

November 17, 2005

California University of PA
School of Graduate Studies and Research

STEPS IN SATISFYING THE RESEARCH REQUIREMENT

I. PAPER, PROJECT, AND THESIS

A research study may be undertaken after the graduate student has been admitted to candidacy for the Master's degree, has completed a course in Methods of Research (RES 800 or the equivalent course in the graduate student's academic area), and has chosen or been assigned an adviser for this purpose. The graduate student, in consultation with the research adviser, writes an overview/proposal of the proposed project or thesis, completes a rough draft for the adviser and then a final draft for presentation to the adviser and, if appropriate, to the committee who will schedule an oral examination with the candidate on the subject of the research project or thesis.

Students must sign up for the required research courses as specified by their departments. They may include the following:

RES 819 RESEARCH PAPER (1 credit): A written report on a specific topic of investigation, based on knowledge of the subject, acquaintance with the published literature on the subject, and accurate presentation of the findings.

RES 829 RESEARCH PROJECT (2 credits): A written report on a specific topic of investigation, based on knowledge of the subject, research techniques, and accurate presentation of the findings.

RES 849 MASTER'S THESIS (3-4 credits depending on the curriculum): A written report of an extensive research into a specific area of investigation, demonstrating knowledge of the background of the subject, the published literature of the subject, and high standards of original research and presentation. A thesis is often experimental in nature.

The Master's Thesis and the Research Project may be distinguished further from one another as follows:

The research project should make a contribution to the graduate student, either professionally or in an increased mastery of the subject matter. The project may pertain directly to the graduate student's own professional work, or it

may be a subject suggested by course work or other pertinent interests. This research project requires the approval only of the faculty adviser.

The master's thesis should make a contribution to the graduate student and to the student's field of study. It examines a subject somewhat more deeply than a research project, uses better controls, wider sampling and/or experimentation, and more of the techniques of basic research. A master's thesis is prepared under the direction of a single faculty adviser, but it is approved by a committee consisting of the adviser, another faculty member(s) from the same graduate program, and preferably a faculty member from another department or discipline.

The Master's degree must be completed within six years from the date of admission to the program. Graduate credit earned more than seven years prior to admission will not count toward the degree. Any special exceptions to this requirement must be appealed in writing to the Program Coordinator, who will in turn schedule an interview with the candidate, the Department Chairperson, and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research.

The one-credit research paper is similar to the research project, but it is more limited in scope or subject matter. The research paper requires only the approval of the faculty adviser.

The graduate student must check with his/her adviser or program coordinator to determine which of the above research requirements is mandated by the program.

II. THE ADVISER/THE COMMITTEE AND THE GRADUATE STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

When a student begins work on a project or thesis, he/she will need to work very closely with the adviser. Advisers will arrange the initial meeting and they will mutually establish subsequent meetings. It is the student's responsibility to initiate these follow-up meetings.

Advisers may differ in style and technique in the manner in which they work with students in developing the project or thesis, but generally the following:

- 1) The student will obtain the adviser's and/or departmental committee's approval of the topic selected for research.
- 2) The thesis committee will approve the student's program of study, conduct the prospectus meeting, supervise the writing of the thesis, and recommend the student for the degree to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research.

- 3) The student will prepare an outline/proposal of the proposed research study indicating the nature of the problem, the importance of the study, the procedures to be used, and any other information the adviser may suggest.
- 4) The student must, where appropriate, submit the thesis proposal for approval by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) prior to the date of the proposal meeting. A minimum of two weeks for return of the IRB forms should be expected. If incomplete or rejected, the student must make the necessary corrections and resubmit. No student research, involving human subjects, will be accepted without IRB approval.
- 5) The student will meet with the adviser as often as necessary to complete the study. Failure to meet with the adviser may result in the need to redo part, or all of the study, which may delay the date of graduation.
- 6) The adviser and committee must approve the finished research study. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the signatures on the approval page.

The chief function of the adviser is to give suggestions concerning the design of the study and to ensure scientific procedures throughout the investigation. The student must accept the full responsibility for writing details of the study. All materials, which are to be submitted to an adviser or to a committee, must be complete and word processed in the correct style. No thesis, research project, or research paper will be accepted unless the grammar and spelling are correct.

III. STYLE OF WRITING

Research studies must conform to a format and style that is recognized by the principal scholarly journals in the discipline. **Students are expected to obtain and use the style manual which is suggested by their respective programs.** Most programs in the School of Graduate Studies and Research require the use of the most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, or the American Medical Association [Manual of Style]. Copies of these manuals and other manuals may be purchased in the university bookstore (The Book Exchange, Natali Student Center) or consulted in the Manderino Library.

It is the student's responsibility to find out the discipline specific correct style manual to use.

Preliminary Pages

Preliminary pages must conform to the manuscript forms followed by the discipline and include a title page, an approval page, acknowledgements, abstract, a table of contents, and a list of tables and charts. Use the format and spacing as shown on the sample title page on page 7 of this document. The approval page of a research project differs from the master's thesis. Refer to pages 8 and 9 for the required format.

Margins and Spacing

The following margins are required: one and one-half inches for the inner or left-hand margins, one inch at the top, and one inch at the bottom. The right-hand margin should be one inch wide. The top margin on the first page of every chapter or major division must measure two inches.

With the exceptions of footnotes, lengthy quotations, and the bibliography, the entire paper should be doubled spaced. Only one side of the paper is to be used.

Body of the Research Study

The body of the research study may consist of an introductory chapter, a chapter on related literature, a chapter on procedures, a results chapter, and a chapter on the summary, recommendations and conclusions. This format may vary according to the individual department and/or adviser.

Supplementary Material

The remaining section of the research study contains a complete bibliography of sources used in the study. Appendices follow the bibliography and contain examples of test instruments, letters, etc...that were used in completing the study. If the research involves human subjects, a copy of the IRB approval must be placed in an Appendix. Each appendix should have a separate title sheet with the appropriate title (i.e. Appendix A).

IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETING THE STUDY

Typing and Reproduction

The student must submit the finished project / thesis in an electronic format (PDF) to the approved university / distributor. The document page format must be 8½ x 11 inches. The recommended font style should be Sans-serif face, i.e. Arial, Helvetica, or Verdata and must be in 12 point font, double spaced. If the student desires any bound copies, they must be printed on 20lb bond paper and submitted to the library for binding. A specific department may request or require

a bound copy for departmental use. Should the student wish to their document copyrighted, there is an additional fee that needs to be provide to the vendor. All copies must be clean, neat, and have a sharp image on the paper. The cost of binding is currently \$25.00 per copy. Cash or checks are acceptable. Checks should be made payable to California University of Pennsylvania.

V. THESIS AND ORAL DEFENSE

Students completing a master's thesis may be required to have an oral defense on the research study. This defense must be scheduled by the student, along with the thesis adviser and committee members, at a time when all are available to meet and review the presentation. In addition, the student must send via e-mail, a defense meeting announcement to all faculty members in the department and all academic administrators. At least two weeks prior to the date of the defense, the major adviser will present an announcement of the thesis title and the date and place of the examination to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research and to the university faculty as a whole. The defense must be completed at least **three weeks** prior to the date on which the degree is to be conferred.

VI. ABSTRACTS

The abstract for the research project and thesis should be limited to one page. It is recommended that the text of the abstract be singled spaced, and include the following information: title, author, adviser, date, and type of research problem (research project or thesis). The abstract should include the purpose of the study, nature of the problem, the method of research, and the significant findings and or conclusions. (page 9)

VII. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH STUDY

In order for a graduate student who has written a thesis or project to graduate in a given semester, an electronic copy must be provided according to the guidelines provided by the publisher/vendor no later than the close of the business day **two weeks** prior to the end of the semester. The advisor must review the document online and complete the necessary steps for approval and submission to the vendor. Abstracts must be included for all submissions.

VIII. GRADES FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS AND THESES

A final grade is given when the research project or master thesis has been completed. If the project or thesis is not completed in the semester in which it was registered, an incomplete grade (N) will be given. The incomplete (N) grade will be changed to the final grade when the project or thesis has been completed and signed by the adviser.

(1 ½" from top) Title of the Thesis, Project or Paper
(Centered)

(4" from top) A THESIS (or RESEARCH PROJECT or RESEARCH PAPER) (All caps)

Submitted to the Faculty of the School of Graduate Studies and Research
of California University of Pennsylvania in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Education
(or Master of Arts, Master of Science, Master of Arts in Teaching
Master of Social Work)

(7" from top)

by
Candidate's Full Name

Research Adviser, (Name)

(9 1/2" from top)
(1 3/4" from bottom)

California, Pennsylvania
2006

**CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
California, Pennsylvania**

RESEARCH PROJECT (or RESEARCH PAPER) APPROVAL

(Name of student's curriculum)
(Ex: Reading Specialist, Elementary Guidance, etc.)

I hereby approve the Research Project (or Research Paper) of

(Student's name)
Candidate for the degree of Master of Education (or Arts or Science)

Date

Research Adviser

(Print name)

CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA
CALIFORNIA, PA

THESIS APPROVAL (All capital letters)

Name of student's curriculum)
(Ex: Biology, Elementary Education, Athletic Training)

We hereby approve the Thesis of

(Student's Name)
Candidate for the degree of Master of Education (or Arts or Sciences)

Date

Faculty

Research Adviser Signature

Committee member Signature

Committee member Signature

PREPARATION OF ABSTRACT

The abstract should contain the most relevant information and findings of your research study. The abstract should not exceed 400 words. To enable you to prepare your abstract, the following format is suggested. It is recommended that the text of the abstract be single spaced, and include the following information: title, author, adviser, date, and type of research problem (research project or thesis). The abstract should include the purpose of the study, nature of the problem, the method of research, and the significant findings and or conclusions

TITLE: (all caps)