



**Department of Defense and Strategic Studies Graduate Program  
Declaration of Selection of Thesis or Non-Thesis Oral Examination/Research Paper Option**

*This form is to be completed and returned to the student's academic advisor upon completion of 18 credit hours of the DSS master's program.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ M Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester and Year to be Completed \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby declare my intention to (select one):



**Thesis Option:** Write an 80-page (approximately) thesis on a DSS-related topic approved by my Thesis Project Mentor. I understand that:

- I will obtain and review the DSS Thesis Project and Process Guide prior to starting my thesis project.
- The thesis must be wholly my original work.
- I am responsible to form a thesis committee consisting of a first, second, and third reader, all of whom are members of the DSS graduate faculty, as described in the DSS Thesis Project and Process Guide.
- I must observe all deadlines established by MSU and DSS relative to the timely submission of the thesis.
- In the graduation semester, I will:
  - Register for DSS 799 Thesis course. Submission of signed first reader commitment form to academic advisor required prior to permission to register for course.
  - Complete the required MSU Graduate College course entitled "Thesis and Dissertation on Brightspace" (self-enroll link: [tinyurl.com/y4dyb7b9](http://tinyurl.com/y4dyb7b9)). Course **must** be completed prior to thesis submission to the Graduate College. This is a non-credit course and will not appear on the student's transcript.



**Non-thesis Option.** Take an oral examination and write a 20-page research paper on a DSS-related topic approved by the Thesis/Non-Thesis Coordinator and my Exam Board. I understand that:

- I will obtain and review the DSS Non-thesis Project and Process Guide prior to starting my non-thesis project.
- The research paper must be wholly my original work.
- I am responsible to form an oral examination board consisting of my Project Mentor and two additional DSS faculty members as outlined in the DSS Non-thesis Project and Process Guide.
- I am required to take a 2 to 3-hour oral examination administered by the Board.
- Two weeks before the exam, I must submit to the members of the Board my research paper and two previously written papers.
- In the graduation semester, I will register for DSS 796 Directed Reading course. Submission of signed mentor commitment form to academic advisor required prior to course registration.

I understand that this declaration constitutes a commitment that can be changed only with the permission of Thesis/Non-Thesis Consultant Professor Curtis McGiffin ([CurtisMcGiffin@MissouriState.edu](mailto:CurtisMcGiffin@MissouriState.edu)). I will also inform my academic advisor of this change.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Return signed form to your academic advisor.)*