

DISSERTATION & THESIS

HANDBOOK

Counseling Psychology
Concentrations (M.S. & Ph.D.)

Counseling Psychology Concentrations
Department of Psychological Sciences & Counseling
College of Education
Tennessee State University
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DISSERTATION & THESIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is provided as a means of introducing you to both the institutional policies and the dissertation process as structured by the Counseling Psychology Concentration in the Psychology at Tennessee State University. The handbook contains information about requirements, procedures, and guidelines which are essential to your demonstration of competence at conducting research.

INTRODUCTION

Theses and dissertation projects are considered to be capstone projects for their respective graduate degrees. They represent the culmination and integration of one's understanding of their field in general, and a specific aspect of that field – the topic of the project. They represent the candidate's initial foray into the profession as a Counseling Psychologist, and, thus, your first contribution to the field of Counseling Psychology. The thesis and dissertations are also demonstrations of your competence as a “scientist” in the *Scientist-Professional* model espoused by the APA-accredited doctoral program. Recent evidence (Lund, Bouchard, & Thomas, 2016; Neimeyer, Rice, & Keilin, 2007; Norcross, Sayette, & Martin-Wagar, 2020).) supports the benefits of attaining competence in research towards higher levels of functioning as a clinician and is, therefore, an important component of your preparation.



The successful completion of a thesis/dissertation is often considered to be a critical threshold in your preparation to function post-completion of your degree. Thus, you are encouraged to put forth your best intellectual energy and time into developing and implementing your project. The program considers this to be an important step in your development as a counseling psychologist, embedding activities and training within the scope of the program to assist you in developing the necessary skills through education, training, and experiential activities.

This handbook is designed to assist you in understanding the process so that you may make the best of those opportunities and successfully complete the requirements for this project. As the thesis or dissertation project is embedded in the counseling psychology field and perspective, it is useful to review the mission and purpose of the Counseling Psychology concentrations at Tennessee State University.

According to the Counseling Psychology handbooks, “Graduate training in Counseling Psychology at TSU is based on the *scientist-professional* model. The integration of research and practice is a central theme of counseling psychology. Problems in professional practice stimulate the need for systematic inquiry through research, the results of which then lead to modification of both theory and practice. The overall mission of the doctoral Counseling Psychology Concentration is

to develop competent, ethical practitioners and facilitators of learning with a multicultural perspective capable of integrating science and practice in a variety of settings and modalities.” (p. 4)

Furthermore, programmatic aims include the development of self-reflective professional behavior, a holistic and contextual worldview, effective skills in research methodologies and a commitment to advocacy, social justice, and systems change (p. 5). As such, theses and dissertations are expected to be grounded in the counseling psychology literature and reflect consideration of the implications of the project for advocacy, social justice, and systems change.

Research training at the graduate level is a cumulative experience. Beginning with the basic research course work, and culminating in the thesis or dissertation, numerous opportunities exist to be involved in both theoretical and applied research at progressively independent levels within concentrations and the Department of Psychology. **All students who plan to complete either a thesis or a dissertation are required to engage in a pre-thesis/pre-dissertation research experience.** More specifically, those students intending to complete a masters’ thesis are required to participate on their thesis chair’s research team for at least one semester prior to beginning the thesis project. The faculty welcomes students interested in collaborating on all levels in areas of

research interest conducting regular research groups. During New Student orientation and the first Town Hall of the year, faculty members present their research interests and solicit participation in research groups.

It should be noted that masters' students conducting a thesis project will formally enroll in their thesis Chair's section of thesis in the summer following their first year in the program and at least one semester of active participation on the Chair's research team. Students in the doctoral concentration may not enroll in Dissertation until the semester after successful completion of the Comprehensive Examinations. Similar to thesis students, after the successful completion of the Comprehensive examinations, the doctoral student will enroll in the dissertation section headed by their chair and remain enrolled through successful defense.

EXPECTATIONS OF A THESIS OR DISSERTATION

The thesis or dissertation is expected to make an original contribution to the counseling psychology professional literature. The contribution needs to be coherent, focused, and original – it does not need to be large; it simply needs to be original. For example, using a unique/different methodology or analysis to examine a topic, testing a theory or a theory's proposition in a new manner or as it relates to a new population, clarifying one aspect of the uniqueness of two related constructs, examining the impact of a therapeutic technique on a different population, or validating a measure for use with a new population would be examples of an original contribution. Here are some questions to consider as you begin to focus your ideas into a topic that could make a unique contribution to counseling psychology:

- How does this study fill a gap or niche in counseling psychology?
- How does this study expand counseling psychology's understanding of the topic or issue?
- How does this study address previously unaddressed multicultural, diversity, social justice, or advocacy issues relevant to counseling psychology?"
- Is there the potential to. . .
 - Uncover new facts, ideas, structures, or principles?
 - Identify new or previously unrecognized relationships?
 - Challenge existing knowledge structures, assumptions, or beliefs?
 - Provide new or deeper insights into an area of study?
 - Suggest new interpretations of previously identified theories or facts?

You should speak with your chair to help ensure that your ideas meet these criteria.

ROLES & EXPECTATIONS IN THE THESIS/DISSERTATION PROCESS

THESIS/DISSERTATION CHAIR

The student may select his or her Dissertation Chair from all faculty of the Core Faculty in Counseling Psychology and who hold Full Graduate Faculty status. The Dissertation Chair may or may not be the academic advisor but must be a member of the Core Counseling Psychology Faculty. The dissertation chair will assist the student/candidate with the planning and implementation of the research and will chair both the initial proposal meeting and the final oral defense of the dissertation. When the student/candidate and the chair come to agreement on a research topic for the thesis/dissertation, they will discuss the potential members of the committee.

Masters' students should anticipate a 12-15-month process, once formal work on the thesis begins, while doctoral candidates should anticipate a 2- or 3-year commitment to this process. Students working on thesis or dissertations should schedule regular meetings with their chairs and negotiate deadlines for completion of the various stages of the project (see forms to support this process in the appendix).

THESIS/DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The Dissertation Chair also works with the student/candidate and guides the selection of the thesis/dissertation committee. The committee members must hold Associate or Full Graduate Faculty status as stipulated by the Graduate School and should have familiarity with the literature in the student's area of interest, or expertise in the student's methodology. At least one of the members (or, the chair) must have expertise in the appropriate methodology (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods). There should also be a member with expertise in the relevant types of analytic techniques (parametric, non-parametric, text analysis, etc.). Finally, to the extent possible, the chair and committee members should have content knowledge of the subfield or one or more major constructs involved in the study.

The dissertation committee has the responsibility for helping the candidate plan the research project and advising the candidate concerning the quality of the proposed study and other factors, e.g. human subjects' issues. The adequacy of a proposal is judged, in general, by its contribution and relevance to the field of Counseling Psychology and by its clarity of conception and language. In terms of the numbers and sources for chairs and committees, the following guidelines are provided:

- For the **master's thesis**, the committee (in addition to the thesis chair) consists of two members from the Department of Psychology and a third member who is a faculty member from outside the Department of Psychology who acts as the Graduate School Dean's representative to the committee.
- For the **doctoral dissertation**, the committee (in addition to the thesis chair) consists of three members from the Department of Psychology and a fourth member who is a faculty member from outside the Department of Psychology who acts as the Graduate School Dean's representative to the committee. It is now optional, should the study warrant it and the candidate desire it, that an individual with appropriate qualifications from outside TSU (see the Graduate School's policy/handbook on Graduate Faculty status) may be added to the committee as a fifth member of the dissertation committee. It is the candidate's responsibility to discuss this with their Chair as early in the process as possible, due to processing time for the approval of the individual to hold "Adjunct Graduate Faculty" status in order to serve on the committee.

Once the topic and the committee members have been identified and have given their consent to serve on the committee, the names of the chair and thesis/dissertation committee are provided to the Department Head in order to establish a committee (using the Thesis/Dissertation Committee Appointment form). The Dean of the Graduate School formally appoints the Chair and committee members. The form to initiate the appointment of the fourth member is available on the Graduate School web page.

ONCE THE COMMITTEE IS FORMED

Once constituted, the Chair and the faculty members serve as the administering committee for the student's thesis or candidates' dissertation work and is the body that approves the thesis/dissertation proposal and the defense. Subsequent review/approval by the Department Chair, College Dean, and Graduate School are dependent upon the thesis/dissertation committee's initial approval of the work. It should be noted that, while the student may engage in preliminary projects related to the topic of the student's thesis or candidate's dissertation, thesis or dissertation is a demonstration of the student's or candidates' abilities to design and conduct research. Class project or a project that the student/candidate did not fully develop themselves, or one that relies on a previously structured project, regardless of authorship on that project (including research or grant proposals) are not considered appropriate projects for theses or dissertations.

Once the draft title has been approved and the committee formed, it is common practice to submit portions of the dissertation as they are completed first to the Chair for their review, feedback, and approval. Subsequent to obtaining the Chair's approval, approved portions may be forwarded on to the candidate's full committee for feedback and constructive criticism. The candidate, upon completion of the first three chapters of the dissertation and with the approval of the chair, shall work with the chair to convene a proposal presentation meeting with the dissertation committee. Once a date for the proposal presentation is arranged, the candidate will provide either via email or hard copy, the most recent version of the thesis/dissertation proposal to each committee member. **The proposal should be given to the committee not later than two full weeks prior to the decision to determine whether or not the student can proceed to the proposal meeting. During this review period, should the committee decide that the proposal is not yet ready for presentation, the committee has the authorization to cancel the proposal presentation meeting. The committee members will provide feedback to guide the revision process.** The candidate and the committee shall discuss any issues relevant to the proposal at this time. At the end of the Proposal Meeting, each member may signify approval of the proposal by signing the signature page (see Graduate School web page for form) provided for this purpose. A copy of the signature page of the approved proposal, accompanied by a copy of the proposal, will then be transmitted to the Graduate School.

CHANGES IN COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

If necessary, changes in committee membership can be made. A request for a change in committee membership can be made by the student or the faculty on the committee. Changes in committee appointment must also go through the Dissertation Chair, Department Chair and on to the Graduate School for approval.

MISCELLANEOUS CONSIDERATIONS

At any given time, faculty in doctoral degree-granting programs are expected to be chairing anywhere from a minimum of 2 to a maximum of 6 dissertations, with the understanding that these numbers may fluctuate based on the number of faculty in the program. Programs are expected to monitor dissertation workload and address concerns accordingly.

Core Faculty are both deeply committed to your dissertation progress and are not required to review your work during semester breaks or over the summer if not on contract. It is critical that you consult with your chair early on regarding her/his expectations, schedule, and preferences in this regard.

TOPICS RELATED TO EFFECTIVE THESIS/DISSERTATION COMPLETION

Two publications guide the dissertation. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association is the official style and format guide for all dissertations emanating from the Counseling Psychology Program [always use the latest edition of the manual]. The Graduate School publishes a booklet of requirements for dissertations [Guidelines for the Preparation of Dissertations, Theses, Projects, and Course Papers], which is available from the Graduate School upon request. Again, be sure to have the latest version in hand. Also, the Department has created a Dissertation Checklist (Appendix K) to guide students in developing their projects.

For writing assistance, students are expected to use TSU resources, such as the Writing Center, Writing Hub, and their chairs. Students may not hire writers or editors for their research products unless recommended by their committee.

USE OF SECONDARY DATA SET FOR DISSERTATION STUDY

Occasionally, students or candidates have the option to use large datasets collected by the department faculty or other university Primary Investigator for their dissertation. Students and candidates should work closely with their chair to ensure that the dissertation consists of original work that makes a contribution to the literature. This stipulation is necessary in order to use a secondary data set for a dissertation study.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The thesis and dissertations are opportunities to continue to develop and share your professional “voice”. Thus, you are strongly encouraged to continue the development of your “voice” as a Counseling Psychologist. That “voice” is your contribution to the field, as grounded in the knowledge of Counseling Psychology, as enhanced by knowledge from other relevant fields (i.e. - the impact of organizational culture on work functioning; the impact of economic forces on movement between social classes). You are encouraged and expected to move beyond simply reporting others’ words to integrating and interpreting trends and patterns in the literature you are reading. Based on the (1992) Tennessee Conference of Graduate Schools *Guide to the preparation of theses and dissertations*. *Adopted as TSU Graduate School Policy (2003)*.

Since conferral of a graduate degree implies personal integrity and knowledge of scholarly methods, there are three areas in which graduate students should be particularly cautious:

- (1) Proper acknowledgement of cited works,
- (2) Use of copyrighted material, and
- (3) Proper reporting of works where research compliance is required.

Any material taken from another's work must be documented, and in no case should one represent another's work as one's own, this includes information received from others during examinations or submitting another's assignments, papers, etc. as one's own. Students involved in collaborative research should exercise extreme caution. If in doubt, students should check with the current APA Ethical Principles and Guidelines, the current APA Publication Manual, and your thesis or dissertation chair. The university does investigate and prosecute plagiarism, if established.

THESIS & DISSERTATION ENROLLMENT

All master's students on the thesis track and doctoral candidates (including graduate assistants) are required to enroll in either Thesis Research (PSYC 6540) or Dissertation Research (PSYC 8110) for at least two semesters. Doctoral students are allowed to enroll in the dissertation course only the semester after they have successfully passed their Comprehensive Examinations and have become a "doctoral candidate". One enrolls in the section with their chair's name. If the chair is not on the list, contact them immediately and it will be added in. Once enrollment is begun in PSYC 6540 or 8110, continuous enrollment in that course **must** be maintained - **including summer terms** - until the thesis or dissertation is successfully defended. Once one has enrolled in the chair's thesis or dissertation section sufficiently document the thesis work prior to defending (9 hrs. for thesis; 15 hrs. for dissertation) you may enroll in the "continuation" section and pay a reduced fee. Speak with your thesis or dissertation chair to access this process. **You have six (6) years from the first semester you enroll in dissertation to complete the degree. (Note: You have a maximum of ten (10) years to complete the doctorate from the first semester of enrollment).** Students will receive an 'Incomplete' grade for each semester until the term in which the dissertation is defended. During this term, students will be given a letter grade. This signals that the project has been successfully completed. The program reserves the right to terminate students for unsatisfactory performance and progress through the program.

DISSERTATION & INTERNSHIP

Doctoral candidates are required to successfully propose the dissertation every year by October 15th before being allowed to proceed to apply for internship. In unusual circumstances, students may formally request an extension to propose. Before requesting an extension, the student should first meet with his/her Chair about

progress on the proposal and significant and unforeseen obstacles, beyond the student's control, such as major life changes (e.g. major illness, Chair unexpectedly leaves the University) that developed since beginning the project. Then, send a letter to the Program Coordinator outlining the following:

1. Reason/justification for the request
2. Summary of what has been completed
3. A plan to complete the proposal
4. A statement acknowledging the impact of the later deadline upon the Internship search process and site availability.

FORMAT FOR THE THESIS/DISSERTATION PROPOSAL MEETING

The thesis or dissertation proposal meeting is generally scheduled for a two-hour block of time. The typical sequence of activities includes a 20 - 25-minute Powerpoint-based presentation by the student or candidate, followed by a question-and-answer period with the student, and a discussion among the committee members (without the student/candidate present) regarding the student's scholarly competence, as demonstrated in the thesis/dissertation document and presentation. The presentation should present a brief summary of the literature review and proposed method. The major purposes of the proposal defense meeting are to assess scholarly proficiency in the following areas:

- The understanding of the research literature relevant to the proposed study;
- the quality of arguments for importance of proposed study; ability to support assertions with evidence, and to express reasoning clearly and compellingly;
- the familiarity with principles of research design, ability to consider study limitations and evaluate ways to strengthen the study;
- familiarity with principles of psychological measurement, ability to evaluate
- reliability and validity of chosen measures;
- clear articulation of research hypotheses;
- understanding of proposed data analysis, and choice of analyses is appropriate
- for the research hypotheses.

FORMAT FOR THE THESIS/DISSERTATION DEFENSE MEETING

The structure of the thesis/dissertation defense meeting is similar to that of the proposal meeting with a few changes. Most importantly, the student/candidate presentation time is longer and has a different focus. For the defense, the presentation should focus on the following:

- The first 5-10 minutes should address the student's interest in the study, a brief review of the most relevant literature, and the study's purpose.
- The bulk of the presentation should focus on the Methods, Results, and Discussion. Implications for future research, training/practice, and theory should all be addressed in the Discussion section.
- Including time for questions from the dissertation committee and the committee discussion of the project

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

The candidate is required to submit a Human Subject's application and receive IRB approval after receiving approval from the thesis/dissertation committee and prior to beginning data collection. The application must incorporate any changes and recommendations made by the committee, as the proposal is approved with those recommendations. The form is available online through the Office of Sponsored Research (type "compliance" into the search bar on TSUs website). The IRB Committee examines proposals for compliance with current directives regarding human subjects, animals and ethical conduct. When the proposal has been approved by the candidate's committee and the IRB, official permission will be granted to pursue the study described in the proposal. However, the student or candidate should understand that approval of the proposal does not constitute approval of the dissertation. Any major changes in the design of the proposal must be approved by the appropriate committees prior to the submission of the dissertation for defense. **The student must retain the IRB confirmation letter for inclusion in the dissertation appendices.**

When the chair of the dissertation committee determines that the dissertation is completed, you should contact all members of the dissertation committee for scheduling of the dissertation defense. **Again, your committee is to be given 10 working days to read the dissertation. At this point, the Committee should determine whether or not you are able to proceed to scheduling the defense or proposal meeting. They are also to be given a letter stating that they have the right to contact your chair directly to cancel the defense if they do not believe the dissertation is defensible at this time. Cancellations should be received not later than 48 hours prior to the defense time.** When the defense time has been determined, the Dean of the College of Education should be informed and the College of Education Conference Room, 126 Clay Hall, should be scheduled by the Chair. **Notification of defense is a public meeting and should be posted throughout the College.** The committee will make suggestions, ask questions, attempt to detect errors, and determine whether the dissertation is indeed in final, acceptable form. If the dissertation is acceptable, that is, if the candidate passes the dissertation defense, he or she is to be congratulated. At that time, the candidate has **15 days** to

make corrections and alterations required by the committee. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with all deadlines established by the Graduate School for turning in examination copies, final copies, applications, etc. and to meet all Graduate school deadlines and requirements. Again, students are reminded that they must obtain a copy of the most current Guidelines for the Preparation of Dissertations, These, Projects, and Course Papers. This document is available through the Graduate School and published on their website.

DEPARTMENT FACULTY AVAILABLE FOR THESIS & DISSERTATIONS

In the tables below, those faculty members with "Full" Graduate Faculty status, and are thus, able to chair dissertations and theses are indicated with a plus sign (+) next to their name. Those faculty members holding Associate Faculty Status, and therefore are able to be committee members, but not chair, are listed with an asterisk (*) next to their name. As a reminder, dissertations must be chaired by a Counseling Psychology Core Faculty member (or, Program Faculty in the table below).

PROGRAM FACULTY (+ MEANS AVAILABLE FOR CHAIRING AND * MEANS AVAILABLE FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP)

The Counseling Psychology concentration has faculty members with diverse backgrounds and research interests. The core faculty members associated with the concentration are:

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Campbell, James L., Ph.D.+ (Oklahoma State University) | Male gender role issues; couples and family counseling; supervision/training |
| Marie S. Hammond, Ph.D. + (University of Missouri-Columbia) | Vocational identity, African American Career development and decision-making, STEM student career development, culturally-appropriate assessment development, persistence of African American and other URM groups, intersectionality, personality |
| Esther Mendez Lynch, Ph.D.* (Tennessee State University) | Integrated health, marginalized populations |
| Robin Oatis-Ballew, Ph.D. + (Howard University) | Women's issues, cultural competence for psychologists, multiculturalism, inclusive classrooms, and service learning. |
| Tiffany Williams, Ph.D.* (Cleveland State University) | Training, supervision, wellness, and vocational psychology among diverse/marginalized populations |

ASSOCIATE PROGRAM FACULTY (AVAILABLE FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP)

The Counseling Psychology concentration has associate program faculty members with diverse backgrounds and research interests who are available to be dissertation committee members. The associate program faculty members associated with the concentration are:

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lisa de la Mothe | Neuroanatomy/neuroscience, drugs & behavior |
| John Dossett | Sexual decision making, critical thinking, statistics |
| Megan Morrison | Perception and treatment of intercultural relationships and multiracial individuals, relationship dynamics, stereotypes and prejudice, cultural diversity, application of statistical methodologies |
| Joan Popkin | Women's issues, diversity and multicultural issues, development of children and adolescents |
| Mary Shelton | Cultural diversity on campus, trauma and Resilience |
| Josh Shive | Human factors, visual perception, auditory perception, statistics |
| Thurman Webb | School counselors and African American students, counseling in the psychology of the Black Experience |

OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS PROCESS

The major steps in doctoral study in Counseling Psychology are:

1. Year 1: Get to know the faculty and the program

- Fall - join and actively engage in the research activities of a core counseling psychology faculty member; begin research methods/statistics course sequence and related pilot study;
- Spring – continue active engagement in research team activities; continue research methods/statistics course sequence and related pilot study; Review pilot study; Review pilot study topic, faculty available for chairing/committee membership and evaluate project's potential as a Thesis; if not, work with available mentors' research/clinical expertise and discuss with faculty who might be your chair.
- Summer – reach agreement as to your chair and register for their section of thesis; discuss potential committee members with your chair and form up committee; develop plan to complete the thesis proposal by deadline with your chair; continue to refine literature search; begin organizing literature review chapter; solidify research questions; draft method section and chapter 1, again, soliciting feedback from chair and committee members.

2. Year 2:

- Fall - finalize proposal & complete final chair's review by end of September; with chair's permission, distribute proposal to committee; work with chair to arrange proposal presentation date; after successful proposal meeting revise proposal, submit IRB application and any required revisions; hopefully, received IRB approval.
- Spring - data collection; continue periodic meetings with chair; complete chapters 4 (results) and 5 (discussion) by end of January; complete revisions/additions by end of February; defend by the end of March; complete the Graduate School's online dissertation submission process and Graduate!

OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION PROCESS

The major steps in doctoral study in Counseling Psychology are:

3. Year 1: Get to know the faculty and the program

- Fall - join and actively engage in the research activities of a core counseling psychology faculty member; begin research methods/statistics course sequence and related pilot study;
- Spring – continue active engagement in research team activities; continue research methods/statistics course sequence and related pilot study.
- Summer – Review pilot study -prepare for submission as a presentation or publication, if possible; consider its potential as a dissertation topic; continue building knowledge of literature; if doctoral research sequence completed, take Qualifying Examination.

4. Year 2: Start thinking about dissertation

- Fall - Review pilot study topic, faculty available for chairing/committee membership and evaluate project's potential as a dissertation; if not, begin lit search on topic of interest; in October identify 2-3 dissertation ideas; in November begin developing 2-3 ideas related to available mentors' research/clinical expertise and discuss with faculty who might be your chair.
- Spring – reach agreement as to your chair; discuss potential committee members with your chair and form up committee; develop plan to complete the dissertation proposal by deadline with your chair; continue to refine literature search; begin organizing literature review chapter; solidify research questions.
- Summer – successfully pass Comprehensive Examination; continue work on finessing literature review (chapter 2), incorporating feedback from chair and committee members; draft method section and chapter 1, again, soliciting feedback from chair and committee members.

5. Year 3: For those applying for internship, please note deadline to successfully propose by October 15th.

- Fall - Register for Dissertation Research under dissertation chair's section; finalize proposal & complete final chair's review by end of September; with chair's permission, distribute proposal to committee; work with chair to arrange proposal presentation date; for those applying for internship, successfully propose by October 15th, otherwise propose when ready; after proposing, revise proposal, submit IRB application and any required revisions.

- Spring - Receive IRB approval and commence data collection; continue periodic meetings with chair; work to complete data gathering.
 - Summer – continue data gathering as needed; initiate trial data analysis to work out kinks; proceed to data analysis when ready and begin drafting chapter 4 (results).
6. Year 4: Typically, on internship
- Fall – continue data collection if needed; complete chapter 4 (results) and begin work on chapter 5 (discussion).
 - Spring – complete chapter 5 by end of January; complete revisions/additions; defend by the end of the semester
 - Summer – complete the Graduate School’s online dissertation submission process and Graduate!

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References

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: REQUIRED COMPONENTS FOR A THESIS/DISSERTATION

(APA and TSU Graduate School Guidelines for content and style supersede this checklist)

Introduction:

In order to ensure that students in this department are able to produce high-quality research and to communicate that research using professional standards and style, this document has been prepared to assist students and faculty serving on their committees to have a clear understanding of the basic components necessary to effectively communicate about one's research to other professionals.

Purpose:

The following is a list of components that are required to be included in all theses/dissertation proposals and completed theses/dissertations. Thesis/dissertation Chairs and Committees may require the inclusion of appropriate other material; however, this document provides a listing of the required minimum components necessary for a minimally adequate document.

Required Components:

1. Title page and front pieces, per the TSU Graduate School guidelines
2. Abstract
3. Complete Table of Contents
 - a. All subsections listed with appropriate indentation
 - b. Correct page numbers
 - c. Appendices should be indented under a "chapter" page labeled "Appendices"
4. Complete List of Tables
5. Complete List of Figures (if used)
6. Chapter 1: Introduction
 - a. Includes an overview of the study, citing only the most important facts
 - b. Purpose: to orient the reader to the topic to be considered in the thesis/dissertation
 - c. Components:
 - i. Purpose of the study
 - ii. Summary of the background on the problem the study will address
 - iii. Figure: conceptual model of the variables in the study and their relationship to each other.
 - iv. Summary statement of the precise problem the study will address
 - v. Summary statement of the significance of the study for the research literature and for practice

- vi. Specific research question(s) to be addressed.
 - vii. Definition of terms that are used in unique/specific ways for the purposes of this dissertation.
- 7. Chapter 2: Literature Review
 - a. Includes an integrated review of the literature, with appropriate subsections and summaries.
 - b. By the end of this chapter, enough evidence for the uniqueness and importance of your research study should be clear to the reader.
 - c. Organization and integration or synthesis of the literature is key to making your point.
 - d. Specific components
 - i. Overview of the subtopics that will be addressed in your study
 - ii. Background on your study (relevant facts/figures to demonstrate need for the study)
 - iii. Integrated literature review that identifies the patterns of findings in the literature and clearly points to the reasons for the “hole” in the literature that your study will fill.
 - iv. Summary of the strengths, weaknesses and the gaps in the literature.
 - v. Summary statement of the proposed research study, based upon the reviewed literature.
 - vi. Statement of specific hypotheses that will be tested.
- 8. Chapter 3: Method
 - a. Introduction stating the purpose of the chapter and providing an overview of what you will cover.
 - b. Research design for the study, including –
 - i. Statement regarding type of research: quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods.
 - ii. Statement of research design and justification for the utility of that research design in answering the research question(s).
 - iii. Description of proposed/used sample (depending upon whether this is the proposal or defense).
 - 1. For quantitative research, include a power analysis, preferably documented with an analysis from software such as G*power
 - 2. For qualitative research include a justification from the research literature for your sample size.
 - 3. For mixed-methods research, report the appropriate information for each type (quantitative and qualitative)
 - iv. Description of the proposed/completed sampling procedures utilized (e.g., purposive, convenience)
 - v. Description of the proposed/completed sample/participants
 - vi. Description of the measures, surveys, data, interviews, etc. that will form the data to be used in the study
 - vii. Description of data collection procedures
 - viii. For each hypothesis, describe the planned statistical analysis, including a justification for the use of the specific technique selected, rather than an appropriate alternative.
- 9. Chapter 4: Results
 - a. Provide an overview to orient the reader to the analyses that will follow.

- i. Remember, the description of the participants after the data is gathered is presented in Chapter 3 under the “Participant Description” subsection.
 - b. Present the results of your evaluation of assumptions analysis
 - c. Presentation of findings, usually organized by research question
 - i. State the research question or hypothesis as a sub-head, then report the results; results should be provided for each hypothesis
 - ii. Provide a report of the results of the analysis, including appropriate p-values and effect sizes (APA Taskforce, 1999)
 - 1. Check your statistics textbook for examples of how to report the results from the statistical analysis you conducted, or
 - 2. Check the SPSS text you used to learn to use this program, as some of them also contain such examples, or
 - 3. Check with your qualitative methods textbook for appropriate reporting for these types of analyses.
 - iii. Summarize findings across analyses
10. Chapter 5: Discussion
- a. Summarize the purpose of the chapter and provide an overview of the results in verbal form (no more than 1 paragraph)
 - b. Discuss the results in greater detail, as they inform, support, and/or contradict the literature.
 - c. State your conclusions about the impact of your study for research, practice, and theory construction.
 - d. Discuss the implications of the significant findings for practice, theory construction, and research
 - e. Discuss the implications of non-significant findings for stimulating further research and for refining theory
 - f. Discuss the limitations of the study for advancing the research literature and practice.
11. References (APA format)
12. Appendices
- a. IRB approval letter
 - b. Tables (one per page, APA format)
 - c. Figures (one per page, APA format)
 - d. Other material deemed necessary for inclusion by your committee.
 - e. Do not include your measures or letters of permission to use measures/participants, as those are assumed to have been acceptable, given the IRB approval.

APPENDIX B: THESIS/DISSERTATION CHECKLIST

ELECTRONIC THESIS & DISSERTATION CHECKLIST

This Checklist is used to simplify the review of your document by the Graduate School. It is to ensure that student has met all thesis/dissertation completion requirements. This form must be completed, signed by student and Chair of the Thesis/Dissertation Committee, and deposited to the Graduate School along with other documents specified in the Checklist. Do NOT submit your electronic thesis/dissertation if you have not met any requirements on this "Checklist."

PRELIMINARY STEPS

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Enrolled in thesis/dissertation credits this semester. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Successfully defended my thesis/dissertation. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Read and followed the " <i>Guidelines for the Preparation of Dissertations, Theses, Projects, and Course Papers</i> " (visit: http://www.tnstate.edu/graduate/thesesdissertations.aspx). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Followed style manual of my discipline: American Psychological Association (APA) 7 th edition, MLA 9 th , ACS, IEEE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | My thesis/dissertation consistently followed one of the above style manuals. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | My thesis/dissertation meets the university's academic integrity standards (see <i>Graduate Catalog</i>). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Committee Chair has checked my thesis/dissertation with plagiarism using Turnitin, ®, Grammrly. |

ORGANIZATION

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>Title Page</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Title Page is the first page in your document and is Page Number 1(Required) 2 inches from top of paper Title (Centered/No more than 12 words/Title Case which means first letter is capitalized and the other letters lower case, Keywords: (italicized, no more than five words) Running Head no more 50 spaces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Copyright Page (Optional and included only if the \$75/00 fee is paid) |

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Committee Page (required) a. Committee Members line up (right side) and signatures b. Graduate Dean Line |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Dedication Page (Optional) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Acknowledgments (Optional) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Abstract (not to exceed 250 words)(Required) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Contents (Required) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | List of Tables (Required if there are five or more) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | List of Figures, Charts, etc. (Required if there are five or more figures or charts) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | List of Abbreviations (Optional) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | List of Symbols (Optional) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Text is divided into chapters designated (Chapter1: Introduction, Chapter 2: Review of Literature, Chapter 3: Methodology, Chapter 4: Findings, Chapter 5: Conclusion) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | References conform to style manual of my discipline: APA 7 th ACS, MLA 9 th edition, IEEE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Appendices conform to style manual of my discipline |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Curriculum Vitae (optional) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | IRB Approval (if applicable) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | CITI Certificate (if applicable) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Instruments (if applicable) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Letters (if applicable) |

Font and Size

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Times New Roman 12pt b. Aria; 11pt c. Georgia 11pt |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|

MARGINS

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>a. Digital Copy: 1 inch top/bottom/<u>left</u>/right</p> <p>b. Bound Copy: <u>1.5 inches left</u>, 1 inch top/bottom/right</p> <p>c. 1 space after punctuation marks. (checking 5 times throughout page</p> |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

SPACING

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | All text is double spaced with no extra before or after paragraphs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | One space after period. |

PAGINATION

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Every page should be assigned a number |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The APA Style rules direct authors to start page numbering at "1" on the title page in the top right corner of the page, flush right (APA, 2020, p. 44). The page numbers should continue in that position to the last page of the document. Dec 13, 2021. This includes the Dedication, Acknowledgements, Preface. |

MISCELLANEOUS

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | There are no widows or orphans. Move any widow or orphan line to the nextpage. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | All page numbers in the Contents correspond with page numbers in the text. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | All citations in the text are included in the Reference section. |

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | After a successful defense and after the requested changes are made to the thesis/dissertation, then convert the Word file to a PDF file and upload to Tennessee State University ETD ProQuest website: https://www.etdadmin.com/cgi-bin/student/etd?siteId=52 . |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Included and typed names of committee members with each member's degree noted on the Committee Page as page ii (second page) of your manuscript. |

ITEMS TO SEND TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL (*After Electronic Submission*)

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Signed Report on Thesis/Dissertation Final Oral Examination (Defense) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Degree Works approved by advisor to verify and validate programs of study. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) “Certificate of Completion” (Ph.D. candidates only). Open https://sed-ncses.org/login.aspx to access the SED send to Graduate School . |

I, the thesis/dissertation student have checked the manuscript for all of the above items.

Student’s name (please print): _____

Signature:_____Date:_____E-mail Address: _____

I, the thesis/dissertation chair have checked the manuscript for all of the above items. I understand that I am responsible for verifying that the manuscript meets the university’s academic integrity standards and the Graduate School’s format and style guidelines.

Thesis/Dissertation Chair’s Name (please print): _____

Signature:_____Date:_____E-mail Address _____

APPENDIX C: DISSERTATION/THESIS COMPLETION PLAN OF WORK

Purpose: To facilitate realistic planning for the completion of the dissertation, given the realities of graduate study and internship.

Goal: To aid the doctoral student in realistically assessing the time it will take to complete one's dissertation, given the realities of one's particular situation and stage at beginning the process.

Directions: Working with your proposed dissertation chair over the course of a semester, develop a set of deadlines that are as realistic as possible and develop a back-up plan, should there be one or two surprises as you work towards completing your degree. During the development process, you should test out the accuracy of your estimates for completion of as many of the components (i.e., how long it takes you to read and digest a journal article) as possible.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Working Title/Topic: _____

Chair: _____

Current Status in Program: _____ Semesters: completed ____ remaining ____

Completed Milestones:

Masters': ____ Program of Study ____ PSYC 5040 ____ PSYC 5140

Doctoral: ____ PSYC 7136 ____ PSYC 7137 ____ Qualifying Examinations

Graduate-level Research Experience supportive of successful completion of a dissertation or thesis:

| Research Team Leader | Project Title/Activities | Dates of Participation (mo/yer-mo-yr) |
|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

THE (DRAFT) PLAN

| Date | Action |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Anticipated Graduation Date |
| | Dissertation Defense (typically at least 6 weeks prior to graduation) |
| | Time for committee to read final copy of dissertation (minimum 2 wks) |
| | Copy preparation, sign copy into Graduate School, and distribution of copies to committee deadline |
| | Finalization of dissertation (Chair's approval to distribute to committee) |
| | edits/corrections from editor |
| | Date for editor to finalize manuscript edits |
| | Date for Dissertation/Thesis Chair's final revisions to be completed (at least 2 wks) |
| | Date for final draft of dissertation to be sent to Chair for review |
| | Date for chapter 5 to dissertation chair |
| | Date for chapter 4 to dissertation chair |
| | Date to finish data cleaning & analysis |
| | Date to finish data collection |
| | Date to submit IRB approval |
| | Date to defend proposal |
| | Date for final draft of proposal to be sent to Chair for review |
| | Date for method chapter to be sent to Chair for review |
| | Date for introduction chapter to be submitted to Chair for review |
| | Date for final draft of literature review chapter to be submitted to Chair for review |
| | Dates for submission of various sections of integrative literature review to Chair for review |
| | Date for submission of final outline of literature review to Chair for review |
| | Date for final topic agreement with Chair |
| | Date for completion of reading/note-taking on literature |
| | Date for completion of initial literature search(es) |
| | Date for completion of identification of committee members |
| | Date for completion of initial topic agreement with Chair |
| | Date for negotiating for faculty member to chair the dissertation/thesis |
| | Date for completion of initial dissertation idea with adviser to help identify potential Chair. |

PLAN “B” (Dealing with unexpected events)

[make notes here]

APPENDIX D: HOW DO WE APPROACH SCHOLARSHIP: WHAT GOES ON IN THE KITCHEN?

Presented by Ernest T. Pascarella to the Journal Editorial Boards of NASPA and ACPA (3/20/97)

Since writing is an important form of communication, what we say must address the concerns of the readers. We desire to motivate people to THINK about the topic we are writing about. When the readers ask: “So what?” we must have a meaningful explanation for them. Hence, I have 10 . . . error 10 $\frac{3}{4}$. . . key ingredients for my recipe for successful scholarship. I must say I am a “Watchful logical positivist; and I give each manuscript a favorable eye unless it fails to meet my criteria. The writer(s) can even miss the exact measurement a little as long as they address, in some significant way, these different aspects of research. The specific ingredients are:

1. Significance Criterion
 - is the topic fundamentally important?
 - Does the study have enough detail included to be replicated?
 - Does the topic generate thoughtful consideration by most readers?
2. Theoretical Blueprint
 - Does the article have “rational validity”?
 - How have the independent and dependent variables been connected?
 - Is there continuity in the linkages between previous knowledge and new knowledge because of this research?
3. Intervention
 - Is the proposed intervention (or source of change) adequately described?
 - Can the treatment be verified and replicated?
4. Sample
 - What was the sampling selection process and was it objective?
 - Was the sample seemingly representative of the population; was the sample size large enough to be a reasonable representation?
 - Did the researchers consider “power”?
 - Did the researchers inadvertently inject any bias?
5. Dependent Variables
 - Were the variables theoretically/conceptually defined and identified as succinct “constructs” rather than arbitrary phenomenon?
 - Was there validity in the measurement of the DV?
 - Was there reliability in the measurement of the DV?
6. Operational Definitions of the Variables
 - Did the researchers name the variable correctly, and did they actually “find” this variable?
 - How did the researchers measure the variable?
7. Model Specifications
 - Are all of the variables identified? (e.g., moderating, variables?)
 - Are there alternative explanations for the results?
 - What error variance was determined to be acceptable?
 - What was the effect size?
 - What variables were controlled or what variables did the researchers attempt to control?

- What relationships were causal?
- 8. Data Analysis
 - Were the data analyses up to the task?
 - Were data adequately specified?
 - Did the researchers keep data even though they did not meet expectations or fit the model?
 - Did the researchers report data ethically?
 - Do the results “travel well?” (reliable/valid?)
- 9. Limitations to internal and external validity
 - What compromises did the researchers make?
 - Did the researchers attempt to extend the results beyond what was reasonable and ethical?
- 10. Contribution to knowledge
 - Did this research contribute to the cumulative body of knowledge?

10 ½ What are the policy implications?

10 ¾. Was the article fun to read?

Emailed by Kerry McCaig (kmccaig@arapahoe.edu) Monday, 11 August 1997, 14:12:38 -0500

(Note: typographical errors and inconsistent grammar/punctuation in the original)

APPENDIX E: RESEARCH ARTICLE CRITIQUE FORM—QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

I. BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Author:
2. Title:
3. Source:

II. SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT
2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION
3. HYPOTHESES
4. MEASUREMENTS:
 - a. Dependent Variable:
 - b. Independent Variable(s)
 - c. Control Variable(s)
5. RESEARCH DESIGN:
6. SAMPLING:
7. INSTRUMENTATION:
8. DATA COLLECTION/ETHICS:
9. DATA ANALYSIS:
10. AUTHOR'S CONCLUSIONS:

III. RESEARCHER'S CONCLUSIONS

1. Is the research design sound?
2. How is the article useful to you in your research? (See relevant themes)
3. Do you have confidence in the findings? Why or why not?
4. What significance do you see from this study for society in general?
5. What significance do you see from this study for educational administrators?

APPENDIX F: RESEARCH ARTICLE CRITIQUE FORM—QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

I. Bibliographic Information:

1. Author/s name:
2. Citation:

II. Summary of Research:

1. Summary Abstract:
2. Theory and/or Variables:
3. Methodology:
4. Population/Setting:
5. Data Collection:
6. Analysis:
7. Findings:
8. Conclusions:
9. Relevant Themes:

III. Researcher's Conclusions

1. Is the research design sound?
2. How is the article useful to you in your research? (See relevant themes)
3. Do you have confidence in the findings? Why or why not?
4. What significance do you see from this study for society in general?
5. What significance do you see from this study for educational administrators?

APPENDIX G: WORDING TO INSERT INTO YOUR IRB RELATED TO PROCEDURES FOR ACCESSING TSU STUDENTS AS PARTICIPANTS:

“The Sona System is a new licensed electronic research management system that allows researchers to either collect data through online surveys or to sign up for in-person studies. After the study has been approved by the University IRB, the assigned HS # is keyed into Sona System by the administrator. The researcher is then allowed to key in the consent form, assessments and other materials, or to set up timeslots for sign-up, in-person studies. Researchers program Sona to administer the keyed materials in a certain order (e. g., description, then consent form, then survey). In the Psychology building, the Sona System administrator (Lara Ault, Ph.D.) reviews the study information input by researchers, assuring ethical responsibility and proper research protocol.

Many psychology instructors allow their students to participate in studies for either extra or required course credit. Students are instructed that, if interested in research participation, they should create a new user account in Sona-systems, including a username and password. They then view a list of available, approved study titles and any associated pre-screening requirements (e. g., participants must be at least 18 years old). Participants select a study from the list and then read the recruitment script for each study. If interested, participants continue on to an informed consent form, which they may either accept and continue with the study or reject and discontinue the study. They may then select another if they wish, or simply exit the system. If the study is an online survey, participants will begin the survey after consenting. As with paper surveys, they are allowed to discontinue participation at any time or to refuse to answer any individual questions they do not wish to answer. If the study is an in-person study, students will read a description and view available timeslots during which the study will be offered. They will choose one that fits their schedule and will be told where they are to report and at what time. Once they arrive at the study, they will receive additional information about the study and an informed consent form that they may either agree or refuse to sign.

For online studies, once data is entered into Sona-system, the researcher extracts the data periodically and purges it from the password-protected system into an excel file to be imported into the SPSS statistical package for analysis. No one but the researcher (and instructor mentor, if applicable) can access the data, as it is password protected. When the researcher has collected all the data, he/she needs, the researcher will deactivate the study and the administrator will purge it from the system. Data is completely anonymous because no names are collected during the study. The system keeps track of who has done what study for purposes of credit for professors, but there is no way to track whose data is where in the data file. Researchers will maintain data files for as long as deemed necessary by the course instructor (in the case of a senior project class) or by the individual professor, depending on whether data are published or not. “

APPENDIX H: IRB APPLICATION FORM

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE

RESEARCH PROPOSAL FORM

Please complete this application for all non-exempt research involving human research participants and submit via electronically to irb@tnstate.edu

(1) Print the signature page for wet-sign, or use personal digital signatures

Research and Sponsored Programs Office

1st Floor, Suite 1A

SUBMISSION GUIDE

- ☐ Please answer all questions and submit your application to avoid delays
 - ☐ Submit Informed Consent documents as appropriate.
 - ☐ Include IRB approvals from collaborating institutions along with permission letter(s).
 - ☐ CITI Human Research Training Certificate(s) have been completed access [CITI here](#).
 - ☐ Provide all supporting documentation such as interview questions, survey instrument(s), recruitment materials, data-use agreements, etc.
-
-

This proposal is: (check where applicable)

- ☐ Dissertation Research
- ☐ Grant Proposal
- ☐ Funding Agency
- ☐ Master's Thesis Research
- ☐ Faculty Research
- ☐ Undergraduate Research
- ☐ Other: _____

IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION: (Complete all items. Use "N/A" if necessary).

1. Title of Proposal: _____

2. Date: _____
3. Principal Researcher: _____ E-mail Address: _____
Department: _____
4. Campus Address: _____

5. Telephone Number: _____
6. Other Researchers: _____
7. Faculty Advisor (if applicable): _____ E-mail- Address: _____
8. Former Title of Proposal (if applicable): _____
9. Identify any other previous committee reviews, dates and results: _____

10. This proposal is: _____ New _____ An Amendment
Yearly Progress Report for Previously Approved Project (only include proposed changes. Sub-Study Under an Umbrella
(e.g. Research Center, Training, Grant, etc...)

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY**RESEARCH PROPOSAL NON-EXEMPT FORM****BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM****I. Research Plan****A. Scientific rationales:****B. Specific objectives:****II. Describe types, numbers, age and sources of subjects to be studied. (From where will the subjects be recruited? How will subjects be recruited)?****III. Identify all procedures that will be carried out with each type of subject in chronological order. Attach copies of tests or instruments to be used, and consent forms.****IV. Does the project offer a direct benefit to each type of subject? (it need not)**
_____ yes _____ no. If yes describe.

- V. Describe anticipated risks, discomforts, or inconveniences that might be associated with the procedures (that are beyond what subjects typically encounter in everyday life).
- VI. What precautions will be taken in those procedures where potential risk may be involved?
- VII. What steps will be taken for maintaining the subjects' confidentiality, rights, privacy, and well being? Include plans for maintaining confidentiality of documents and data, and access to such.
- VIII. Is any element of deception of the subjects necessary for this research?"
_____ yes _____ no. If answer is "Yes" describe the nature of the deception and the procedure to counteract (undo) the deception.
- IX. Procedure for obtaining the participants' informed consent:
- A. Written consent form will be used _____
B. An oral presentation will be made _____
C. Other _____

Regardless of the method chosen, the researcher must attach to this proposal the completed consent form or a description of the alternate procedure. If no consent is considered necessary, please explain.

- X. If other institutions are involved in any way in this research sponsored by Tennessee State University, submit letters of cooperation from the administrative authority in these institutions.
- XI. The researcher agrees to seek prior approval from the committee for any changes in title, experimental procedures, informed consent procedures or working of informed consent letter, or other aspects of this proposal. The research further agrees to notify the committee immediately of any adverse effects experienced by subjects participating in this study.

SIGNATURES:

Principal Researcher Date

Faculty Advisor (if applicable) Date

Department Chairperson Date

IRB Chair or Reviewer Date

NOTE: Return completed Proposal Form and all attachments to:

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Pick up approved forms from: Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, Research and Sponsored Programs Building, Suite 1A, Tennessee State University, Box 9519, 3500 John A. Merritt Boulevard, Nashville, Tennessee 37209-1561

VP for Research and Sponsored Programs Date

APPENDIX I: EXAMPLE IRB FEEDBACK FORM

Human Participants Research Protocol # **HS**

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUEST

Please address noted areas of concern and/or recommendations presented in this document. Submit changes immediately so that your application may be processed. Until such time, your application is placed “on hold.” For additional information contact Dr. Burch-Sims at 615-963-5661 or irb@tnstate.edu. Fax number is 615-963-5071.

Corrections to IRB application

1. ☐ Please complete all segments of title page
2. ☐ All sections of application must be type-written
3. ☐ Please answer all segments of all questions
4. ☐ More detail on where participants will be recruited. (e.g., Psychology subject pool, Metro Nashville Public Schools)
5. ☐ More detail on how participants are to be recruited. If you plan to use flyers include a copy of that flyer. If you

plan to get participants from a class, include written permission from instructor. If you plan to use archival data or data from an external agency, include letter of cooperation. If you plan to get participants from a church give the name of the church and state exactly how it will occur. (Will flyers be passed out at the church? Will the pastor make an announcement during the service?) There must be enough detail so that anyone wanting to replicate your study would be able to recruit participants in the same manner you did. The following examples

do not give enough information to clearly show how participants will be recruited:

I will get volunteers from my school or church

I will get volunteers from the Nashville area

I will get students from Tennessee State University

6. ☐ Specify number of participants necessary for research; if it is difficult to predict how many participants will be eligible or attracted to your study, specify optimum number; if there is a problem in recruiting participants, and include a discussion of the problem
7. ☐ Specify age of participants, participants under the age of 18 require parental or guardian consent
8. ☐ Include a copy of the questionnaire(s), interview(s), survey(s), or other instrument(s) to be used in the **EXACT** form to be issued or presented to participants. Do not just copy the survey from a textbook. If participants will be asked to do some form of activity, include description of what they will be asked to do along with the form that you will use to score participant responses.
9. ☐ **Approval** of instructor(s), adviser(s), principal researcher(s), department head and/or director required

10. ☐ Copy of **letter of cooperation** or equivalent required. This is a letter from the external agency from which you are gathering data giving permission for you to access their data or participants. This must be on their company letterhead and signed by the appropriate supervisor.
11. ☐ How is **confidentiality** of human participants to be maintained
12. ☐ More detail on what precautions will be taken where potential risk may be involved.
13. ☐ Means of **securing** questions and other applicable documentation and data is not acceptable; needs to be secured on Campus, preferably by the researching department
14. ☐ What is the **correct** title of protocol
15. ☐ There is no **anonymity** once a name is given
16. ☐ Include more detail on procedure section. This should contain enough detail to allow another researcher to replicate your study.
17. ☐ Incentive described in order to obtain subject participation is **coercive**
18. ☐ If the test instrument is a **copyrighted** document an approval for usage is required
19. ☐ **Course credit** is not considered a benefit
20. ☐ As a rule researchers should avoid using their own patients, students, clients, etc. As research participants; subtle coercion often occurs when a potential research participants is also one of the aforementioned; if there is good scientific rationale for using these participants the following issues should receive special consideration.
21. ☐ Did not complete IRB Training. Please see <http://www.tnstate.edu/interior.asp?ptid=1&mid=1136>

Complete training course and submit certificate of completion.

Corrections to Informed Consent Form

1. ☐ Tell participants– Amount of time required to complete surveys
 2. ☐ Tell participants – Participation is voluntary
 3. ☐ Tell participants – Participants may refuse to answer any questions they choose or withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequences.
- ☐ Tell participants – Any potential risks of participation. If there are none anticipated, state that.
- ☐ Tell participants – Exactly what participants will be expected to do. (eg. Fill out a survey, and have blood pressure measured)
27. ☐ Tell participants - Contact information. They need to know whom to contact if they have questions or

concerns. Typically a phone number is given since many people who are not college related do not have email addresses. Make sure that you give them a copy of the consent form to keep.

28. ☐ Missing Informed Consent Document. Please submit.

Additional Comments: Item

APPENDIX J: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

1. *What is this letter all about?*

The purpose of this document is to provide you with the most up to date information concerning the process of preparing theses and dissertation. As additional information becomes available this document will be revised. This document however refers only to the **process**. For information on style, formatting, content, and actually writing up the text, refer to the graduate school guidelines and the APA style manual. On the following page are listed frequently asked questions about theses and dissertations along with the number that identifies the section where the information may be found.

2. *How do I get started writing a thesis or dissertation?*

Meet with your academic advisor. This person will tell you how the process works and will direct you as to what you must do next. If eligible and willing this person may serve as your thesis/dissertation chair.

3. *How do I find a topic for my thesis or dissertation?*

During your tenure at Tennessee State University, you should have identified an area or areas of interest. While the student is largely responsible for identifying a research topic it must be consistent with the research expertise of faculty. At many schools, the student selects a topic that is closely related to the research interests of his/her mentor. Students who choose a topic similar to the research interests of faculty are most likely to get the benefit of the mentor's expertise in that area.

4. *In What Class (es) Should I Be Enrolled?*

PSYC 6540 for Thesis

PSYC 8110 for Dissertation

During your first semester of thesis or dissertation sign up for the section of the person who will serve as your chairperson. (Note: this is not necessarily your academic advisor.) Thesis and dissertation courses are available at a reduced fee (\$35) depending on how many times you have enrolled in the course. **The reduced fee is available for students working on a master's thesis starting with their 2nd semester of enrollment in thesis.** Starting with your second enrollment sign up for PSYC 6540.35 (thesis continuation section with a reduced fee). **The reduced fee is available for students working on a doctoral dissertation starting with their 6th semester of enrollment in thesis.** Starting with your 6th enrollment sign up for PSYC 8110.35 (dissertation continuation section with a reduced fee).

5. *Thesis and dissertation sections are often scheduled for Saturdays or very early in the morning. Does this class actually meet?*

Students enrolled for thesis or dissertation writing do not meet as a class. The times are listed on the schedule because every class must have a day and time listed. Students enrolled for thesis or dissertation are to contact the committee chair and set up actual meeting times.

6. Must my academic advisor also be my thesis/dissertation chairperson?

No, your academic advisor may serve as your advisor if similarity of research interests and time availability allow. However, this person is **not required** to serve in this capacity. In this case, you may elect to approach someone else. Typically, the person who serves as your chair is someone with expertise in your chosen area of research. Please refer to “faculty areas of research” elsewhere in this document.

7. Describe the composition of my committees.

The committee is established jointly by the student and thesis/dissertation chair. The composition of the committee varies depending on (1) how far along you are in the process and (2) whether you are working on a thesis or a dissertation. Student work on a thesis or dissertation is guided by a **committee**. The **composition** of this committee varies depending on whether you are preparing a thesis or a dissertation.

- **Thesis committee** - The thesis committee consists of **three faculty** members who hold **graduate faculty status**. At least two of them must be faculty members from the department in which the degree is sought. The third committee member may either be (1) a member of the graduate faculty from the area in which you plan to receive the degree or (2) this person may be an external graduate faculty member from a closely related department. Your chairperson will be instrumental in identifying this person. At the time of the thesis defense (not to be confused with your proposal meeting), a **fourth committee member from an external department** is added to the committee. This external person is typically identified by the dissertation/thesis chairperson or the Dean of the graduate school. If desired, it is permissible to add the external member at the same time that the committee is identified, thus creating a four-member committee. If this latter scenario is chosen, at the time of the thesis defense, no additional committee members are required. The four committee members will be sufficient.
- **Dissertation committee** - The dissertation committee consists of **four faculty members who have graduate faculty status**. At least three of them must be faculty members from the department in which the degree is sought. The **fourth member** must be a member of the graduate faculty from a closely related department. This external person is typically identified by the thesis or the Dean of the graduate school. **For dissertations, all four members of the committee must be in place prior to the proposal meeting.** For the actual dissertation defense, a total of four committee members (three internal, one external) are required. Since the composition of the committee already includes these people, the committee may serve as the **entire** committee in front of which the student will defend her/his dissertation.

8. What is the difference between a proposal meeting and a thesis/dissertation defense?

For both theses and dissertations there are two meetings that must take place. The first is called a proposal meeting. The second is called a thesis or dissertation defense.

- **Proposal meeting: a formal presentation** of your proposed research given to your committee. All members of the committee **must be present**. **Committee members must be given a paper copy of what you will present at least two weeks prior to the defense.** The purpose of this defense is to lend clarity to your proposal and to allow you to make any changes recommended by your committee prior to data collection. (FYI- It often works well when this is done as a PowerPoint presentation.)

- **Thesis/dissertation defense:** a formal defense of the completed thesis or dissertation. Typically, you will first be introduced by your thesis/dissertation advisor who will ask you to tell a little about yourself, how you came to be interested in that topic, and to discuss the research project, your findings and implications. All committee members (and the external committee member for theses) **must** be present. **Committee members must be given a paper copy of what you will defend at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense.** (FYI- See paragraph above.)

9. *Can a part-time (adjunct) faculty member or a faculty member from another institution serve on a thesis or dissertation committee?*

- A part-time (adjunct) faculty member who has graduate faculty status may serve on a thesis/dissertation committee; however, this person may not chair the committee. Contact the department head to find out if a particular adjunct faculty member may serve in this capacity.
- Faculty from other institutions cannot serve on thesis/dissertation committees.
- The external member must have knowledge of your content area. This person must not be selected just for the convenience of scheduling.

10. *What if a committee member cannot make it to my proposal or defense meeting but has already read my paper and told me that it was fine?*

All committee members (and the external committee member for theses) **must** be present. Otherwise, the meeting must be rescheduled.

11. *After my committee members have received my thesis or dissertation, how will I know if they approve the work I have done so far?*

Committee members must each sign a document saying that they have no major problems with the work done thus far and that it is recommended that the meeting or defense take place. This approval must be given by each committee member **no less than 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting**. The meeting or defense will not be allowed without this written approval.

12. *Whose responsibility is it to make accommodations for faculty with various disabilities?*

It is the student's responsibility to check with each committee member and assess what if any accommodations are needed. This may mean for example, preparing larger copies of text for those who are visually impaired, or getting auditory amplification as needed. If the student requires help in making these accommodations, it is up to the committee chair to provide assistance.

13. *Is it OK to communicate with my committee by e-mail?*

Generally, it is better to communicate verbally than by e-mail. For instance, if you decide to email a meeting date to your committee you run the risk of some committee members not being informed for a number of reasons including: 1) e-mail may be down, 2) incorrect address, 3) email was delivered but not read until after the proposed meeting date. Similarly, do not assume that, just because you left a voicemail, it has been heard. **If you do send an e-mail or voice mail, make sure that you actually talk to the person and let them know that you have done so.**

14. *Whose responsibility is it to schedule a room for meetings and to secure necessary equipment?*

It is the responsibility of the committee chair to schedule a room for meetings and to schedule the use of equipment. The student, however, may be responsible for picking up the equipment once it has been scheduled.

15. *How far in advance must I schedule my thesis or dissertation meeting/defense?*

All committee members must receive the complete document for thesis or dissertation no less than **ten (10)** working days prior to the proposed meeting or defense date. For the proposal meeting this consists of the first three chapters (i.e. introduction, literature review, method). For the defense meeting this document refers to the complete thesis or dissertation.

16. *Can a scheduled meeting ever be cancelled?*

A meeting can be cancelled by the student or any committee member as long as two workdays advance notice is given.

17. *Do I really need an editor?*

Yes, all dissertations must be reviewed by an editor prior to their submission to the graduate school. The dissertation must be accompanied by a letter from the editor which states that the document was reviewed and is compliance with the most recent version of the APA style manual. While it is desirable to have theses also edited, this is not mandatory.

18. *Must I submit my research proposal to the Institutional Review Board (IRB)?*

All research projects which involve collecting data from humans require approval from the IRB. A copy of the IRB approval letter must be submitted to the graduate school along with a final copy of your thesis or dissertation. **Data collection cannot begin without written verification of IRB approval.** It would be prudent to delay applying for IRB approval until after your proposal meeting. That way, any methodological changes recommended by the committee may be incorporated into your IRB application. IRE approval will not be given if **the application is submitted after data has already been collected.**

19. *When must documents be signed in to the graduate school?*

See graduate school catalog for exact dates.

- Thesis or dissertation proposal form — due as soon as possible after defense meeting
- Preliminary copy of thesis or dissertation- **end of October for December graduation.**
- Final defense of thesis or dissertation — **early November for December graduation.**
- Final copy of thesis or dissertation — **end of November for December graduation.**
- Preliminary copy of thesis or dissertation- **middle of March for May graduation.**
- Final defense of thesis or dissertation — **early April for May graduation.**
- Final copy of thesis or dissertation — **middle of April for May graduation.**

20. Who, in the department of Psychology, can serve on thesis and dissertation committees?

A list of individuals eligible to serve as designated by the Graduate School is available through the Program Coordinator of each area.

21. What is the order in which all of these tasks must be done?

- a. Meet with academic advisor to identify thesis/dissertation chair.
- b. Once thesis/dissertation chair is identified, sign up for a section of thesis or dissertation under that faculty member.
- c. Meet with thesis/dissertation chair to identify research topic.
- d. Meet with thesis/dissertation chair to identify committee.
- e. The thesis/dissertation chair is responsible for identifying the external committee member with assistance from the graduate school.
 - Complete form: **REQUEST FOR EXTERNAL MEMBER**
- f. Work with **all members of committee (not just the chair)** on preparing your proposal first three chapters (Introduction, Review of literature, Method)
- g. When all committee members are in agreement that the proposal is ready to present:
 - complete form:
 - o **APPROVAL FORM FOR SCHEDULING OF PROPOSAL MEETING**
 - o schedule proposal meeting.
- h. **All committee members must be present at the proposal meeting.**
- i. Following a successful proposal meeting, the thesis/dissertation chair is responsible for copying all recommendations given by the committee onto the appropriate form.
 - Complete form:
 - o **REPORT ON FORMAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL PRESENTATION (for Ph.D.) or**
 - o **THESIS PROBLEM OR TERMINAL PROJECT OUTLINE (for M.S.)**
- j. After completing compliance certification, make application for approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB)
 - www.tnstate.edu -> sponsored research -> human subjects
- k. **Data collection cannot start prior to written approval from the IRB.**
- l. Conduct study under supervision of committee
- m. When all committee members are in agreement that the research project is ready to be presented schedule your final defense with the appropriate committee. See the section of this document entitled **"Describe the composition of my committees."**

- n. Committee members must have final document **two weeks prior to final defense.**
- o. Following a successful defense, the thesis/dissertation chair is responsible for copying all recommendations given by the committee onto the appropriate form.
 - Complete form:
 - o **REPORT ON ORAL DEFENSE OF DISSERTATION (for Ph.D.) or**
 - o **REPORT ON ORAL DEFENSE OF THESIS (for M.S.)**
- p. Once all requested changes have been made, submit the completed oral defense form along with 5 copies of the approved thesis or dissertation to the Department Head, who will forward them to the Dean of the College and then to the Dean of the Graduate School.
- q. Congratulations!

22. *What information is to be included in each section of my thesis or dissertation?*

Guidelines for both the sections of the dissertation/thesis and the required components for a dissertation/thesis are provided in the appendices.

23. *Must I complete my dissertation prior to applying for my doctoral internship?*

It is not necessary to complete your dissertation prior to applying for internship; however, it is necessary to have a successful proposal meeting prior to applying for internship.