

AUCA Law Division LL.M. Thesis Policy

The LL.M. Thesis Policy sets out the requirements for writing the thesis. Students should read the Policy carefully and observe it by meeting the deadlines and following other rules provided below.

I. LL.M. Thesis Description

An LL.M. thesis in the AUCA Law Division is an original, individual, intellectual, and creative activity that rounds out and caps LL.M. students' program of study. It is a significant intellectual student-driven and teacher-guided work that demonstrates and celebrates the knowledge and skills acquired during students' graduate education in AUCA. The LL.M. thesis is a research work in which students are expected to present their critical and independent analysis and cover the relevant statutory and doctrinal sources on the chosen subject in the field of law.

II. The Role of a Supervisor

The LL.M. thesis is to be written under the supervision of a full-time faculty member of the AUCA Law Division. Students must choose their thesis supervisors during the first semester of their studies in AUCA. If a student fails to choose a supervisor, the Head of the Law Division may assign one for her/him.

The LL.M. thesis is an individual student-driven endeavor. Students are responsible for research and writing. At the same time, thesis supervisors are expected to provide guidance to students in selecting and formulating the LL.M. thesis topic, discuss the thesis progress with students regularly and comment on drafts of their works throughout the thesis writing process. Students must observe deadlines set by their supervisors. If a student fails to meet the deadlines, his/her supervisor has the right to refuse thesis supervision upon consultation with the Head of the Law Division.

III. LL.M. Thesis Colloquium

LL.M. students are to participate in colloquia – regular meetings with faculty and fellow students aimed at supporting students in writing their LL.M. theses. These colloquia provide students with an opportunity to immerse themselves in academic conversation on their theses and get feedback on their works. Each year at least two LL.M. students will be selected to help in organizing the colloquia. The ultimate goal of the colloquia is to offer guidance and help to students in the thesis writing process so that they are able to complete the thesis writing requirement successfully.

IV. Thesis Format and Structure

The LL.M. thesis should be from 50 to 70 pages in length (a minimum of 17, 000 words). This does not include the cover sheet, table of contents, abstract, list of abbreviations, and bibliography. The thesis must be typed and double-spaced with one-inch (2.54 cm) margins. The font size must be 12, the font type – Times New Roman. All pages should be consecutively numbered and should appear in the lower right hand corner of the pages. Footnotes should be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals. The title page, acknowledgements, and table of contents should not be numbered.

The thesis should contain the title page, table of contents, abstract, list of abbreviations, introduction, chapters, conclusion, and bibliography. All headings and subheadings used in the text must correspond to the table of contents.

IV. Citation

One of the basic requirements of the LL.M. thesis is the citation of source materials used in the work. Failure to do it will make students vulnerable to a charge of plagiarism in which case their grade will be lowered. If the committed **plagiarism** offense is serious, students may not be permitted to graduate. Students are expected to read and abide by the rules in the Student Academic Dishonesty section of the AUCA Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct and the Law Division Rules on Plagiarism. The citation of sources should be in accordance with the Bluebook.

V. LL.M. Thesis Assessment

1. Grading Criteria

The final grade for the LL.M. thesis will be based upon the following criteria:

- originality;
- structure: focus, relevance, clarity, coherence and logic;
- analysis: depth and development of discussion, reasoning, argumentation, claims and quality of evidence;
- research design and methodology;
- compliance with formatting requirements;
- use of sources and bibliography;
- linguistic fluency and clarity.

2. Grading Process

Students are to participate in the Law Division pre-defense of their LL.M. theses in the first week of February of the second year of their studies. Law Division faculty members will evaluate students' performance. Students who do not pass the pre-defense cannot qualify for the defense and will, therefore, not be eligible to graduate from the University. The pre-defense will be graded, and the grade received will constitute 10% of the final grade.

Following the pre-defense students must submit their LL.M. theses in the written form and present them orally during the defense. Students' works must already be evaluated and graded by

the LL.M. Thesis Assessment Committee members before the thesis defense. Committee members develop a tentative grade based on their assessment of the submitted work. The final grade for each LL.M. thesis is decided by the Committee immediately after the thesis defense.

The final grade is determined based on the following components:

- evaluation of the written work by the LL.M. Thesis Assessment Committee members—40%;
- evaluation of supervisor – 30%;
- oral presentation – 30% (10% of which is allocated to a pre-defense).

To graduate, students must produce and defend the LL.M. thesis with a grade of no lower than C.

The grading system is as follows:

A	93 - 100
A-	89 - 92
B+	85 - 88
B	80 - 84
B-	74 - 79
C+	70 - 73
C	69 - 72
C-	65 - 68
D+	60 - 64
D	54 - 59
D-	51 - 53
F	below 50%

VI. Deadlines

The successful completion of the LL.M. thesis is a pre-requisite for students' graduation from AUCA. To ensure smooth and effective work on the thesis students are expected to meet the following major deadlines:

- submission of a thesis supervision form: **November LLM program year 1**
- submission of a thesis topic: **December of LLM program year 1**
- submission of a research proposal: **March 1 LLM program year 1**
- submission of the draft version of Chapter I: **May LLM program year 1**
- submission of the draft version of Chapter II: **September LLM program year 2**
- submission of the draft version of Chapter III (or other parts of the thesis as determined by the supervisor if the thesis consists only of two chapters): **November LLM program year 2**
- submission of the draft version of the entire thesis: **March LLM program year 2**
- preliminary departmental defense: **April LLM program year 2**
- submission of the final version of the thesis: **University announces (April 30 is usual date)**
- LL.M. thesis defense: **May LLM program year 2**

If the date falls on a holiday or weekend day, then the date of submission/defense is considered to be the next working day.

Students must submit an electronic and three bound hard copies of their theses by deadline announced by the program.