If you could give one piece of advice for a student about to start their thesis, what would it be?

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Pick a topic that you have already written about or one that you can have the extra support of an outside organization.

I would tell them to think early, think small, and pick a doable project. Don't go overboard with large ideas and try to graduate on time.

Choose something you have a passion for as soon as possible (first or second quarter of year one) and funnel all of your efforts, Candidacy Paper, Electives, Prospectus, Research toward that. Prepare the cover pages, Abstract, Table of Contents, Figures, Tables, Introduction, Lit Review, Data Collection, Results, Discussion, Conclusion, Bibliography, Appendices in separate files to collect ideas and content separately even if empty before beginning the writing process. Write whatever comes to mind as early as possible and keep polishing sections even as you move from file to another throughout the thesis project. It's ok to even start at the end as long as it all flows in the final product. It is way better to accomplish something in any section than do nothing trying to be linear in the process. I learned a lot during this project. This is more than one piece of advice but is some of what I discovered along the way because I had no idea what a Thesis was all about when I started. Thank you to all MES faculty for this marvelous education.

well I deferred a year to make sure I knew what i wanted to study for my thesis and hit the ground running when I arrived...and then...it just didn’t happen. I wasn’t able/encouraged/supported in flying solo until after case studies. This is something students should know coming into the program.

Start thinking early and don't be afraid to ask 2nd year students for help and advice!

Focus on scope and make sure that you show expertise in a specific component of your question.

Start early.

Pick a topic that is fueled by your passions. Use your thesis as an opportunity to explore your vision for your future and the career that you dream of. Your thesis can be a testing ground for ideas and a means of exploring concepts to deepen your expertise and provide credibility for continued professional work post-graduation.

Can't think of any

Get the lit review done early and turn in each draft early if you can!

Just work at it every day.

Start early!

Don't compare yourself to others, especially in terms of the thesis timeline, we are all in a different place. Also that it's OK to say no

Having a research question that you are genuinely fascinated with is vital, one with real-world application, so that your interest is carried throughout the research. Even if another research question of lesser interest has greater academic merit, it can be fraught to lose interest mid-project (as I've seen classmates do); passion is evident in both presentations and theses.

Choose a topic you're passionate about and make sure the scope is appropriate for your timeline.

Have a clear understanding of your interests and do your best to narrow focus as early in the process as possible.

Start early, do what you want to do

I would highly recommend knowing your strengths and weaknesses during the writing process. Really pinpoint when you are the most productive. Don't be afraid to ask for help. I'm not just talking about thesis help but help in general.

Think about what kind of data you will be working with and try to figure out how to use R or JMP to analyze that data when you are taking RDQM

Have your idea the summer before

Everything takes about 2-3 times longer than you expect, and if you are using lab equipment, almost nothing works exactly as it should.

Only use the labs if you plan to extend or begin early. If you begin early, make sure you have faculty support and have consulted the relevant SIT. It takes a whole quarter to write SOPs, but we only have one quarter to complete the entire thesis project.

Start thinking about it your first year

Start early if you want to collect your own data. Otherwise working with data that already exists makes things a lot easier.

Get organized early

Do not take the MES program unless you know what you will be doing for your thesis, and do not expect sufficient Lab Support.