Master's of Science in Nursing (MSN)

Thesis and Project Handbook

Table of Contents:

Thesis/Project Handbook

Thesis/Project Handbook

The quality of a master's thesis or project is determined by the graduate student, the student's advisor, and the thesis or project committee. The Department of Nursing at Utah Valley University (UVU) has developed this handbook to aid the student and advisor in the presentation of the work in a format that is acceptable as a scholarly publication of the Department of Nursing at UVU. This is a consensus document. As such, these guidelines are designed to provide enough flexibility to meet the needs of each of the disciplines of the Department while maintaining a style that is consistent for all theses and projects developed in the Department of Nursing.

The purpose of this handbook is to assist students in the preparation of their theses or projects. It is also a guide for those who assist with the compilation or typing of information and who may not have had experience in thesis preparation. It is not intended as rigid sets of rules that must be adhered to under all circumstances. There are many styles that are appropriate to particular disciplines. However, manuscripts should follow the traditional thesis or project format as closely as possible.

Thesis: Provides students an opportunity to complete original research on a particular subject in which they have interest. Theses have a quantitative or qualitative research focus. Students will assess the need for original research in the area of interest, identify a research question and hypothesis, develop research methodology, identify appropriate tools and evaluation methods, and discuss ways to disseminate findings to communities of interest.

Project: Provides students an opportunity to actively integrate and apply learning to the development, implementation, analysis, and evaluation of a practical and hands-on project. Projects have an educational focus and address evidence-based practice issues, concerns, or necessary changes appropriate to selected populations and nursing or nursing education areas. Students will assess needs for the project, develop objectives and outcomes, identify strategies from the literature, and select or develop instruments for collecting data, implementing activities, conducting evaluations, and disseminating the project outcomes.

Master of Science in Nursing Thesis/Project Rubric

In order for a thesis/project proposal or report to be accepted, all elements of the rubric must meet the "met" requirements.

COMPOSITION			
Elements	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
Structure	-All required elements are compellingly and coherently presented - Transitions help connect sections smoothly and seamlessly - Headings are correctly and effectively used to orient the reader - Consistently uses APA style	-All required elements are present - Some transitions are apparent between sections, but they may be sporadic and/or unclear - Headings are usually used correctly - Uses APA style	Some required elements may be missing or rudimentary - No transitions are apparent between sections - Headings are not used, or not used correctly - Applies APA style incorrectly
Writing	- Writing is clear, focused, concise, and well-organized - Contains no or very few errors in grammar, spelling, and/or punctuation - Careful construction of sentences serves to reduce ambiguity and facilitate communication - Uses language respectful of racial and ethnic identities, sexual orientation, and disabilities	- Writing is well-organized, but some sections may lack focus - Contains few errors in grammar, spelling, and/or punctuation - Sentence structure may make some passages in the writing unclear or ambiguous - Uses appropriate language to describe racial and ethnic identities, sexual orientation, and disabilities	- Writing is unfocused, rambling, and/or poorly organized - Contains many errors in grammar, spelling, and/or punctuation - Sentence structure makes the writing unclear and/or ambiguous - Uses inappropriate language to describe racial and ethnic identities, sexual orientation, or disabilities

CONTENT			
Elements	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
Literature	- Displays an extensive understanding sophisticated literature - Exhibits a command over the material; makes meaningful connections between the literature and the project content - Critically evaluates relevant literature from reputable sources	- Displays an adequate understanding of relevant literature - Exhibits an adequate understanding of the material; makes some connections between the literature and the project content - Reviews relevant literature from reputable sources	- Displays a narrow understanding of the field - Fails to make connections between the literature and the project content - Reviews, but does not evaluate literature - Does not select literature from reputable sources and/or misses relevant literature
Rationale or Justification	- Exhibits advanced, independent thinking - Adopts a strong, consistent, and justifiable point of view - Arguments are focused, logical, rigorous and sustained - Bias is openly acknowledged	- Exhibits independent thinking - Adopts a justifiable point of view - Arguments are coherent - Bias is acknowledged	- Exhibits trivial or unoriginal thinking - Fails to justify point of view - Arguments are unimaginative, inconsistent, and/or unconvincing - Bias is unacknowledged

FRAMEWORK AND DESIGN			
Elements	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
Theory	- Selects and applies a highly developed theoretical framework	- Selects and applies appropriate theory	- Theory is missing, or is minimally or inappropriately applied
Research/ Project Design	- Clearly uses highly developed research methods and tools that meets rigor - Uses multiple data sources - Makes clear connections between research questions and research methods and tools, or clearly describes how project addresses the problem	- Describes appropriate research methods and tools - Uses appropriate data sources - Attempts to connect research questions to research methods and tools, or describes how project addresses the problem	- Describes inappropriate or flawed methods or tools - Uses inappropriate or flawed data sources - Makes no attempt to connect research questions to research methods and tools, or fails to describe how project addresses the problem

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION			
Elements	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
Analysis	Clearly and accurately represents data and communicates results of research, or clearly describes the real or intended implementation of a creative project	- Represents data and communicates results of research, or describes the real or intended implementation of a creative project	- Inaccurately or incompletely represents data and fails to clearly communicate results, or fails to describe the real or intended implementation of a creative project
Results, Recommend-ations, Product	- Makes clear and meaningful connections between research questions and data analysis, or clearly describes how creative project addresses the problem - Results or product have potential to make a significant impact on the concerned population	- Makes some connections between research questions and data analysis, or describes how creative project addresses the problem - Results are solid, but expected - Poses new questions relevant to the work - Recommendations are appropriate to discussion of results	- Makes no connections between research questions and data analysis, or fails to describe how creative project addresses the problem - Results are predictable and obvious, or stated results are not well-supported by the data - Poses no new questions or recommendations for future work in the field

	- Explores interesting issues and poses new questions relevant to the work - Recommendations are insightful and appropriate to discussion of results		- Recommendations are not clearly related to the discussion of results
Contribution	- Of sufficient quality to be published in a peer-reviewed journal or to be adopted by professional educators to solve a problem - Has the potential to change the way people think about the problem	- Makes a modest contribution to the literature or to the efforts of professional educators	- Makes an insignificant contribution to the literature or to the efforts of professional educators

(Based on Rubric Developed by UVU School of Education, MEd program, 2009)

Thesis Proposal and Report

Thesis Proposal and Thesis Report Contents

The thesis proposal and eventual report of the thesis will contain and be arranged in the following manner:

- Title Page

- Approval Page

- Dedication or Acknowledgements (optional)

- Table of Contents

- List of Tables and Figures (if any)

- Abstract

- Chapter 1: Introduction

  - Background

  - Research Problem/Problem Statement

  - Purpose, Research Questions, and/or Hypothesis (Some qualitative projects will not have a hypothesis)

  - Definitions of Terms

  - Limitations

- Chapter 2: Literature Review

  - Theoretical Framework

- Chapter 3: Methods

  - Design

    - Qualitative, or

    - Quantitative

  - Subjects

- o Instruments

- o Procedure (including legal and ethical considerations)

    - ▪ Data Collection

    - ▪ Data Generation

    - ▪ Data Management

- o Data Analysis

- Chapter 4: Results

- Chapter 5: Discussion

    - o Implications

    - o Conclusions

- References

- Appendices

    - o Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter

You should consult with your committee chair about any possible variations before you begin writing your thesis proposal.

The thesis **proposal** will include all the above except:

- Dedication and Acknowledgements

- Results

- Discussion, implications, and conclusions.

Sections of the Manuscript

Title Page

The title page contains the title of the thesis, author's name, affiliation, and submission date. The title should be typed in uppercase letters, centered (left to right) and be positioned in

the upper half of the page. Do not use boldface type. Times New Roman 12-point font should be used for the title page and throughout the manuscript. Refer to appendices of this handbook for the title page template with example following.

Approval Pages

The *proposal* approval page has the names of your committee members, a line for approval signatures, and the date of the committee approval to begin the project. Please check with each committee member as to how their names should appear, including any requested credentials. A template for the *proposal* approval page can be found in the appendices. Remember, no research or project application should begin until after you have received committee and if needed, IRB approval.

The thesis report approval page has the names of the committee members, approval signatures, and date that the thesis was completed and approved by the committee. Signatures on this page indicate the thesis has been accepted as partial fulfillment of the degree requirement for graduation. A template for the thesis report approval page can be found in the appendices.

Abstract

The abstract provides a brief, comprehensive summary of the thesis. It should be readable, well organized, brief, and self-contained. The abstract is included at the beginning of the thesis report and should be no more than 250 words. The abstract is placed on its own page. The page is headed with the word Abstract as a Level I heading.

Dedication or Acknowledgement

A dedication or acknowledgment page is optional and should only be included in the thesis report, not the proposal. The dedication or acknowledgement section is used to thank

those who have been of service to the author or have provided support during the study process. It should be a separate page and not included on another page of the manuscript.

Table of Contents

The table of contents contains all major headings found throughout the manuscript. Headings and subheadings are listed exactly as they appear in the body of the paper. The Table of Contents should be developed according to the American Psychological Association (APA) format as outlined in the 6th edition of the APA publication manual.

List of Tables and Figures

Tables and figures are actually separated and listed on different pages. Each section should be labeled. Take extreme care in labeling tables as tables and figures as figures and not interchanging them. It may be necessary to complete the labeling at the end of the revisions of the manuscript so that if tables and figures are moved around, they will be labeled correctly for the final version.

- The number and title of all tables and figures should be listed exactly as they appear in the manuscript.

- Indicate the page number using the same formatting as used with the Table of Contents.

- Tables and figures used in the body of the manuscript should be necessary and clear enough to stand alone.

- Make all titles brief, but explanatory.

- Refer to the *APA Manual* (6th ed.) Chapter 5, *Displaying Results*, (pages 125-167) for suggestions on using and designing Tables and Figures.

Body of the Manuscript

The manuscript will generally be divided by content and developed into chapters. Most manuscripts have the same basic five chapters that include:

Chapter 1. Introduction

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Chapter 3. Methods

Chapter 4. Results

Chapter 5. Discussion

Although the chapters work together in order to have a great finished product, each chapter should also be able to stand alone. This means that each chapter needs an introduction, a body of text, and a summary. A brief overview of each chapter's contents follows.

Chapter 1. Introduction

At the beginning of the paper, introduce the reader to the problem being addressed. Consider why the problem is worthy of research, how the hypothesis and methods relate to the problem, what implications exist for the study, a brief discussion of what has been examined previously in other research, and what theoretical implications are examined in the paper. The introduction to the paper will address these issues in order to give the reader a solid sense of what will be examined. The introduction includes:

- Statement of the research problem
  - Background / research problem
  - Research purpose
  - Research question(s) / hypothesis
  - Definition of Terms (if needed)
- Limitations and delimitations statements

o Delimitations of a study are those characteristics that limit the scope (define the boundaries) of the inquiry

o Limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methods that set parameters on the application or interpretation of the results of the study.

Consider the importance of this research and contemplate how to present it before writing the introduction. Remember this is the place where the reader will begin to develop an opinion about the research – make a good impression.

Background / Research Problem

This section presents the problem to be investigated. The description should have enough detail that the reader can see why this is a worthy research study as well as a discussion of the context of the problem. For example, include explanations of how the problem is realized in the real world and/or the implications that might exist if it is not resolved.

Research Purpose, Research Questions, and/or Hypothesis/ Definition of Terms

Begin this section with an explanation of the purpose of the study. Clearly lead the reader to understand why the study is important, and develop a clear rationale for the thesis or project selected. Introduce the reader to the issue being addressed and discuss why this is a study worthy of examination. Review the problem(s) or question(s) and state the objective(s) of the study as well as its purpose.

This section can be divided into sub-sections according to the objectives of the research or project. The section need not be lengthy but should supply the following:

- Research questions – there are no set numbers of questions

- The purpose statement is:

  o Stated as a general goal

- Written in present tense for the proposal and past tense for the final thesis/project report
- Reflective of the purpose or intention of the thesis/project
- Aligned with the nature of the problem, research questions, and literature review
- Definitions of terms should help the reader to understand how the researcher is using specific words or phrases in the context of the thesis.
- In the thesis or project final report, the purpose should be written in the past tense

Chapter 2. Literature Review

The literature review provides a comprehensive analysis of current and relevant literature on the chosen research topic. Literature reviews should be detailed and thorough enough to give the reader a good understanding of relevant research and theory that pertain to the thesis or project. Another important purpose of the literature review is to establish a legitimate need for the thesis or project to be completed. The literature review should include the following:

- Both theoretical articles and empirical studies
- Identification of the author, date, number, and method of each study
- A critique of any inconsistencies and/or limitations of the research
- A summary of current and related research that has been conducted in relation to the problem
- A summary of the theory and/or conceptual arguments that have been posed in the literature pertaining to the problem
- A summary of current gaps in knowledge pertaining to the problem

- Statement of the study's theoretical framework

- Definition of terms if needed.

Do not use non-credible sources in the literature review. Use professional, peer-reviewed journals or other credible sources that can be accessed through the library to make the case for why this problem is worthy of examination. There are many ways to access information that will be included in the literature review. The library has a large list of credible electronic databases (i.e., CINAHL, ERIC, PsycInfo, etc.) that can give access to a wide variety of professional, peer-reviewed articles. The internet can also be a source for credible information, but caution should be used since there is no guarantee on the trustworthiness of the items found on the internet. Student researchers should consult with their committee chairs for help and direction as they begin to develop this chapter.

Write the literature review in the past tense since the research and theory has taken place previously. When citing studies that are currently under investigation, it is appropriate to discuss those in the present tense.

Chapter 3. Methods

The methods section describes in detail what the student researcher did or will do in the study. This section lets the reader know, step by step, how the study is going to be conducted (proposal) or was conducted (thesis/project report) and how the student researcher obtained the data and the procedures used to analyze the data. The section should also include:

- Design – discussion about why the specific method was chosen for the study

- Description of subjects, including:

  o How they were selected and why they are relevant to the study

  o Environmental factors relevant to the study and subjects

- Instruments – include materials used in the study

    o Reliability and validity of the instruments used

    o Instrument scoring system

- Procedure – include how you will accomplish:

    o Internal Review Board (IRB) needs

    o Data Collection

    o Data Generation

    o Data Management

- Data Analysis

    o Tests used to analyze results

    o Trustworthiness features

Chapter 4. Results

This section summarizes the data analyzed throughout the study. Present the findings in enough detail to justify whatever conclusions are being made from the data. Report *all* results according to study's hypotheses/research questions/perspectives, even those that are contrary to the study's hypothesis. It is acceptable, and in many cases desirable, to use tables and figures in the report to support the narrative. This section does not have to be lengthy, but it should be sufficient to help the reader understand the findings.

Chapter 5. Discussion

The interpretation of the results is presented in the discussion. This section examines, interprets, qualifies, and evaluates what was found. Draw inferences from the results and related literature if they are applicable.

The discussion section addresses what the findings mean and what implications the findings have for the population studied, etc. It should include strengths and limitations of the study, and address the validity/trustworthiness of the study as part of the evaluation process. Discussion should improve the reader's awareness of the results and help them understand why they should come to the same conclusions as the study.

Lastly, the discussion section should include implications for nursing research, practice, and/or education. It should also include recommendations for future research.

References

List all sources cited in the paper using APA format. Refer to the *APA Manual* for guidance in citing your references. The reference list should directly follow the Discussion Chapter and be double-spaced.

Appendices

The last section of the paper is reserved for items that are not included in the body of the text, but are essential for the reader to understand the context of the project or thesis. Examples of items that might be included in the appendices are forms, lesson plans, letters, survey instruments, or other applicable instruments. Any letters requesting use of another's instrument or copyrighted materials should also be included in the appendices. Each item in the appendices begins on its own page and includes a title, centered, at the top of the page. If including an item as an appendix, it must be referred to in the body of the paper. If it is not mentioned anywhere in the text, then it should not be included in the appendices. Items in the appendices should be listed and placed in the same order they are cited or discussed in the body of the report. IRB information and paperwork should also be included at the end of the report as part of the appendices.

Project Proposal and Report

Project Proposal and Project Report Contents

The project proposal and eventual report of the project will contain and be arranged in the following manner:

- Title Page

- Approval Page

- Dedication or Acknowledgements (optional)

- Table of Contents

- List of Tables and Figures (if any)

- Abstract

- Chapter 1: Introduction

  o Background

  o Problem/Problem Statement

  o Purpose of the project

  o Objectives or desired outcomes of the project

- Chapter 2: Literature Review

  o Theoretical or conceptual framework (where applicable)

- Chapter 3: Methods

  o Target Population, Subjects, and Setting

    ▪ Assessment of the needs of target population

    ▪ Description of the participating subjects

    ▪ Setting for the project

  o Development, Implementation and Evaluation Plan

- - Appropriateness and feasibility of project

    - Identification of key stakeholders

    - Organizational resources required

    - Strategies to overcome barriers and potential barriers

  - Instruments

    - Materials developed for the project

    - How instruments will be used in conducting the project

  - Procedures

    - How the project will be conducted

    - Legal and ethical considerations

  - Data Analysis

- Chapter 4: Results

- Chapter 5: Discussion

  - Objective achievement

  - Results related to the literature

  - Results related to the theoretical framework

  - Interpretation of evaluation and results

    - Contributions to the organization(s) or institution(s)

    - Consistency with the organization's/institution's culture

    - Contributions to the nursing profession

    - Limitations of the project

  - Recommendations

- - Implications for other programs, projects, research, education, clinical practice, etc.

    - Next steps in project or future research

  - o Conclusions

- References

- Appendices

  - o Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter

You should consult with your committee chair about any possible variations before you begin writing your thesis or project proposal.

The project **proposal** will include all the above except:

- Dedication and Acknowledgements

- Results

- Discussion, implications, and conclusions.

Title Page

The title page contains the title of the project, author's name, affiliation, and submission date.   The title should be typed in uppercase letters, centered (left to right) and be positioned in the upper half of the page.   Do not use boldface type. Times New Roman 12-point font should be used for the title page and throughout the manuscript.   Refer to appendices of this handbook for the title page template with example following.

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Dedication or Acknowledgement

A dedication or acknowledgment page is optional and should only be included in the project report, not the proposal. The dedication or acknowledgement section is used to thank those who have been of service to the author or have provided support during the study process. It should be a separate page and not included on another page of the manuscript.

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- Indicate the page number using the same formatting as used with the Table of Contents.

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The manuscript will generally be divided by content and developed into chapters. Most manuscripts have the same basic five chapters that include:

Chapter 1. Introduction

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Chapter 3. Methods

Chapter 4. Results

Chapter 5. Discussion

Although the chapters work together in order to have a great finished product, each chapter should also be able to stand alone. This means that each chapter needs an introduction, a body of text, and a summary. A brief overview of each chapter's contents follows.

Chapter 1. Introduction

At the beginning of the paper, introduce the reader to the problem being addressed. Consider why the problem is worthy of this project's implementation based on the research, what implications exist for the project, a brief discussion of what has been examined previously in other research, and what theoretical implications are examined in the paper. The introduction to the paper will address these issues in order to give the reader a solid sense of what will be examined. The introduction includes:

- Background and discussion of the current problem, including a problem statement that is the focus of the project being proposed.
- Purpose of the project. This includes how the project will help to solve the problem or change the environment in which the problem exists. This should also discuss how the project incorporates evidence into the solution proposed.
- Objectives or desired outcomes of the project

Consider the importance of this project and contemplate how to present it before writing the introduction. Remember this is the place where the reader will begin to develop an opinion about the project and its need – make a good impression.

Background / Problem

This section presents the problem to be investigated. The description should have enough detail that the reader can see why this is a worthy project and the need for it within the context of

the problem. For example, include explanations of how the problem is realized in the real world and/or the implications that might exist if it is not resolved.

Purpose

Begin this section with an explanation of the purpose of the project. Clearly lead the reader to understand why the project is important, and develop a clear rationale for the project selected. Introduce the reader to the issue being addressed and discuss why this is an area worthy of examination. Review the problem(s) or question(s) and state the objective(s) of the project as well as its purpose.

This section can be divided into sub-sections according to the objectives of the project. The section need not be lengthy but should support the need for the project based on current literature.

- The purpose statement is:
    - Stated as a general goal
    - Written in present tense for the proposal and past tense for the final project report
    - Reflective of the purpose or intention of the project
    - Aligned with the nature of the problem and literature review
- In the project final report, the purpose should be written in the past tense

Chapter 2. Literature Review

The literature review provides a comprehensive analysis of current and relevant literature on the chosen research topic. Literature reviews should be detailed and thorough enough to give the reader a good understanding of relevant research and theory that pertain to the project.

Another important purpose of the literature review is to establish a legitimate need for the project to be completed. The literature review should include the following:

- Both theoretical articles and empirical studies

- Identification of the author, date, number, and method of each study

- A critique of any inconsistencies and/or limitations of the research

- A summary of current and related research that has been conducted in relation to the problem

- A summary of the theory and/or conceptual arguments that have been posed in the literature pertaining to the problem

- A summary of current gaps in knowledge pertaining to the problem

- Statement of the project's theoretical framework (if applicable)

- Definition of terms (if needed).

Do not use non-credible sources in the literature review. Use professional, peer-reviewed journals or other credible sources that can be accessed through the library to make the case for why this problem is worthy of examination. There are many ways to access information that will be included in the literature review. The library has a large list of credible electronic databases (i.e., CINAHL, ERIC, PsycInfo, etc.) that can give access to a wide variety of professional, peer-reviewed articles. The internet can also be a source for credible information, but caution should be used since there is no guarantee on the trustworthiness of the items found on the internet. Students should consult with their committee chairs for help and direction as they begin to develop this chapter.

Write the literature review in the past tense since the research and theory has taken place previously. When citing studies that are currently under investigation, it is appropriate to discuss those in the present tense.

Chapter 3. Methods

The methods section describes in detail what the student did or will do in the project. This section lets the reader know, step by step, how the project is going to be conducted (proposal) or was conducted (project report), how the student obtained the data, and the procedures used to analyze the data. The section should also include:

- Discussion of the target population, those who will be participating in the project (subjects) and the setting in which the project will take place. Students should include how they assessed the needs of the target population and how the subjects of this project reflect the needs of the target population within the setting for the project.

- Dialogue about how the student plans to develop, implement and evaluate the project. This should include the appropriateness and feasibility of project in regard to key stakeholders and other individuals or organizations that may have interest in the implementation or outcomes of the project. The plan should also take into consideration what organizational resources may be required to complete the project and how the student plans to overcome barriers and potential barriers that may present themselves within the organization.

- Identification of appropriate instruments to complete the project. This should include all materials needed for the project including those developed by the student, and tools identified as suitable to collect data for evaluation purposes. The student should discuss how materials will be used in conducting the project.

- Detailed discussion on the procedures being used to conduct the project. The discussion should also include any legal and ethical considerations for the project. This will be an essential part of the proposal to determine if the project will need and meet Internal Review Board (IRB) approval for human subject research.
- Information on how student will analyze the data collected and use it in the evaluation of the outcomes for the project.

Chapter 4. Results

This section summarizes the data analyzed throughout the project. Present the findings in enough detail to justify whatever conclusions are being made from the data. Report *all* results according to project's stated problems, needs and perspectives, even those that are contrary to the project's expected results. It is acceptable, and in many cases desirable, to use tables and figures in the report to support the narrative. This section does not have to be lengthy, but it should be sufficient to help the reader understand the findings.

Chapter 5. Discussion

The interpretation of the results is presented in the discussion. This section examines, interprets, qualifies, and evaluates what was found. Draw inferences from the results and related literature if they are applicable.

The discussion section addresses what the findings mean and what implications the findings have for the population, etc. It should include how the objectives of the project were obtained, the results of the project in relationship to other literature, studies, and the chosen theoretical framework. The discussion section should also include:

- Contributions of the project to the organization or institution in which it was completed within its culture and mission.

- Contributions to nursing, nursing education, and the nursing profession.

- Strengths and limitations of the project along with recommendations for future use of the project and its outcomes for future researchers.

The discussion section should improve the reader's awareness of the overall project and its results and help them understand why they should come to the same conclusions as the author. Lastly, it should include recommendations and implications for nursing research, practice, and/or education and next steps in improving or further implementing the project.

References

List all sources cited in the paper using APA format. Refer to the *APA Manual* for guidance in citing your references. The reference list should directly follow the Discussion Chapter and be double-spaced.

Appendices

The last section of the paper is reserved for items that are not included in the body of the text, but are essential for the reader to understand the context of the project or thesis. Examples of items that might be included in the appendices are forms, lesson plans, letters, survey instruments, or other applicable instruments. Any letters requesting use of another's instrument or copyrighted materials should also be included in the appendices. Each item in the appendices begins on its own page and includes a title, centered, at the top of the page. If including an item as an appendix, it must be referred to in the body of the paper. If it is not mentioned anywhere in the text, then it should not be included in the appendices. Items in the appendices should be listed and placed in the same order they are cited or discussed in the body of the report. IRB information and paperwork should also be included at the end of the report as part of the appendices.

Manuscript Preparation
Thesis and Project

Manuscript Preparation

Language

While technical and research writing can be creative, it should not be confused with creative writing. Use language that is direct and concise; avoid creative devises such as ambiguity, excessive description, and irrelevant observation. Take care to eliminate redundancy, wordiness, jargon, and language that is racist, sexist, biased, disabling, or overtly stereotypical. These common errors impede the ready grasp of ideas, and tend to lead the author into embellishment and flowery writing instead of the needed scientific style. Short words and short sentences are easier to understand, but long technical terms may be more precise than several short words. All technical language should be understood by individuals within the discipline.

Use of language can help or hinder the reader. Incorrect spelling, grammar, inconsistent agreement of subject and verb, improper use of pronouns, and careless construction of sentences tend to distract the reader. Active rather than passive voice is preferred and helps focus the reader's attention, although passive voice is acceptable when you desire to focus the reader's attention to the recipient of the action rather than the actor. Passive voice is most appropriate in the methodology section of the manuscript. Pronouns may confuse the reader unless the referent is obvious; the most troublesome pronouns include *this, that, these,* and *those*. A pronoun must agree in number to the noun it is replacing. Likewise, a verb must agree in number with its subject. Singular subjects and nouns should have singular verbs and pronouns; plural subjects and nouns should have plural verbs and pronouns.

Word Processing Properties

The final manuscript should be double-spaced, error-free and printed neatly on one side of standard 8.5 x 11 inch, heavy white bond paper. Times New Roman 12-point font should be

used consistently throughout the paper, except in figures or tables where a sans serif typeface, such as Arial or Helvetica, may be used. Do not use a compressed typeface or any settings in your word-processing software that would decrease the spacing between letters or words. Default settings are normally acceptable. Type should be left -justified, leaving a ragged right margin. Words should not be hyphenated at the end of a line; let a line run short rather than break a word at the end of a line.

The first line of each paragraph should be indented ½ inch or 5 to 7 spaces. Use the "tab" key for consistency on indentations. The default on most word-processing programs is usually sufficient.   Headings should follow the Level of Headings section per *APA manual* (6th ed.) pp. 62-63.

Spacing

The final manuscript should consistently utilize one space after commas, colons, semicolons, and periods although no spaces are needed after a period in abbreviations (e.g. U.S.A.) or around colons in ratios (e.g. 1:1). Two spaces should be inserted after punctuation at the end of a sentence.

Use double-spacing between all lines in the manuscript with the exception of the reference list (refer to Reference section p. 15). This includes spacing after headings, titles, footnotes, quotations, and figure captions. Tables may be either single or double spaced. Refer to *APA manual* (6th ed.) pp. 141, 229.

Margins

Although APA guidelines suggest 1-inch margins, due to the need for binding, each page should have a left margin of 1.5 inches. Top, bottom, and right margins should be set at 1 inch.

All material throughout the document must fit within these margins, including tables, charts, graphs, page numbers, and headers.

Tables

Tables are an efficient way to present a large amount of data in a small space. Reserve tables for crucial data that is directly related to the content of the study and when the reader can more easily comprehend the information in tabular form than in text form.

Figures

Any type of illustration other than a table is labeled a figure. A figure may be a chart, graph, drawing or photograph. Figures are especially useful in describing interactions or nonlinear relations.

Pagination

Page numbers should be placed on the top right corner of each page. Numbers should appear without hyphens, parentheses, or the word "Page," and in the same size and font as the body of the text. Page numbering should begin with the number "2" on the second page of the introduction chapter.

Printing and Binding

The student is responsible for the printing and binding of the thesis or project report. Pages can be printed either single or double sided. Multiple hardbound copies are **required**. Usually hardbound copies are made for 1) the Department of Nursing, 2) the Digital Learning Center, 3) the student, and 4) if the student desires, the Chair of the student's thesis/project committee. The student may produce as many personal hard-bound copies as he/she wishes. Additional soft-bound copies may be required for the faculty committee, department and others. Students should ask their committee members of their desires for copies. Arrange the print file

according to the MSN thesis/project handbook. Electronic versions may be required, therefore signature pages and other non-electronic pages must be scanned into the electronic file as necessary. The thesis or project report must be accepted and the printing and binding paid for before students will be allowed to graduate. The IRB certification and all approval letters from districts, etc., must be included in the appendices.

For step-by-step directions on how and where to print and bind your project, see the figure on the following page. In addition to these bound copies of your final thesis/project, you must also submit a digital copy to the UVU Library Digital Collections. To do this, you should:

1. Submit a PDF (or Word) copy of your final thesis/project, and also send any audio or video files you may have included in your project to Catherine McIntyre, at

   mcintyca@uvu.edu.

2. Download, read, and sign the form for Permission to add Student Thesis to UVU Library Digital Collections (available at

   http://www.uvu.edu/library/archives/drpermissionform.php

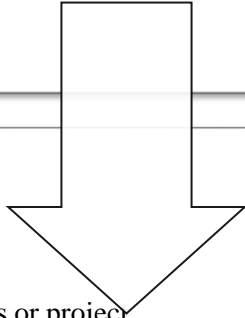   Send or deliver this form to:

   > Catherine McIntyre
   > Archivist & Digitization Librarian
   > UVU Library & Sutherland Archives
   > LI 302
   > 801 863-8821
   > mcintyca@uvu.edu

   Any further questions about submitting a digital copy to the library should be addressed

   to Catherine McIntyre at mcintyca@uvu.edu, or 801-863-8821.

Printing and Binding Instructions:

1. You have successfully defended your project. You have made any revisions your committee recommended and your committee chair has approved a final draft of your project.

2. Email a digital copy (PDF version only) to:

   Herring and Robinson Book Binders at hrbookbinders@yahoo.com
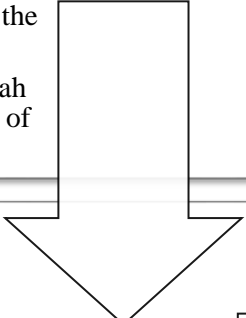
3. In the text of the email, you should:

   Clearly indicate the complete title of your thesis or project and your full name as you want it printed on each bound copy.
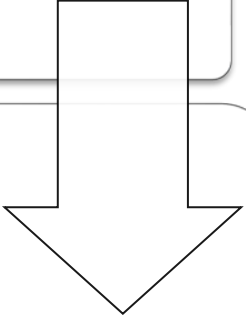
   Specify number of copies you want (minimum of 2 [1 for library and 1 for department] as many others as you desire) and whether you want double or single sided pages.

   Indicate signatures of commitee members should NOT appear on the copy that goes to the library -- leave blank lines on the page that will go in the copy for the library.

   Indicate that they should follow the specifications for Utah Valley University, Master of Science in Nursing (see also Master of Education)

4. Price expectation for students:

   •   Black/white pages $ .08/page
   •   Color pages $ .25/page
   •   Binding $32.50/hard bound book

5. Normal time to complete is 2-3 weeks from receipt of the PDF copy.

   Payment is due upon completion of the printing and binding.

   Payment can be made by PayPal, credit card, or check.

   6. You will deliver a copy to the UVU Department of Nursing MSN Program and one to the UVU Library. Others you can keep or deliver as desired.

   Bound copies will be shipped to the address supplied with your payment

APPENDICES

Utah Valley University
Department of Nursing

Thesis/Project Committee Selection Template

I, _____ (print name) would like to request the following individuals to serve on my Thesis/Project Committee. I have discussed my wishes with them, and have requested their support and help.

Signatures:

_____   _____
Xxxxxx Xxxxxx, Chair   Date

_____   _____
Xxxxxx Xxxxxx   Date

_____   _____
Xxxxxx Xxxxxx   Date

I understand that any changes to this committee will need to be approved by the Department of Nursing's MSN Committee and that the request will need to be submitted by me in writing.

_____   _____
          Student Signature   Date

The above committee was accepted on _____ (date) for the Thesis/Project Committee for _____ (student)

_____   _____
Xxxxxx Xxxxxxx   Date
MSN Committee Chair

Utah Valley University
Department of Nursing

Thesis/Project Committee Change Template

I, _____ (print name) would like to request a change in the following individuals who are currently serving on my Thesis/Project Committee. I desire to make this change for the following reason(s):

I understand that these changes are subject to the approval of the Department of Nursing's MSN Committee, my Thesis/Project Committee Chair, and the faculty member being placed on my committee.

_____   _____
          Student Signature   Date

_____   _____
Xxxx Xxxxx, Chair Signature   Date

_____   _____
Xxxx Xxxxx, Replacement Faculty Signature   Date

The above change in committee was accepted on _____ (date) for the Thesis/Project Committee for _____ (student)

_____   _____
Xxxxxx Xxxxxxx   Date
MSN Committee Chair

Thesis/Project Proposal Template

Utah Valley University
Department of Nursing

Committee Approval

of a thesis / project proposal entitled

XXXXXXXXXXXXX

submitted by

Xxxxxx X. Xxxxxxx

This thesis/project proposal has been read by each member of the student's thesis/project committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

_____ _____
Date   Xxxxxx Xxxxxx, Chair

_____ _____
Date   Xxxxxx Xxxxxx

_____ _____
Date   Xxxxxx Xxxxxx

Thesis/Project Report Template

Utah Valley University
Department of Nursing

Committee Approval

of a thesis / project entitled

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

submitted by

Xxxxxx X. Xxxxxxx

This thesis/project has been read by each member of the student's thesis/project committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

_____   _____
Date   Xxxxxx Xxxxxx, Chair

_____   _____
Date   Xxxxxx Xxxxxx

_____   _____
Date   Xxxxxx Xxxxxx

Thesis/Project Title Page Template

TITLE (ALL CAPITAL LETTERS)

by

insert your full legal name here (no credentials)

A thesis/project submitted to the

Faculty of Utah Valley University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science in Nursing

Department of Nursing

Utah Valley University

20XX

HOW TO WRITE A THESIS

by

Catherine B. Fitzgerald

A thesis submitted to the

Faculty of Utah Valley University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science in Nursing

Department of Nursing

Utah Valley University

2012

Thesis/Project Copyright Template