedback the student received from the Sustainable Design Academic Committee. The thesis project proposal is intended to prepare the MASD candidate for the next step in their MASD tenure, that is, to begin working on their thesis project and presentation in a directed and concerted manner and to advance to the MASD candidacy stage.

Definitions

The ***Thesis Project Proposal*** is a **five-page (maximum)** presentation (slide deck) that clearly and concisely articulates the thesis project ideas, and includes credible, supporting references for the need for this sustainability work. It includes citations in the required CMS format. **The thesis project proposal is submitted as part of the mid-program review package (see Section 5).**

Purpose of the Thesis Project Proposal

The purpose of the MASD candidate's thesis project proposal is to critically demonstrate the MASD candidate's ability to create a cohesive, provocative final thesis project and presentation for their final thesis review (see Section 3 for more information about the thesis project, Section 9 for more information about the thesis project presentation, and Section 10 for more about the final thesis review). MASD candidates' thesis work will drive toward a more sustainable solution or concept to an existing need.

The thesis project proposal articulates **how** the MASD candidate's thesis project and presentation will:

- result in **original** research, prototype, product, system, service, or plan;
- drive toward a **more sustainable** solution or concept to an existing need;
- have quantifiable **significance and impact** in the context of sustainability; and
- be completed **in time for their final thesis review**

Exploratory work and research-focused work are acceptable if the proposed sustainability solution/design:

- Can be demonstrated to be a more sustainable solution in its specific context than what already exists, or
- Includes full details on what work is required to compare the final design against existing products or services.

Process of the Thesis Project Proposal

The thesis project proposal is conceptualized, developed, and written by the MASD student after completing 12 credits, and it is submitted to the MASD Director as part of the mid-program review package for review and feedback by the Sustainable Design Academic

Committee (SDAC) (see Section 5). See the Appendix for the Thesis Project Proposal Rubric used by the SDAC.

Requirements of the Thesis Project Proposal
The thesis project proposal should be five pages/slides or less (including primary references), delivered in PDF format, and must include the following sections:

- **Problem Statement:** The Problem Statement is a single sentence (or two) that describes the specific sustainability problem that will be addressed in the proposed thesis work. The proposed Idea and Strategy should address this specific problem.
- **Sustainability Challenge:** The Sustainability Challenge builds the case that the problem is meaningful and worthy of being addressed. It should highlight relevant supporting data, insights, and/or research. It should provide support for the Problem Statement.
- **Idea:** The Idea is the proposed design solution to the specific problem described in the Problem Statement. The Idea should be original, innovative, and/or reflect a significant improvement on existing solutions to the problem
- **Strategy:** The Strategy is how the proposed design solution (the Idea) will be approached or implemented to address the problem and achieve significant impact.
- **Impact:** The Impact is the potential positive sustainability impact(s) that the proposed design solution could have on the problem if implemented and scaled. The Impact(s) should be quantified and/or qualified.
- **Scope:** The Scope describes what the proposed thesis work will and will not address or cover.
- **Sustainability Professional**: The Sustainability Professional section presents the professional goals of the student and how the proposed thesis work supports the student in achieving these goals.

The MASD student completes the thesis project proposal stage by submitting their five-page proposal to the Director of the MASD program. The thesis project proposal is submitted by the MASD Director to MCAD's records office and becomes a part of the MASD candidate's academic file.

Once the thesis project proposal has been submitted as part of the mid-program review package it will be reviewed by the Sustainable Design Academic Committee. **Students who pass the mid-program review will advance to the thesis committee stage, and are considered MASD candidates.** (Review details about the Mid-Program Review process in Section 5.)

Section 7: THESIS ADVISOR AND COMMITTEE ROLES

After the student has passed the mid-program review stage (must be completed *before* the 5th semester), the MASD candidate can register for the Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project (GSTP) courses (SD 7021 and SD 7022) where they prepare for their thesis project presentation by accomplishing the concurrent tasks listed below.

Tasks:

1. Secure a thesis advisor.
2. Revise thesis project proposal (using Sustainable Design Academic Committee feedback).
3. Complete, sign, and return the Advisor-Student Learning Contract (see Appendix), to MASD director.
4. Secure two thesis committee members.
5. Submit revised thesis project proposal (see Section 6) that has been **reviewed, approved and signed by thesis advisor,** to the MASD Director for filing with the records office.

Definitions

A ***Thesis Advisor*** is a sustainability professional who is (typically) an instructor in MCAD's MASD program who will extensively help the MASD candidate to design and execute a final thesis project, presentation, and prepare for their final thesis review. The thesis advisor is a **voting** member of the student's graduate thesis committee.

Thesis Committee Members are professionals who lend their expertise to help the MASD candidate to refine their thesis project and presentation. They may or may not be MCAD faculty members; however, it is recommended that one be a MASD faculty member and one a professional from outside of the faculty. Each MASD candidate is required to have **two** thesis committee members. Thesis committee members are **voting** members of the MASD candidate's graduate thesis committee.

The ***Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project Instructor*** is a faculty member in MCAD's MASD program who leads the Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project (SD-7021 and SD-7022) course and who guides the MASD candidate through the development of the various stages of their thesis project work including: thesis project development, thesis presentation, web-based portfolio creation, and final review preparation. The GSTP instructor **does not have a vote** in the final thesis review process.

The ***Thesis Committee Chair*** is typically the Director of the MASD program and is the person who facilitates the final thesis review process. The thesis committee chair is a **non-voting** member of the MASD candidate's graduate thesis committee. In some cases, the thesis committee chair and the Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project (GSTP) instructor are the same

person; in either case, these are non-voting members of the MASD candidate's graduate thesis committee.

The ***Advisor-Student Learning Contract*** is crafted by the MASD candidate, in collaboration with the thesis advisor, to outline the expectations for the working relationship between them and returned to the Director of the MASD program for filing (see Appendix).

Finding a Thesis Advisor

The purpose of the MASD candidate's thesis work is to demonstrate that they are capable of leading an independent project with a sustainability focus with clear parameters, process, and oversight from concept to completion, under the guidance of their advisor and committee members. Finding an advisor and, subsequently, two additional committee members that are the best fit for the MASD candidate and their proposed work is a critical part of a successful MASD experience.

In consultation with and approval of the Director of the MASD program, the MASD candidate will approach a prospective advisor(s) who is an MASD instructor. **This will typically take place before or during the MASD candidate's first semester of the GSTP course.** Advisors must hold at least a master's degree (or equivalent professional experience according to MCAD's Professional Equivalency Rubric), have relevant professional experience to guide their final thesis project work, and have the time to dedicate to provide critical oversight to the MASD candidate's thesis project, presentation, and final thesis review.

Advisor Role

The roles and responsibilities of the thesis advisor are to:

- Work as an advisor to assist the MASD candidate to design and execute a final thesis project that will result in the candidate's development as sustainability leader and that relates to the future career goals of the candidate, and that these goals meet the standards of the MASD program (see Section 13: General Assessment Guidelines and Appendix: Thesis Project Presentation Rubric).
- Sign and return a Graduate Thesis Advisor Contract to MCAD.
- Commit to spending up to 1 hour per week with the MASD candidate.
- Consult, review, approve, and sign the MASD candidate's revised thesis project proposal and Advisor-Student Learning Contract (see Appendix).
- Oversee the selection process of the remainder of the MASD candidate's thesis committee (see Committee Member Role below).
- Provide feedback and critique during the advising period.
- Help the MASD candidate find relevant and/or critical references.
- Provide feedback, critique, and eventually approve the MASD candidate's thesis proposal and draft versions of their final thesis paper.
- Critique MASD candidate's web-based portfolio.
- Read, review, evaluate, and approve the MASD candidate's thesis project presentation before it is submitted to the entire thesis committee.

- Participate in the MASD candidate's final thesis review and advocate for the MASD candidate, if and when appropriate, to the thesis committee.

Working with an Advisor
Advisors are sustainability professionals who are active in their area of expertise and preferably are, or have been, an instructor in the MASD program. Advisors have a clear vision of their role as a sustainability leader.

Expectations for the advisor and MASD candidate relationship are negotiated between the MASD candidate and the advisor and will vary depending on work styles, personalities, and scheduling preferences (i.e. time of day/week for meetings, how to meet [phone, video chat, etc.], how much turn-around time between revisions, etc.). **Clearly articulated and understood expectations and a strategy for working together make for a successful working experience.** Expectations for the relationship structure are documented in the Advisor-Student Learning Contract that is crafted by the MASD candidate and initially approved by the advisor (see Appendix). Subsequently, the contract is sent to the Director of the MASD program for final approval and in turn submitted to the MCAD Records Office as part of the MASD candidate's academic file.

Finding Committee Members
Each MASD candidate works with their thesis advisor to select a two-member thesis committee, in consultation with and the approval of the Director of the MASD program.

This committee includes:
- A practicing sustainability professional from outside the MCAD community to serve as the outside committee member (if appropriate and possible)
- Either a member of MCAD's MASD faculty OR a practicing sustainability professional from outside the MCAD community to serve as the secondary committee member

Committee Member Role
The committee meets online with the MASD candidate a **minimum of three times** to review the MASD candidate's thesis project proposal as well as during the development of the thesis project presentation, and for the preparation for the final thesis review (see Section 12 for a timetable of academic milestones).

Once the outside member(s) of the thesis committee has been secured, MASD candidates may be asked to provide the Director of the MASD program with information for this member(s), including but not limited to:
- Curriculum vitae
- Statement about their role as a sustainability leader
- Examples of their work as a practicing sustainability professional
- Approach to mentoring

Working with Committee Members

Thesis committee members work with MASD candidates in a less time-intensive manner than the advisor. However, the specifics of the relationship (i.e. meeting times, expectations for deliverables, etc.) are to be established by the individual committee members and the MASD candidate through candid conversation. Committee member involvement in the MASD candidate's final thesis project and paper will vary greatly depending on the needs of the MASD candidate and the relationship forged.

In summary, **MCAD expects MASD candidates to be practicing sustainability professionals and to have a clear idea of what they want to achieve from their studies.** The advisor and committee members serve as guides and sources of thoughtful and critical response throughout this process. MASD candidates and advisors/committee members will determine their meeting schedule based on what best advances the MASD candidate's progress from the thesis project proposal stage (see Section 6) to their final thesis review (see Section 10). ***It is the MASD candidate's responsibility to maintain these relationships and make regular connections with their committee members and advisor.***

Section 8: WEB-BASED PORTFOLIO

Definition

The ***Web-Based Portfolio*** serves to create a public presence for the candidate's MASD work and as a direct expression of the MASD candidate's individual point of view, opinions, activities, etc., for the candidate's sustainability-focused work created during their tenure within the MASD program.

The web-based portfolio is a website (platform, style, format, etc.) that is created and curated by the MASD candidate that highlights **one example of their work from each MASD course taken** at MCAD. In some cases, teamwork will need to be presented as a portfolio piece; *ensure that all team members are identified and that the student's role in the project is clearly detailed*. Other sustainability work that the MASD candidate has conducted (professional or personal practice) may also be included in the portfolio but all work must be clearly identified as student or non-student work.

Purpose of Web-Based Portfolio

The purpose of the web-based portfolio is to promote reflection on the coherence of a student's academic career. Because MCAD's MASD is a fully online program, the portfolio serves as a means for MASD candidates to make a public presentation or exhibition of their work as is a requirement for traditional master's programs at institutions of art and design. (Note: students may make their portfolios password protected if they do not want to share their work outside of the program and/or their thesis committees.)

Portfolios will support an MASD candidate with:

- Preparation and building confidence for their final thesis review
- Providing a means to reflect on and analyze their academic experiences
- Preparing a foundation for the development of materials to support and recognize their growth as a sustainability professional
- Demonstrating a competency-based body of sustainability-focused work

The web-based portfolio **must** include the following:

- Introduction or About page
- Short biography (ten sentences or less)
- Sustainability statement/philosophy (ten sentences or less)
- Resume
- Contact information (virtual business card)
- **Portfolio:** Showcased work with **one** piece of work from every MASD course taken (8 courses plus the final Thesis Project Presentation, for a total of 9 pieces). Each piece must include an accompanying **portfolio work overview** (three sentences or less per each) that describes the assignment and how/why the student approached the problem

or design solution. Please see **Section 5: Mid-Program Review for more details about portfolio pieces and overview**.
- All pieces in the portfolio must be easily viewed and read by reviewers.

The web-based portfolio **may** include the following, if relevant, to showcase the MASD candidate's sustainability work:
- Blog (to showcase essay-style work)
- Professional sustainability-focused work
- Other ideas approved by the MASD director

MA candidates' web-based portfolios will be created, maintained, and curated by the MASD candidate as part of their professional sustainability practice.

In the course Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project (SD-7021 and SD-7022) the MASD candidate will select the final website platform to develop the web-based portfolio that best meets the professional needs of the project and matches the MASD candidate's ability to build, update, and maintain. It is critical that the following factors are considered in the platform selection process:
- MA candidate is comfortable using the platform
- Platform meets the professional needs of the MASD candidate and/or project
- Platform is globally accessible
- Platform has a professional reputation

MA candidates may design their own sites, add a sustainability page to an existing professional site that they have already deployed, work with a professional web developer, or make use of free website platforms. Some examples of currently available, user-friendly, free website platforms that MASD candidates may select from are (but are not limited to): WordPress, Tumblr, Blogger, Wix, and Weebly; industrial design portfolio sites such as Cloroflot; and graphic design portfolio sites such as Behance.

Section 9: THESIS PROJECT PRESENTATION

The thesis project presentation is the capstone to the MASD program and an indication of the MASD candidate's development as a sustainability leader as a result of the graduate experience. The MASD candidate works closely with their thesis advisor and committee to plan and implement the thesis project presentation that ultimately leads to the final thesis review. **(NOTE: Students who wish to prepare a thesis project paper in lieu of a presentation may do so with the permission of the MASD director.)**

Definition

The ***Final Thesis Project Presentation*** captures and communicates the MASD candidate's sustainability-focused thesis project work. The presentation explains the relevance and importance of the thesis project in the greater context of sustainability (the "why"), the step-by-step process that the MASD candidate follows to develop and complete the thesis project (the "how"), and the outcome or developed design of the project (the "what").

Purpose of the Thesis Project Presentation

The ultimate purpose of the thesis project presentation is to provide a narrative, in the format of a professional presentation (e.g., PDF of slide deck), of the MASD candidate's independent sustainability-focused thesis project. In a sense, it is the story of the thesis project that provides the reader with an in-depth understanding of the background, context, current research, process, and outcome of the thesis project. The thesis project presentation will clearly articulate the current thinking around the subject matter of the thesis project as well as incorporate a summary of relevant and related research on the subject. It also illustrates the candidate's mastery of sustainable design processes and frameworks.

Process of the Thesis Project Presentation

The MASD candidate will work independently with the guidance and support of their thesis advisor and the instructor of the Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project (GSTP) course to accomplish the following and complete the requirements of the degree:

- Earn a passing grade for 6 credits of Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project (SD-7021 and SD-7022) (these are pass/fail courses). To earn 6 credits, the MASD candidate takes GSTP-1 (SD-7021) and then GSTP 2 (SD-7022) during the last two semesters of their program.
- Prepare a thesis project presentation (see Section 9)
- Make a public presentation of their thesis project and experiences in the MASD program through their web-based portfolio (see Section 8)
- Earn a passing grade for the final thesis review (see Section 10)
- Submit a final electronic copy of their thesis presentation to the library through an online submission portal (see Section 11)

Structure of the Thesis Project Presentation

MA candidates are required to employ an **academic writing style**: concise, compelling, and well supported. The written text included in the thesis project presentation will be written in the **third person**.

MASD candidates are also encouraged to use visuals to communicate information in their thesis project presentations, including imagery, charts, graphics, infographics, sketches, visuals of designs and prototypes, video, etc. Candidates are encouraged to use whatever creative means best communicates their project in a professional manner.

Thesis project presentations will **have a minimum of fifteen pages/slides and should not exceed 40 pages/slides, excluding references or appendices.** The thesis project presentation will follow a professional presentation **structure that will include the following major sections and sub-sections, in this order:**

1) Front Matter (3 pages)

- Title Page, that must clearly state:
    - The title of the presentation
    - "In support of MASD Thesis Review"
    - Date of final thesis review
    - Full name of candidate
    - The names of the MASD candidate's thesis advisor, two committee members, and thesis committee chair
- Abstract / Summary
- Table of Contents

2) The Project Introduction (6 pages)

- Problem statement
- Sustainability challenge
- Thesis statement
- Idea for a sustainability solution
- Strategic approach to the solution
- Potential sustainability impact of the solution
- Scope of thesis project
- Candidate's professional goals

3) The Project Execution (15 pages)

- Project objectives
- Proposed and actual process:
    - Includes sustainable design framework(s) used and steps to achieve outcome(s)
- Visual and written demonstrations of project work, including:
    - research
    - application of sustainability frameworks
    - initial explorations and sketches

- insights and discoveries made throughout the project process
- challenges encountered and overcome
- design decisions

4) The Project Outcome (15 pages)

- Visual and written demonstration of final project outcome, the final solution, or result of thesis exploration (i.e., research results and conclusions for a research project, a business plan for the launch of an idea, or a final original design)
- Insights that emerged from applying the frameworks, including lessons learned, pivot points, new ideas, etc.
- Potential functionality or viability of the outcome or design solution
- Potential positive sustainability impact that the outcome or design solution would have if implemented and/or scaled.
- Project conclusion, describing how the project did or did not support the problem statement, conclusions drawn, and next steps that could be taken.

5) References/Works Cited (1-10 pages, as needed)

- Follows the most recent Chicago Manual of Style (CMS) citation style guidelines produced by MCAD's Learning Center (see the Writing Resources section of MCAD's Learning Center Intranet page).
  - In-text citations must be in the form of superscripted numbers
  - The References or Works Cited section must list full citations in the form of endnotes, in the order presented in the body of the presentation.
    - Bibliographies are not acceptable.
  - References must include all relevant and key literature from a literature search and research will be summarized in the body of the paper.

6) Appendices (1-10 pages, as needed)

- Includes supporting research, additional details, etc.

Thesis project presentations must be clearly written in academic writing style, well organized, visually appealing, and professionally presented. MASD **candidates are responsible for proofing their work for spelling and grammatical errors before final drafts are submitted to the thesis review committee.** MASD candidates will complete proofing as part of Graduate Sustainability Thesis Project-2 (SD-7022). In some cases, the instructor of the course may suggest that candidates seek the services of a copyeditor. **MCAD's Learning Center does not provide copy editing services** but, with ample time for assistance, the Learning Center will work with students to improve their writing. Be preemptive. Seek help early and often. (See Section 14 for more information about support services.)

The thesis advisor and committee oversee the development of the thesis project and presentation, and vote on the presentation during the final thesis review. It is recommended that MASD candidates ask for early feedback from committee members and incorporate changes into their drafts. MASD candidates must submit their final thesis project presentation

to their advisor, committee members, and thesis committee chair ***at least two weeks*** **before the final thesis review date,** noting that the final thesis review must take place at least two weeks before the end of the semester..

Documentation
All thesis project presentations must cite references where appropriate. All images, claims, quotes, and/or data not originally generated by the student **must** be substantiated by credible sources. All presentations must include a References or Works Cited section. MASD candidates ***are required*** **to use the CMS citation style** ***but are not*** **required to use the CMS formatting style**. Citations in the body of the presentation will be indicated with a superscripted number, as with an endnote. Full citations will be listed In the References or Works Cited section by number, as with endnotes, in the order that they appear in the body of the presentation.

Appearance
It is the **responsibility of the MASD candidate** to ensure that the final copy of their thesis project presentation meets the required formatting detailed below.

Final thesis project presentations must meet the following standards for the final thesis review:

- Follows the **professional presentation structure** with the major sections listed above, in the order shown
- Is written in **third person using academic writing style**
- Uses **EITHER Helvetica or Times font** (Not required but these are the best fonts for long-term preservation of thesis)
- Uses either a portrait or landscape layout
- Is **40 pages or less** (excluding references and appendices)
- Is no more than **30MB** when saved as a PDF
- Note: The library copy of the final thesis presentation must be in **PDF/A 1-b format** (see Section 11)
- Includes a **title page/slide** that clearly states:
    - The title of the paper
    - “In support of MASD Thesis Review”
    - Date of final thesis review
    - Full name of candidate
    - The names of the MASD candidate’s thesis advisor, two committee members, and thesis committee chair
- Follows **CMS citation style** guidelines (not formatting)
- Until further notice, indentation, layout style, etc. are according to students’ personal preference, but is subject to change
- Note: Hard copies are NOT required

Section 10: FINAL THESIS REVIEW

Definitions

The ***Final Thesis Review*** is an approximately two-hour long online video and/or audio conference call between the MASD candidate and their thesis committee including the thesis chair who facilitates the meeting. The review provides an opportunity for the committee members to make comments, critique, ask questions, and discuss ideas with the MASD candidate based on their thesis work including the thesis project, presentation, and web-based portfolio.

Purpose of the Final Thesis Review

The purpose of the final thesis review is to ensure that the MASD candidate is prepared to leave the program as an active sustainability practitioner who has demonstrated their capabilities to lead an independent sustainability project and prepare an in-depth project presentation in a professional manner.

Process of the Final Thesis Review

Once an MASD candidate's thesis project is complete and a thesis project presentation is prepared, the thesis committee meets online with the MASD candidate for a formal review facilitated by the thesis committee chair (typically the Director of the MASD program). The review will last approximately two hours and addresses all aspects of the thesis project and corresponding thesis project presentation. **The final thesis review meeting must take place at least two weeks prior to the end of the semester.**

In addition to the thesis project presentation, the MASD candidate will make a short video of their thesis project presentation and their background as an introduction to the review (**five minutes or less**; **a pre-recorded video is recommended but not required**), and present a web-based portfolio (see Section 5) of their work developed while in the MASD program.

Each committee member will have an opportunity to respond to and ask questions about the thesis project, presentation, video, and portfolio. After each committee member has done this, the review opens to a discussion format. During this time, the candidate may request clarifications and specifics from the committee members, as needed. At the conclusion of the meeting, the MASD candidate will be asked to leave the meeting while the committee discusses their recommendations and casts their votes for their individual recommendations.

The committee will recommend one of the three following options to the MASD faculty that the degree of Master of Arts in Sustainable Design:

- be awarded (pass),
- be conditionally awarded (pass with contingencies), or
- not be awarded (no pass).

Note: Conditional recommendations must include specific conditions under which the committee will reconsider or approve the MASD candidate's thesis project presentation and pass the review.

The committee's decision will then be reported to the MASD candidate in writing via email from the Director of the MASD program. Upon the recommendation of the committee, the MASD faculty, through the Director of the MASD program, will recommend to the president and the board of trustees that an MASD degree be awarded.

Should the committee recommend the MASD not be awarded, the MASD candidate may appeal the decision to the Director of the MASD program.

*** MASD CANDIDATES WILL NOT RECEIVE DIPLOMAS UNTIL ALL REQUIRED THESIS DOCUMENTATION AND COURSE WORK IS SUBMITTED (See Section 2)***

Section 11: THESIS PROJECT PRESENTATION SUBMISSION TO LIBRARY

MA candidates are responsible for submitting their final thesis presentation to the MCAD library following the PDF standards and process outlined below. (See Section 9 for details regarding the required structure and appearance guidelines for the final thesis project presentation.)

Final Thesis Project Presentation PDF Standards required for MCAD Library Submission

- File Name Requirements:
    - **first initial last name_thesis_year of graduation.pdf**
        - Example: ddeluca_thesis_2021.pdf
- Format Requirements:
    - **Save as PDF/A 1-b** (this is the best format for long-term preservation of theses)
    - Save your file in above format using Adobe Acrobat.
    - No encryption of the file is allowed. [Note: in cases where confidentiality is an issue (i.e. with Intellectual Property issues), theses may be submitted directly to the Director of the MASD program with prior approval and arrangement. Students may contact the Director of the MASD program about Non-Disclosure Agreements, if relevant to student work.]

Submission Process

- An electronic copy (**PDF/A 1-b**) will be submitted to the MCAD library using an online submission portal by **5:00 p.m. CT the second-to-last day of classes**.
- All of the following information will be required to submit through the online portal:
    - MA candidate's full name
    - Semester and year of final thesis review (e.g. Spring 2020)
    - Names of advisor, committee members, and thesis chair
    - Title of thesis project
    - Project abstract or summary
    - Seven or fewer **keywords** to be used in a search engine to find your thesis paper (keywords may be one ["biomimicry"] or two ["systems thinking"] words)
    - Link to MASD candidate's **web-based portfolio** (see Section 4 for more details)
    - **PDF/A 1-b version** of the thesis project presentation (no more than 30MB)

Section 12: ACADEMIC MILESTONES

The following academic milestones are part of the MASD candidate's official files in MCAD's records office and determine progress toward the MASD degree.

All associated forms must be submitted to the Director of the MASD program for review and approval. All forms are available from the Director of the MASD program. Please send an email to the MASD Director to request forms.

General Timetable of Academic Milestones

Academic Milestone	Responsible Party	Who Reviews/ Approves	Deadline
Course Registration(s) completed	Student, in conjunction with Director of MASD	Director of MASD and Records office	Each fall and spring semester during designated academic advising period
Thesis Project Brief submitted	Student	Sustainable Design Academic Committee	After 6 credits have been successfully completed, before the start of the next semester (date determined by Director of MASD)
Mid-Program Review Package submitted (includes portfolio work, overviews, and 5-page **Thesis Project Proposal**)	Student	Sustainable Design Academic Committee	After 12 credits have been successfully completed, before the start of the next semester (date determined by Director of MASD)
Mid-Program Review passed	Student	Sustainable Design Academic Committee	Before starting GSTP I
Thesis Advisor secured	MA candidate, GSTP instructor, and	Director of MASD	During GSTP I, or earlier

	Director of MASD		
Advisor-Student Learning Contract submitted (see Appendix)	MA candidate	Thesis advisor and Director of MASD	During GSTP I, or earlier
Thesis Advisor Contract issued (issued by MCAD)	Thesis advisor and Director of MASD	Director of MASD	During GSTP I
Revised Thesis Project Proposal completed	MA candidate	Thesis advisor and GSTP instructor	During GSTP I
Thesis Committee formed	MA candidate, thesis advisor, and Director of MASD	Director of MASD	During GSTP I, or earlier
Thesis Committee Member Contracts issued (issued by MCAD)	Committee members and Director of MASD	Director of MASD	During GSTP I
Intent to Graduate Form submitted	MA candidate	Director of MASD, Records office, MCAD Online Learning	During GSTP II, or as required by the Records Office; submit to Director of MASD and Records office
Complete final draft of Thesis Project Presentation submitted	MA candidate	Advisor, committee, and GSTP instructor	During GSTP II, four weeks before final thesis project presentation due, or earlier
Feedback from Thesis Committee	Thesis committee and GSTP instructor	MA candidate	During GSTP II, two weeks before final thesis project presentation due, or earlier

Final Thesis Project Presentation submitted	MA candidate	Advisor, committee, chair, and GSTP instructor	During GSTP II, two weeks before final review date, or earlier
Web-based Portfolio submitted	MA candidate	Advisor, committee, and chair, and GSTP instructor	During GSTP II, two weeks before final review date, or earlier
Introductory video submitted	MA candidate	Advisor, committee, chair, and GSTP instructor	During GSTP II, one week before final thesis review date (OPTIONAL; students may present during review)
Final Thesis Review	MA candidate	Advisor, committee, and chair	During GSTP II, at least two weeks before last day of classes, or earlier
Library copy of Final Thesis Project Presentation submitted	MA candidate	Library Director and Director of MASD program	During GSTP II, second-to-last day of classes, or earlier; use library's online submission portal

*** MASD CANDIDATES WILL NOT RECEIVE DIPLOMAS UNTIL ALL REQUIRED THESIS DOCUMENTATION AND COURSE WORK IS SUBMITTED (See Section 2)***

Section 13: GENERAL ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

During the final thesis review, in addition to the assessment of the thesis project presentation using the Thesis Project Presentation Rubric (see Appendix), MASD candidates will be assessed on their development as a sustainability professional as it relates to their Career Development.

Because sustainability-focused work across all disciplines is expanding rapidly, the intention of MCAD's MASD is to fully prepare students to leave the program with the ability to accelerate their existing careers or to help them to forge novel career paths, possibly even to create job opportunities that do not exist today but will become commonplace for sustainability-minded professionals in the future. To this end, the MASD strives to prepare students for their role in a cutting-edge field by ensuring that they each meet the following **four criteria**:

Collaborative problem solvers: Because no global challenge can be solved in isolation by one person or one discipline, MCAD MASD students will engage in cohesive and high-quality paired and group learning experiences. These opportunities will be grounded in creative leadership training, collaborative design processes, and dynamic problem-solving skills.

Conscious social professionals: Students will experience student-driven projects in the form of new and/or improved sustainability-focused products, processes, systems, or services. MASD candidates will create novel, accessible, affordable, and sustainability-focused solutions that will address current, global human social and/or economic needs and/or environmental issues.

Inventors, innovators, and entrepreneurs: Students will nurture professional development experiences through real-life business interactions, peer-to-peer and teacher-student mentorships, entrepreneurship training, and strategic business planning experience.

Global community members: Through various modes of learning and training, students will develop the skills to maintain a forum for interactions and global networking opportunities with their fellow students, MASD faculty members, industry partners, and MCAD alumni.

Section 14: SUPPORT SERVICES

Books
Required books for MASD courses are listed on my.mcad.edu when students register for courses. They are also listed on canvas.mcad.edu/books. The MCAD Art Cellar does not stock books, but they are available for online order at amazon.com/shop/mcadartcellar.

Career Development
The Office of Career Development works collaboratively across the college, providing student career integration opportunities and employment consultation while enriching external opportunities and visibility in creative industries for students and alumni.

Career Development manages the MCAD Internship Program where students learn about professional industries, build skills, network, and expand portfolios by working with an experienced professional. Internships, part-time and full-time jobs, and freelance opportunities are posted online at http://mcad.joinhandshake.com. This site, available only to students and alumni, allows users to submit documents (resumes, cover letters) for critique and browse employer pages.

The Career Development staff is available to meet one-on-one with students and alumni to assist with career development. Topics include assistance writing and editing resumes, cover letters, and other professional correspondences; career exploration and industry research; interviewing practice; networking strategies; and industry-specific practices. Individual drop-in meetings are available during office hours; however, scheduled appointments are strongly encouraged. Request an appointment on Handshake.

Disability Accommodation
Students who have a learning disability, even those who do not plan to seek accommodations, are strongly encouraged to register with the Director of MCAD's Learning Center (see Learning Center below for more information). This will ensure that students have access to all of the services and accommodations that are available. Learn more about disability accommodation.

All accommodations are determined on an individual, case-by-case basis by the learning center director, and in consultation with faculty and administrative staff. For more information about these services, please contact the Learning Center at 612.874.3671.

Financial Aid
Students who are U.S. Citizens may be eligible for financial aid. Students are encouraged to apply for financial aid with the help of the MCAD Financial Aid Office. The total amount of financial aid a student may receive is based on the family's financial situation and the cost of attendance. While the amount of financial aid a student may receive is dependent upon financial need, the student must also be making satisfactory academic progress to be eligible

for federal funds. **Students must be taking at least three credits during any semester to be eligible for financial aid.** Types of financial aid students may qualify for include the Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan, Federal Graduate Plus Loan, and/or an alternative education loan through a lender.

MCAD Intranet

The MCAD Intranet is a clearinghouse of important information for all MCAD students, staff, and faculty**. It is highly recommended that MASD students use the MCAD Intranet as their first stop to get the information they need**. All of the offices, services, and access points listed below (and more) are available on MCAD's Intranet. Important ones to note for MASD students are MCAD's:

- Art Cellar and Bookstore
- Business Office (for tuition bill questions)
- Career Development (look into jobs and opportunities)
- Financial Aid Office (any questions related to student loans)
- Learning Center (for writing, tutoring, disability accommodation, and time management assistance) (see below)
- Library (for resources)
- Online Learning (for Blackboard and Canvas help)
- Records Office (to request a transcript, etc.)
- Student Affairs (download a copy of the MCAD Student Handbook)
- General resources:
    - Access to mcad.edu Gmail account
    - Access to Blackboard
    - Computer Support Help Desk (for trouble logging into student accounts)
    - Academic calendar (semester start and end dates; holidays; deadlines)
    - Lynda.com Online training library (learn how to do nearly everything here!)
    - Knowledgebase (concise help with common issues on Blackboard and beyond)

Learning Center

MCAD's Learning Center is an academic support center and enrichment resource for all students. The learning center offers assistance with: writing (every level and style), limited **software support, time management** and study skills, and professional development.

You can find Chicago Manual of Style resources on the CMOS website and in the Writing Resources section of MCAD's Learning Center Intranet website.

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html
http://intranet.mcad.edu/resources/writing-resources

Be pre-emptive! Seek help early and often. Students may contact the learning center to arrange an appointment via email at learning_center@mcad.edu.

Library Services
The MCAD Library is dedicated to supporting MASD student research needs during their tenure in the MASD program. The library provides research assistance to students ranging from preliminary topic development to in-depth research consultation to citation verification. **Online resources** include article and image databases, e-books, interlibrary loan articles requests, and instructions for making the most of your local resources. All resources are available from the MCAD Intranet. Many resources will require your MCAD login as authorization.

For questions, students should check the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section available in the Knowledgebase. Please contact the Library Director with questions at library@mcad.edu or 612.874.3791. Messages will be answered Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. CDT. Every effort will be made to reply to messages within forty-eight hours.

MCAD.EDU Account
When students are actively enrolled in the MASD program, they will have continuous access to an official MCAD Google email (Gmail) account that ends in "@mcad.edu." Email is the primary form of communications for the MASD program. **All students are required to check their mcad.edu email at least once every twenty-four hours during semester sessions and respond immediately to all official requests.** All MCAD-related notices and messages will be sent to students' mcad.edu accounts including but not limited to: Blackboard and Canvas classroom announcements, instructor messages, important information from records, online learning, business office, financial aid, and the Director of the MASD program. Students may access their Gmail accounts from MCAD's Intranet.

Online Learning
All MASD classes are asynchronous, meaning that there are no specific all-class online meeting times, though there are shared weekly deadlines. Students can access their online course(s) at https://learn.mcad.edu for Blackboard-based courses, and at https://canvas.mcad.edu/ for Canvas-based courses.

It is recommended that students set aside ample time each week to work on their online course(s). **In general, students should expect about 9 hours of course work every week of the semester for each course (for a 15-week semester).** The most successful students log in nearly every day to work and interact with their classmates.

It is expected that students log in at the start of each week to plan their time appropriately to meet all due dates, particularly courses with greater levels of student interaction and collaboration.

Check MCAD's website for up-to-date information about upcoming online courses at MCAD: my.mcad.edu.

If students would like technical assistance with their online course(s), the Online Learning Department can help:

- email online@mcad.edu
- call 1.800.874.MCAD Ext. 4 or 612.874.3618
- MCAD Knowledgebase
- Blackboard Help

Service Bureau
Students will not have access to the MCAD Service Bureau. This is the on-campus office for printing services and is unavailable to online students.

Social Media Outreach
The MASD program has an active social media outreach program. Join the conversation!

MCAD Sustainable Design Program Website:
mcad.edu/sustainable

MA in Sustainable Design Blog:
MCADsustainabledesign.com

MASD LinkedIn Group (public):
https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1945418/

MCAD MA in Sustainable Design Network LinkedIn Group (private)
https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12258958/

MASD Facebook Page:
facebook.com/MCAD.SustainableDesign

MASD Alumni Facebook Group (open only to MASD Alumni):
facebook.com/groups/758966524260815/

MASD Student Facebook Group (only open to MASD Students):
facebook.com/groups/727951847414472

MASD Twitter Feed:
twitter.com/#!/MCADSustainDsgn

MASD Slack group
(by invitation only, for MASD students, alumni, and faculty)

Student Identification Cards
Students will be provided with physical student ID cards upon request. Students may email (online@mcad.edu) or call (1.800.874.MCAD Ext. 4 or 612.874.3618) the MCAD Online Learning Office if they have any questions about getting a student ID card.

Student Account Information
Students are required to activate their online student account by entering their official MCAD username and password at mybill.mcad.edu.

Technology Support Help Desk
MCAD's Technology Support Help Desk provides support to the entire college community, seven days a week. Many questions are answered in our extensive Knowledge Base. Or fill out a help request form to open a ticket with a help desk specialist. Contact them at computer_support@mcad.edu or 612.874.3666.

APPENDICES

Thesis Project Brief Rubric

Thesis Project Proposal Rubric

MA Advisor–Student Learning Contract Document – COPY

Thesis Project Presentation Rubric

Thesis Project Brief Rubric

Evaluation Criteria

Each section is weighted equally and can be given up to 5 points for a total score of up to 25 points. A score of 17 points or higher (average of 3.4 points per section) is required for passing. If a Brief scores less than 17 points, students will be asked to revise and resubmit.

Section	Top Ranking
Sustainable Design Problem What is the meaningful sustainability problem or issue that your thesis project will help solve or address?	● The problem is articulated clearly and concisely. ● The problem reflects a good understanding of underlying sustainability issues. ● A strong case is made that this is a meaningful and worthy problem to be addressed. ● Supporting data, insights, and/or research are highlighted and cited.
Impact How might solving or addressing this problem lead to a more sustainable world? How might we measure the impact of solving or addressing this problem?	● The potential impact clearly reflects the problem and issues presented in the Problem section. ● Qualitative and/or quantitative metrics are described to assess the potential sustainability impacts.
Strategy What is currently being done to solve or address this problem? How might we improve upon the existing solutions, approaches, or models?	● The text reflects a good understanding of the current sustainability landscape around the specific problem. ● The improvements suggested support the proposed thesis project ideas.
Thesis Project Ideas What are your initial ideas for innovative and impactful solutions to the sustainable design problem you've chosen?	● The ideas are described clearly. ● The ideas clearly address the specific problem described in the Problem section. ● The ideas are innovative and reflect an improvement on solutions already in place for addressing the problem. ● The ideas have the potential to succeed in addressing environmental, social, and/or cultural concerns.
Professional Goals How might your thesis project work contribute to your growth as a sustainability leader and help to attain your goals as a sustainability professional?	● The student's professional goals are clearly outlined. ● The thesis work will contribute to the achievement of the professional goals.

Thesis Project Brief Rubric

Point Allocation
Each section is weighted equally and can be given up to 5 points for a total score of up to 25 points. A score of 17 points or higher is required for passing.

5 points	Excellent work	Work is exemplary. Professional, appropriate, concise, eye-pleasing, is easy to comprehend/navigate, and demonstrates creative and critical thinking skills. Work demonstrates an excellent understanding of the objective(s).
4 points	Good work	Work is complete, professional, is easy to understand, and is appropriate. May contain very few minor errors or omissions, but demonstrates a very good understanding of the objective(s).
3 points	Satisfactory work	Work is mostly complete yet is professional and appropriate. May contain minor errors or omissions, but demonstrates adequate understanding of objective(s). May take some effort to follow, navigate, and/or comprehend.
2 points	Unsatisfactory work	Work is incomplete, may have significant errors, and may be difficult to follow/navigate/comprehend. It is not clear if objectives are understood.
1 point	Work submitted but grossly inadequate	Work was submitted but demonstrated little to no understanding of the objective(s).
0 points	Work not submitted	Work was not submitted.

Thesis Project Proposal Rubric

Evaluation Criteria

Each section is weighted equally and can be given up to 5 points for a total score of up to 35 points. A score of 25 points or higher is required for passing. See Point Allocation below.

Section	Description	Top Ranking
Problem Statement	The Problem Statement is a single sentence (or two) that describes the specific sustainability problem that is addressed in the thesis work. The Problem Statement should be supported by the Sustainability Challenge. The Idea and Strategy should address this specific problem.	The problem statement is articulated clearly and concisely. Establishes focus for the proposal.
Sustainability Challenge	The Sustainability Challenge builds the case that the problem is meaningful and worthy of being addressed. It should highlight relevant supporting data, insights, and/or research. It should provide support for the proposed design solution (the Idea) and the strategic approach to the solution (the Strategy). It should provide support for the Problem Statement.	Comprehensive understanding of underlying sustainability issues. Work has potential to succeed in addressing environmental, social, and/or cultural concerns.
Idea	The Idea is the proposed design solution to the specific problem described in the Problem Statement. It should reflect the argument presented by the Thesis Statement. The Strategy describes how the Idea will be approached or implemented. The Idea should be original, innovative, and/or reflects a significant improvement on existing solutions to the problem.	The proposed idea is clearly and concisely defined. The proposed idea has merit as an original or innovative idea, or is an improvement on an existing sustainability solution. There is clear and solid support for the proposed idea.
Strategy	The Strategy is how the design solution (the Idea) will be approached or implemented to address the problem and achieve significant impact.	The proposed Strategy clearly presents how the Idea will be approached or implemented to solve the problem and achieve significant impact. The proposed Strategy would have a significant impact on the problem defined.

Impact	The Impact is the potential positive sustainability impact(s) that the design solution could have on the problem if implemented and scaled. The Impact(s) should be quantified and/or qualified.	The potential sustainability impact is quantified and qualified. The potential impact clearly reflects the problem and issues presented in the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge. The proposed solution has the potential to succeed in having a positive impact on the problem described in the Problem Statement. Qualitative and/or quantitative metrics are presented to assess the potential sustainability impacts.
Scope	The Scope describes what the thesis work will and will not address or cover.	The proposed Scope is clear and concise. The proposed Scope is narrow and well defined. The proposed Scope clearly addresses the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge. The proposed Scope clearly addresses the proposed Idea.
Sustainability Professional	The Sustainability Professional section presents the professional goals of the student and how the thesis work supports the student in achieving these goals.	The student's professional goals are clearly outlined. The proposed thesis work will contribute to the achievement of professional goals.

Thesis Project Proposal Rubric

Point Allocation
Each section is weighted equally and can be given up to 5 points for a total score of up to 35 points. A score of 25 points or higher is required for passing.

5 points	Excellent work	Work is exemplary. Professional, appropriate, concise, eye-pleasing, is easy to comprehend/navigate, and demonstrates creative and critical thinking skills. Work demonstrates an excellent understanding of the objective(s).
4 points	Good work	Work is complete, professional, is easy to understand, and is appropriate. May contain very few minor errors or omissions, but demonstrates a very good understanding of the objective(s).
3 points	Satisfactory work	Work is mostly complete yet is professional and appropriate. May contain minor errors or omissions, but demonstrates adequate understanding of objective(s). May take some effort to follow, navigate, and/or comprehend.
2 points	Unsatisfactory work	Work is incomplete, may have significant errors, and may be difficult to follow/navigate/comprehend. It is not clear if objectives are understood.
1 point	Work submitted but grossly inadequate	Work was submitted but demonstrated little to no understanding of the objective(s).
0 points	Work not submitted	Work was not submitted.

MCAD

Minneapolis College of Art and Design Master of Arts
in Sustainable Design

Advisor – Student Learning Contract

MA Candidate:

Thesis Advisor: _____

Anticipated Completion Date - Semester:_____Year: _____

In cooperation with your advisor, please detail your expectations and goals of your relationship with your advisor throughout the tenure of your thesis project. Attach additional pages as necessary.

COPY
NOT FOR OFFICIAL USE

Signatures of approval:

Student:_____ Date: _____

Advisor:_____ Date: _____

Director of MASD: _____ Date: _____

This document must be completed, signed by all parties, and returned to the MCAD Records Office for filing (records@mcad.edu)

Thesis Project Presentation Rubric

Evaluation Criteria

Each section and subsection is weighted as shown in the rubric below. Each subsection can be given up to 5 points. A total weighted score of 70 points or higher (average of 3.4 points per section) is required for passing.

Section [weighting]	**Description**	**Unacceptable**	**Top Ranking**
Introduction [20%]			
Abstract [1%]	The Abstract captures the entire contents of the thesis, from Introduction through Conclusion. It should cover the "arc of the story".	The Abstract is missing or not clear. The Abstract does not accurately cover the entire contents of the thesis, from Introduction through the Conclusions. The Abstract is not compelling and does not make the reader want to read the rest of the presentation.	The Abstract is clear and concise. The Abstract accurately covers the entire contents of the thesis, from Introduction through the Conclusions. The Abstract is compelling and makes the reader want to read the rest of the presentation.
Problem Statement [2%]	The Problem Statement is a single sentence (or two) that describes the specific sustainability problem that is addressed in the thesis work. The Problem Statement should be supported by the Sustainability Challenge. The Idea and Strategy should address this specific problem.	The Problem Statement is missing or not clear. The Problem Statement shows a lack of understanding of the topic area. The Problem Statement does not relate to the Sustainability Challenge. The Problem Statement does not establish a clear focus for the presentation. The Problem Statement is not written in the form of a *problem*.	The Problem Statement is articulated clearly and concisely. The Problem Statement shows an in-depth understanding of the topic area. The Problem Statement clearly emerges from the Sustainability Challenge. The Problem Statement establishes a clear focus for the presentation. The Problem Statement is written in the form of a specific problem to be solved.

Sustainability Challenge [3%]	The Sustainability Challenge builds the case that the problem is meaningful and worthy of being addressed. It should highlight relevant supporting data, insights, and/or research. (More thorough research is part of Project Execution). It should provide support for the proposed design solution (the Idea) and the strategic approach to the solution (the Strategy). It should provide support for the Problem Statement.	The Sustainability Challenge is unclear or unfocused, and is not related to the Problem Statement. The Sustainability Challenge does not make the case that the challenge is meaningful and worthy of being addressed. The Sustainability Challenge shows a lack of understanding of underlying sustainability issues. The Sustainability Challenge does not highlight relevant supporting data, insights, and/or research.	The Sustainability Challenge is clear and focuses on the Problem Statement. The Sustainability Challenge makes a strong case that the challenge is meaningful and worthy of being addressed. The Sustainability Challenge shows an excellent and comprehensive understanding of underlying sustainability issues. The Sustainability Challenge highlights relevant supporting data, insights, and/or research.
Thesis Statement [2%]	The Thesis Statement is a single sentence (or two) that presents the main argument for the proposed solution. It should reflect the Problem Statement and support the Idea and Strategy.	The Thesis Statement is missing or not clear. The Thesis Statement does not relate to the Problem Statement and/or Sustainability Challenge. The Thesis Statement does not present an argument for the Idea (proposed solution). The Thesis Statement does not establish a clear focus for the presentation.	The Thesis Statement is articulated clearly and concisely in one or two sentences. The Thesis Statement clearly emerges from the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge. The Thesis Statement presents a clear argument for the Idea (proposed solution). The Thesis Statement establishes a clear focus for the presentation.
Idea [3%]	The Idea is the proposed design solution to the specific problem described in the Problem Statement. It should reflect the argument presented by the Thesis Statement. The Strategy describes how the Idea will be approached or	The Idea is not clear. The Idea does not address the specific problem described in the Problem Statement. The Idea is not original or innovative, or does not reflect a significant improvement on existing sustainability solutions to the problem. There is not clear and solid support for the Idea.	The Idea is described clearly and concisely. The Idea clearly addresses the specific problem described in the Problem Statement. The Idea is original or innovative, or reflects a significant improvement on existing sustainability solutions to the problem. Research clearly indicates that the Idea is original or innovative,

	implemented. The Idea should be original, innovative, and/or reflects a significant improvement on existing solutions to the problem.	The Idea does not have potential to succeed in addressing the problem.	compared to solutions already in place for addressing the problem and Sustainability Challenge. There is clear and solid support for the Idea. The Idea has potential to succeed in addressing environmental, social and/or cultural concerns.
Strategy [3%]	The Strategy is how the design solution (the Idea) will be approached or implemented to address the problem and achieve significant impact.	The Strategy is not clear. The Strategy does not present how the Idea will be approached or implemented to solve the problem and achieve significant impact. The Strategy would not have a significant impact on the problem defined.	The Strategy clearly presents how the Idea will be approached or implemented to solve the problem and achieve significant impact. The Strategy would have a significant impact on the problem defined.
Impact [3%]	The Impact is the potential positive sustainability impact(s) that the design solution could have on the problem if implemented and scaled. The Impact(s) should be quantified and/or qualified.	The potential sustainability impact is not quantified and qualified. The potential impact does not reflect the problem and issues presented in the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge. The proposed solution does not have the potential to succeed in having a positive impact on the problem described in the Problem Statement. Qualitative and/or quantitative metrics are not defined to assess the potential sustainability impacts.	The potential sustainability impact is clearly quantified and qualified. The potential impact clearly reflects the problem and issues presented in the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge. The proposed solution clearly has the potential to succeed in having a positive impact on the problem described in the Problem Statement. Qualitative and/or quantitative metrics are defined to assess the potential sustainability impacts.
Scope [2%]	The Scope describes what the thesis work will and will not address or cover.	The Project Scope is not clear and concise. The Project Scope is too broad or ill-defined. The Project Scope does not address the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge. The Project Scope does not address the proposed Idea.	The Project Scope is clear and concise. The Project Scope is narrow and well defined. The Project Scope clearly addresses the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge. The Project Scope clearly addresses the proposed Idea.

Sustainability Professional [1%]	The Sustainability Professional section presents the professional goals of the student and how the thesis work supports the student in achieving these goals.	The student's professional goals are missing or not clear. The thesis work is not related to the student's professional goals. The Presentation does not demonstrate growth of the student as a sustainability leader	The student's professional goals are clearly outlined. The thesis work will contribute to the achievement of professional goals. The Thesis Presentation demonstrates growth of the student as a sustainability leader
Execution **[35%]**			
Objectives [5%]	The Objectives section describes the specific measurable results of the thesis project work. The Objectives should reflect the Idea and Strategy. The Objectives should lead to the Impacts.	Project Objectives are missing or unclear. Project Objectives are not related to the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge Qualitative and/or quantitative metrics are defined to assess when project Objectives are reached.	Project Objectives are clearly articulated. Project Objectives are clearly related to the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge Project Objectives are clearly related to the Idea and Scope Qualitative and/or quantitative metrics are defined to assess when Project Objectives are reached.
Research [5%]	The Research (section) provides clear support for the Idea and design decisions. It should demonstrate broad knowledge of relevant sources of information in the topic area. Background research should be from relevant and credible sources. Research should be cited and documented using CMS citation style.	Research presented demonstrates limited knowledge of relevant sources of information in the topic area. Background research is scarce and/or from sources that are not credible. Ideas were poorly explored and not supported with relevant research. Research is not properly cited and documented CMS citation style.	Research presented demonstrates broad knowledge of relevant sources of information in the topic area. Background research is thorough and from relevant and credible sources. Ideas were thoroughly explored and supported with relevant research. Research is correctly cited and documented using CMS citation style.

Process [10%]	The Process section presents the process that the student followed in their thesis work toward achieving Project Outcomes. It should include the steps taken and where Sustainability Frameworks were integrated and applied. It can include tangents and deadends that led to insights that impacted design decisions. This section can include the Proposed Process that the student initially planned to follow. The differences between the Actual and Proposed processes can be used to highlight insights, design decisions, pivots, and lessons learned. The Actual Process should be used to frame the Execution section.	The presentation of the (Proposed and Actual) Process is missing or unclear. The presentation of the (Actual) Process does not provide a focus for the Project Execution. The (Actual) Process does not demonstrate linkages among the problem, the research, the frameworks, and the design decisions. The presentation of the (Actual) Process does not indicate when/where the Sustainability Frameworks were used. Key learning moments and insights are not described or presented.	The presentation of the (Proposed and Actual) Process is clear and concise yet thorough. The presentation of the (Actual) Process provides a clear focus for the Project Execution. The Actual Process demonstrates clear linkages among the problem, the research, the frameworks, and the design decisions. The presentation of the Actual Process clearly indicates when/where the Sustainability Frameworks were used. Key learning moments and insights are clearly described and presented.
Application of Sustainability Frameworks [15%]	This section should describe the Sustainability Frameworks that the student applied during the project. It should briefly describe each Framework used, why the student chose to use it, and how/where they applied it, particularly in concert	Knowledge of potentially applicable Sustainability Frameworks is not demonstrated. Selection of Sustainability Frameworks is not appropriate for the Sustainability Challenge. The Project Execution does not demonstrate an understanding or appropriate application of the Sustainability Frameworks	Knowledge of potentially applicable Sustainability Frameworks are clearly demonstrated. Selection of Sustainability Frameworks is appropriate for the Sustainability Challenge. The Project Execution demonstrates a thorough understanding and appropriate application of the Sustainability Frameworks used. Insights and information that emerged from applying the frameworks are clearly reflected in

	with other Frameworks. Sustainability Frameworks include Systems Thinking, Design Thinking, The Natural Step, Biomimimcry, Cradle to Cradle, Life Cycle Analysis, etc.	used. Insights and information that emerged from applying the frameworks are not reflected in design decisions and Project Outcomes.	design decisions and Project Outcomes.
Outcome **[35%]**			
Project Outcome / Design Solution [15%]	This secion describes the design solution or outcome of the thesis project work. It should reflect the insights and information that emerged from following the Research and Actual Process, including application of the sustainable design frameworks. The outcomes or design solution should address the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge.	The Project Outcome is not clear or not concise. The Project Outcome does not address the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge. The Project Outcome does not reflect the insights and information that emerged from the Research. The Project Outcome does not flow from the Actual Process The Project Outcome does not reflect the insights and information that emerged from using the Sustainability Frameworks. The Project Outcome is not original or innovative and does not represent a significant improvement over existing solutions.	The Project Outcome is presented clearly and concisely. The Project Outcome clearly addresses the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge. The Project Outcome clearly reflects the insights and information that emerged from the Research. The Project Outcome clearly flows from the Actual Process The Project Outcome clearly reflects the insights and information that emerged from using the Sustainability Frameworks. The Project Outcome is original or innovative and represents a significant improvement over existing solutions.
Insights [5%]	This section presents the insights that emerged from applying the frameworks. These may be lessons learned, pivot points, new ideas, etc. The insights may be as or more important than the actual design solution.	The Insights are not clear or concise. The Insights do not reflect what emerged from the Research and applying the Sustainability Frameworks. The Insights do not flow from the Actual Process, or the differences between the Proposed and Actual Processes.	The Insights are presented clearly and concisely. The Insights clearly reflect what emerged from the Research and applying the Sustainability Frameworks. The Insights clearly flow from the Actual Process, or the differences between the Proposed and Actual Processes.

Functionality [3%]	The section discusses the potential functionality or viability of the outcome or design solution.	The functionality of the Project Outcome is unclear. The proposed solution is not functional. The Project Outcome does not demonstrate quality and relevant craftsmanship and technical skills.	The functionality of the Project Outcome is clear. The Project Outcome demonstrates quality and relevant craftsmanship and technical skills.
Impact [2%]	This section discusses the potential positive sustainability impact that the outcome or design solution would have if implemented and/or scaled. These impacts should reflect the Problem and Sustainability Challenge.	The Project Outcome does not appear to be viable or have the potential to have significant positive impact. The potential impacts are not clearly tied to the issues outlined in the Problem Statement and/or Sustainability Challenge. Understanding of potential impacts is not clearly demonstrated, quantified, or well documented.	The Project Outcome is clearly viable and has the potential to have significant positive impact. The potential impacts are clearly tied to the issues outlined in the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge. Understanding of potential impacts are clearly demonstrated, quantified, and well documented.
Conclusion [10%]	This section discusses how the project did or did not end up addressing the Problem and Sustainability Challenge. It also discusses logical and holistic next steps toward implementation and achieving impacts.	The Project Conclusion does not clearly describe how the project did -- or did not -- support the Problem Statement and/or Sustainability Challenge. The Project Conclusion does not present logical and holistic next steps that could be taken.	The Project Conclusion clearly describes how the project did -- or did not -- support the Problem Statement and Sustainability Challenge. The Project Conclusion presents logical and holistic next steps that could be taken.
Presentation **[10%]**			
Layout [2%]	The Thesis Project Presentation should meet the layout requirements presented in Section 9 of the MASD Handbook.	The layout requirements described in Section 9 of the Handbook have not been met.	All of the layout requirements described in Section 9 of the Handbook are met.
Organization [2%]	The Thesis Project Presentation should be well organized and professional.	The Project Presentation/paper is poorly organized and not professional.	The Project Presentation/paper is very well organized and professional. The Project Presentation/paper is easy to follow and tells a compelling

	The organization should help tell a story and guide the reader.	The Project Presentation/paper is difficult to follow and fails to tell a compelling story.	story.
Use of Visuals [2%]	The Thesis Project Presentation is more visual than a thesis paper. Visuals should be used to effectively communicate complex information, rather than relying on text and numbers. Visuals should be compelling or creative.	Visual materials are not compelling or creative. Visual materials do not present information in a way that is relevant to the reader. Visual materials do not communicate complex and/or challenging sustainability issues and information.	Visual materials provide a compelling and highly creative piece to the presentation. Visual materials are effectively used to present information in a way that is relevant to the reader. Visual materials are used to effectively communicate complex and/or challenging sustainability issues and information.
Writing Style [2%]	The text reflects academic writing style. The text avoids use of superlatives and judgemental language. The text avoids use of vague or ambiguous terms and phrases. The text consistently uses the third person.	The text does not consistently reflect an academic writing style. The text contains language or terminology that is vague or ambiguous. The text contains language that is judgemental. The text contains superlatives. The text is not consistently written in the third person.	The text consistently reflects an academic writing style. The text avoids language or terminology that is vague or ambiguous. The text avoids language that is judgemental. The text avoids use of superlatives. The text is consistently written in the third person.
Document-ation [2%]	Key and credible research should support the thesis work. This research should be documented with in-text citations and a Works Cited section using the CMS Endnote format.	Supporting documentation for the thesis work is not key and/or credible. There is not adequate documentation to support the thesis work.	Key and credible documentation provide excellent support for thesis work. Documentation follows CMS endnote formatting, as described in Section 9 of the Handbook.