

Department of Psychology
Suggested Thesis timeline and Thesis Project and Manuscript Requirement

The thesis is the culminating activity where you bring together all the knowledge that you have learned in your graduate program.

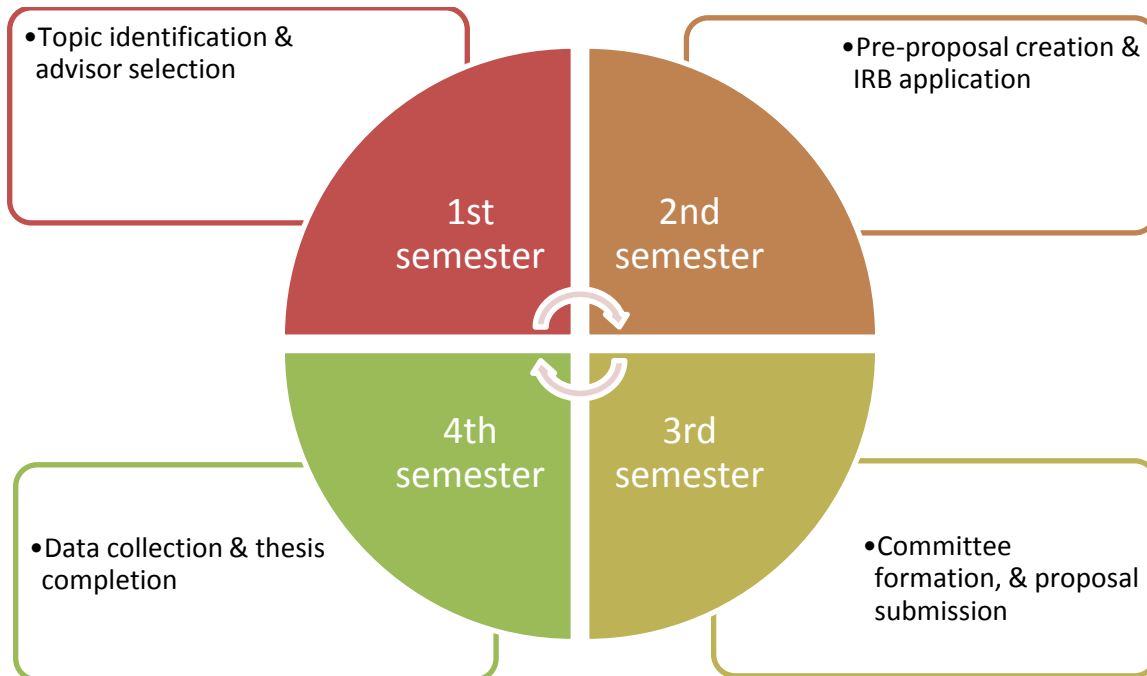
The purpose of your master's thesis is to demonstrate that you are able to explore a research question using the scientific method. This will include developing an idea into a research question, developing a method to test your question, collecting and analyzing data, and drawing conclusions. You will be expected to write up your study using APA format. Doing so means having the manuscript in a format acceptable for journal publication, which involves having an:

- Introduction section
- Literature search narrowing to your hypotheses
- Methodology
- Results
- Discussion

We also encourage you to present your study at a professional conference and/or submit it for publication in a peer reviewed journal. For assistance finding an appropriate conference, please connect with your thesis advisor and see below for suggestions.

Below is an outline that will help to guide you through the thesis process. If the schedule is followed, it is possible to complete your thesis in four semesters and avoid taking an extension, thus delaying graduation.

It is important that you read MSU's Thesis Guidelines & Procedures located on The Graduate School's website. You can also click [here](#).



First semester:

Sept-Oct (or Jan-Feb):

- Interview (talk to) professors and find out what research they are conducting. Select one professor and volunteer to assist them in their research.
- Meet with GPC to go over the Thesis process (either individually or with other students who wish to complete the thesis) during their first or second semester in the Graduate Program. GPC will create a "Required Initials" document (in Survey Monkey or MSU Survey) for each student completing a thesis, which tracks that students have completed required steps required to register for Thesis credits. The Thesis committee must indicate in this document that the steps have been completed. GPC will initial electronically that they met with the student and created this document, save a copy of this Initial Requirements document and email a copy to the student.

Oct-Jan (or Feb-Summer):

- Engage in research, read literature. Discuss with professor various related topics that might be good to pursue for your thesis.

Second semester:

Jan (or Sept):

- Select a topic to pursue
- Ask the professor to be your chair
- Discuss with them whether you will design your own thesis (and whether they are open to that) or whether you will complete part of one of his/her studies.

Feb-April (or Sept-Dec):

- Write your initial proposal (3-5 page research rationale and 2-4 page outline of methods, design and intended analysis).
- Identify 2 additional faculty members (one can be outside of the psychology department at MSU) to serve on your thesis committee
- Ask these faculty members if they would be willing to serve on your thesis committee
- Meet with committee members and verbally present proposal and get feedback from committee. Student must make sure committee members access students' Initial Requirements document in MSU Survey and indicate this step has been completed.
- Use feedback from thesis committee to finalize proposal.
- Get okay from thesis committee to proceed. Student must make sure committee members access students' Initial Requirements document in MSU Survey and indicate this step has been completed.

May/Summer (or Dec./winter break)

- Fill out and submit IRB forms.
- Receive IRB approval

Third semester:

- Collect data
- Register for Thesis (unless instructed by GPC or Thesis Advisor to do so earlier in certain situations): Adhere to the university's thesis guidelines document in order to do this correctly. Committee must make sure that Initial Requirements document indicates all required steps have been completed before signing Thesis Registration document.

Fourth Semester

- Analyze results (Should meet with Thesis Advisor at least once for guidance during this point)
- Write Draft one of full thesis for Thesis Advisor (this may go back and forth for a few drafts)
- When Thesis Advisor agrees send draft of Thesis to full committee for Feedback
- Make changes for Final defense.
- Defend thesis to committee. GPC and Thesis committee members must sign cover page of final Thesis.

Note that this is a suggested timeline that may vary slightly based on the topic of study that you become engaged in. For example, you may need to start collecting data over the summer prior to your third semester.

Master's Thesis Project and Manuscript Requirements

- 1) The research project should involve primary data collection or secondary data analyses. The project should involve either qualitative or quantitative data analyses. It should involve inferential statistics (meaning analyses should be used to state if findings are likely to exist in the population they are drawn from as opposed to only the sample that they are analyzing).
- 2) The project should involve a large enough data set in order to make inferences to the population from which the sample is drawn (sample size to be determined with the help of Thesis committee members).
- 3) The project should be sophisticated and refined enough to be considered for publication in a refereed journal in the field of psychology.
- 4) The project should be developed into a manuscript in a format similar to that which would be submitted to publication in quality peer review journals in psychology.
- 5) Students may view journal Submission Guidelines for assistance in writing the manuscript. These Submission requirements may be viewed by googling the Journal name and clicking on the link Submission guidelines (or something similar in name). You do not have to adhere to page limits (page requirements will be discussed below) The following Journals are approved for consideration (please check with your advisor to determine whether other journals may be considered:
 - A. Thesis for M.A. in Industrial Organizational Psychology:
 - a. Journal of Applied Psychology
 - b. Journal of Business and Psychology
 - c. Personnel Psychology
 - d. Journal of Vocational Behavior
 - e. Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology
 - f. Journal of Applied Social Psychology
 - g. Journal of Organizational Behavior Management
 - h. Journal of Organizational Behavior
 - i. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology
 - j. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology
 - B. Thesis for M.A. in General Psychology
 - a. Journal of Social Psychology
 - b. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology

Have GPC members add to this list and put out to faculty to do so also
- 6) The manuscript must adhere to APA format. The manuscript must also adhere to all requirements from the The Graduate School at MSU. You should obtain a copy of the Thesis requirements from the graduate school and read it closely.
- 7) The manuscript should include a Title Page, Abstract, Table of Contents, Introduction, Method, Results and Discussion Sections, and References.
- 8) The sections should include the following:

- a. The *Introduction* should be from 10-16 pages and include:
 - A1. Proposed general research question within the first few paragraphs
 - A2. a developed rationale that introduces the dependent variable, provides a brief history of the dependent variable within the context of your area of study (you do not need a complete research history of the dependent variable) and then introduces and develops the rationale (based on past research either directly or indirectly) and discusses how the Independent variable is likely to influence the dependent variable.
 - A3. Include the Research Question(s) and/or Hypotheses at the end of the introduction or throughout the development of the rationale.
- b. The *Method* should be from 7-15 pages and include:
 - B1. A discussion of your **sample** based on study relevant characteristics (age, gender, whether they are students, workers, etc. (e.g. where you obtained your population), ethnicity, number of subjects and other relevant demographic characteristics.
 - B2. Information about your **materials** (detailed information about surveys, equipment, and other materials you will use to collect data).
 - B3. Information about your **procedure** (what each subject will have to do) and what you as the researcher did.
 - B4. Information about the **research design**, including the operational independent and dependent variables, the basic set up of the research design and analyses you will conduct.
- c. The *Results* section should be from 7-15 pages and include:
 - C1. Brief summary of analyses conducted.
 - C2. Reporting of the findings within the context of the research questions or hypotheses
 - C3: Tables and figures that helped to summarize and explain the data.
- d. The *Discussion* should be from 8-12 pages and include:
 - D1. Summary of the **Findings** within the context of the Hypotheses or Research Questions. Summary of any interesting or unexpected findings.
 - D2 . Discussion of **Implications of the Research** (Practical: How your findings are practically important in the world, Theoretical: How your findings relate (are similar and different) from past research on the topic.
 - D3: Discussion of **Strengths and Limitations** of the research
 - D4: Discussion of **Future directions** (what studies should be considered or conducted next).
- e. Your Abstract is usually written once the manuscript is completed. It should be about 150 words and include the following:
 - E1. A statement of the basic purpose of the research
 - E2. A sentence of the sample (where drawn from and the number), and the basic research design.
 - E3. A sentence or two of the findings
 - E4. A sentence or two of the implications of the research.

f. Your paper should also include a Title page and Table of Contents that corresponds with requirements from the Graduate School, and references that are in APA style.

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Faculty willing to chair or serve on Master's theses and their programs of research

May 1, 2014

Faculty Name	Research	Willing to be thesis chair	Willing to serve on a committee	Access to Databases
John Adams		No	Yes	
Paul Amrhein	Addiction; Language that predicts commitment to quitting addiction	Yes	Yes	
Yoav Arieih	Attention, perception, Adaptation processes on hearing, Multi-modal information integration	Yes	Yes	
Daniel Simonet	Normal and abnormal personality in performance, relationship development, and team dynamics -The etiology of toxic leadership -Employee empowerment -Emotional intelligence and emotions in negotiations -Advanced statistical modeling and psychometrics	Yes	Yes	
Jennifer Bragger	Bias and Stereotype Threat in Personnel Processes Process; The job interview; Organizational Decision Making; Faith, values, and ethics at work; Work-balance issues; Organizational Citizenship Behavior; work attitudes; Leadership and Pregnancy at work	Yes	Yes	
Saundra Collins				
Jason Dickinson	Legal decision-making, particularly on the topics of eyewitness memory, forensic interviewing, and	Yes	Yes	

	police interrogations.			
Tony D'Urso	Child abuse, child fatality, forensic interviewing, forensic assessment & interface between psychology and law	No	No	
Kevin Askew	Technology at Work; Personal Computer Use at Work (cyberloafing); Human Factors Issues Job Performance; Counterproductive work behavior; Task Performance Quantitative Research Methods; Item Response Theory; Structural Equation Modeling	Yes	Yes	
Julian Keenan	Neuroscience and understanding the bases of choice.	Yes	Yes	
Meredyth Krych-Applebaum	The coordination processes involved in language use	Yes	Yes	
Laura Lakusta	Developmental psychology; cognitive and language development: the nature of pre-linguistic thought and how learning language may influence the way children think about the world.	Yes	Yes	
Sandra Lewis	stress and coping among Black women	No	Yes	Yes, but MSU does not support the software needed to analyze the data.
Danielle Martines	Emotional Intelligence and culture.	No	Yes	
Jennifer Pardo	the production and perception of speech.	Rather not	Yes	
Ruth Propper	lateralized cortical contributions to memory	Yes	Yes	
Deborah Ragin	health psychology/ health economics/ health disparities and	Yes for BA/MA students only	Yes for BA/MA students only	

	health systems/health policy			
Ofelia Rodriguez	LGBT identity; religiosity and substance abuse; sexual abuse; cross-cultural identity; mentoring work with at risk middle school students	Yes	Yes	
Valerie Sessa	Leadership development, learning	Yes	Yes	
Ken Sumner	work, occupations, and health: expressive writing interventions to address workplace stress and satisfaction; workplace aggression and incivility; learning disabilities and college and work experiences. Additional areas of interest: core self evolution research linking personality variables to performance, implicit measurement of attitudes, stereotypes, and self concepts, judgment and decision making research, and research related to innovation and sustainability.	Yes	Yes	
David Townsend	Cognitive Processes in Reading			
Peter Vietze	developing a model of Parenting Style in parents with young children; observations of mother-infant/toddler interaction Master Motivation in infancy, adolescents with developmental disabilities and infants/toddlers with Autism Spectrum	Yes	Yes	National Longitudinal Study of Youth; NICHD Longitudinal Study of Childcare

	Disorders.			
Deb Zellner	Cognitive influences on hedonic judgments particularly concerning food	Yes	Yes	
Sally Grapin		Yes	Yes	