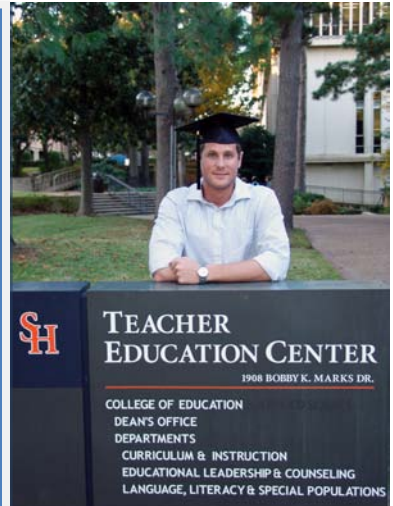
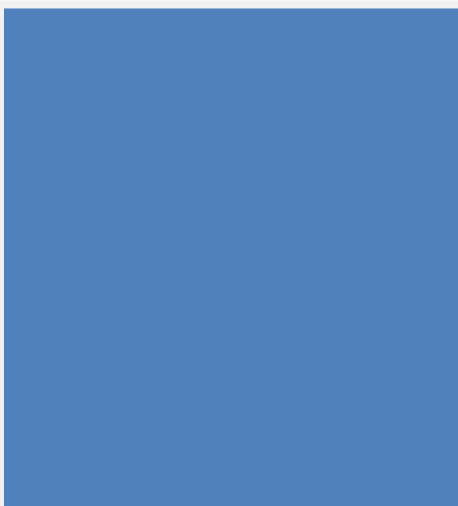


Sam Houston State University College of Education *Thesis and Capstone Research Project Handbook*



SHSU College of Education Thesis and Capstone Research Project Handbook

This College of Education Thesis and Capstone Research Project Handbook is intended to assist you, the masters candidate, through the process of completing a thesis or action research project. It is our hope that this Handbook can aid you in your challenging, yet exciting opportunity—publishing your thesis or action research project.

The College of Education has used the University's [*Directions on Form, Preparation, and Submission of the Final Copies of Master's Theses and Doctoral Theses \(SHSU Guidelines\)*](#) and modified it to address specific issues relating to Education masters degree candidates. The SHSU's College of Education Thesis and Capstone Research Project Handbook is available online. This Handbook serves as a guide and in no way provides a contract between you and SHSU or the College of Education. You must take responsibility to determine specific requirements of your particular department or program.

In addition to this COE Handbook and the SHSU Guidelines, you might wish to review other more in-depth "how to" books on completing a successful thesis or action research project. Several have been written over the past few years, one of which has been written by two of our graduate faculty members, Dr. Fred C. Lunenburg and Dr. Beverly J. Irby, [*Writing a Successful Thesis or Dissertation*](#).

To ensure that your thesis or capstone research project from SHSU's College of Education reflects the importance the College places on either of them, the College of Education requires that you follow the rules of this Handbook and strict formatting and submission guidelines as outlined by the University and the departments. By following the guidelines, you can be more confident and encounter fewer problems in the publication process with the University Library, the Dean's Office, or the contracted publishing company, UMI. You are ultimately the one responsible for following the guidelines and instructions in this Handbook; therefore, it is important that you read it completely and carefully. The College of Education faculty and staff should familiarize themselves with the contents of the Handbook.

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Thesis Defined

Your thesis is the ultimate performance event in your master's education. This performance event is expected to make a contribution to the body of knowledge in your particular discipline. It also demonstrates that you understand the existing published literature and that you are capable of critiquing published literature and of conducting your own original, high-quality research. The basic difference between a master's thesis and dissertation is that a master's thesis may focus on one area of the knowledge base or may focus on applying knowledge to a specific area, while the dissertation must contribute significantly and substantially to the knowledge base of the discipline.

There are differing types of thesis structures that you will want to consider. Of course, all steps in the thesis process, including selecting the structure, will need to be discussed and approved by your thesis chair and your respective master's program director. The decision you will make is dependent upon how well your topic fits within one of the following structures, the view of your field regarding the thesis structure, and the view of potential employers regarding the type of thesis.

The following are brief descriptions of potential thesis structures.

Traditional Thesis

The traditional thesis typically includes five chapters. Chapter I is the introductory chapter including a presentation of the problem, definitions, theoretical framework, purpose, significance, research questions, and limitations/delimitations/assumptions (not necessarily in that order). Chapter II is a critique of the related literature. Chapter III contains a presentation of the methodology encompassing the research design, sample, instrumentation, validity issues of the study, data collection plan, and data analysis plan (not necessarily in that order). Chapter IV is a presentation of the results, and Chapter V includes a discussion of the findings, implications for practice, and a suggestion for future research. Please note that a thesis that uses qualitative methodology may include more than five chapters.

Four-Chapter Thesis

The four-chapter thesis typically includes Chapter I as the introductory chapter including a presentation of the problem, definitions, theoretical framework, purpose, significance, research questions, and limitations/delimitations/assumptions (not necessarily in that order). Chapter II is a critique of the related literature. Chapter III contains a presentation of the methodology encompassing the research design, sample, instrumentation, validity issues of the study, data collection plan, and data analysis plan (not necessarily in that order). Chapter IV includes a presentation of the results and includes a discussion of the findings, implications for practice, and a suggestion for future research. Please note that a thesis that uses qualitative methodology may include more than four chapters.

Journal-Ready Thesis

The journal-ready thesis typically will include four chapters; however, it is unlike the four-chapter thesis. Chapter I includes the overall purpose of the thesis, the problem identified, the structure of the thesis and plans for each of the journal-ready manuscripts and the potential locations for respected scholarly journal submissions. Each of the two journal-ready manuscripts will be described with purposes and research questions for each. For the actual research study, the proposal will include traditional components of research design. In Chapter II, the first manuscript developed for publication, you will include a systematic review or critique of the literature related to your topic. This critique is more than just a term paper type of review; it is an actual in-depth analysis of literature related to (a) theory, (b) practice, and (c) published research on your topic. Chapter III will be the presentation of your actual research study with all components of a published research study, along with implications for practice, whether that is based on qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods. Chapter IV is the summary chapter. In this chapter, you will make concluding remarks overall from both Chapters II and III. Additionally, you will include future research recommendations. A copy of the journals' instructions to the author, copies of two articles published within the last three years must be submitted with a draft of the thesis to the Library.

The thesis should be presented as a single unit; continuity from chapter to chapter is important. Unavoidably, this will duplicate some of the introductory and concluding material in each article. The thesis will have a common abstract and reference section. The reference section will be an integrated list, not a series of lists. Appendices may be added to present information not included in the body of the thesis. When submitting the work from the thesis for publication, you and your chair will need to determine how each manuscript will be pulled from the thesis for submission and how each then will not be duplicated.

Whenever there are differences in format and layout between the specifications of the SHSU Guidelines and the journal model, the SHSU Guidelines overrule the journal. The journal will be followed for:

- location of table titles (above or below)
- location of figure titles (above or below)
- reference section (entry format).

Continuous pagination is required throughout the thesis. The usual requirements for margins, consistency in chapter or section titles, and other mechanics as specified elsewhere in the SHSU Guidelines will apply.

The thesis is not expected to duplicate the typographic style of the published journal; the publication and layout practices (use of double columns, extra spacing, etc.) are not to be followed. A journal's "Author's Guidelines" is not followed exactly when writing a thesis. These instructions are for the convenience of editors and do not necessarily apply to the format of a thesis. Individual manuscripts serving as chapters of the thesis

need not have the same internal structure. Instead, each is presented in the style appropriate to the selected journal.

The following sentence will be placed on the cover page of the thesis with the committee signatures (Follow the SHSU Guidelines for placement on the page):

This thesis follows the format and style of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*, except where superseded by the directions of the Office of Graduate Studies at Sam Houston State University.

A model journal sentence for each publishable manuscript follows. The sentence will be placed at the bottom of the first page of each chapter to be published. It will be placed beneath a solid line 10 to 15 spaces long.

This thesis chapter follows the style and format of <*journal name*>.

The journal name will appear in italics and should be spelled out completely. Single space the sentence if it is more than one line.

Per SHSU Guidelines, you may publish material that subsequently will be used as part of the thesis provided that the chair of your thesis committee is notified in writing at the time you submit the paper for publication. The notification should include the article title, the journal name, the names of all authors, and the date of submission. It is recommended that you not publish the paper without the chair's approval and assistance. The student must be the first author of each article used. The names of all authors, in journal-submitted order, and the name of the journal (with volume, page numbers, and date, if known) must be given as a footnote to the title on the first page of each manuscript chapter so as to indicate the current status of each manuscript. Evidence of permission to use articles that have been published or accepted for publication prior to completion of the thesis must be included in the appendices. You should be aware that the agreement signed when a journal accepts an article for publication usually assigns all rights to the journal and you may no longer possess rights to the material.

Companion Thesis

Related to dissertations (and you might interchange the word, thesis, in place of dissertation), McNamara, Lara-Alecio, Irby, Hoyle, and Tong (2007) stated, companion dissertations are characterized by collaborative inquiry by one or more students in which (a) each dissertation may utilize a target population with a unique study sample centered on a problem, a phenomenon, or a general topic of interest or (b) each dissertation may utilize two or more different target populations yet they may focus on the same problem, phenomenon, or topic. We offer five formats in which a companion dissertation can be conceptualized as one of the following models: (a) meta-analytic model, (b) multiple case study

model, (c) evaluation model, (d) single case model, and (e) subsequent replication model. (Chapter 10, ¶ 1)

For a detailed explanation of each model of the companion thesis go to [Doctoral Program Issues: Commentary on Companion Thesis](#). Basically, the companion thesis will include at least five chapters. The first chapter, Introduction, will include the fact that this is a companion thesis and the type it is and will include the basics as outlined previously related to Chapter I. Additionally, you will note the organization of the thesis. The second chapter will relate to your particular aspect of the topic. The third chapter is typically the methodology which may be similar in each thesis. The fourth chapter includes the results and discussion for the specific topic of the thesis. The fifth chapter is the final compiled chapter in which both candidates write the results together. This will be noted as the final compiled chapter of both theses.

Thesis Proposal Process

Prior to or during the thesis proposal class, you will meet with your selected chair of the thesis to discuss the topic of interest. Prior to the selection of other members of the committee, you must discuss all committee members with the chair of your committee. The chair of the committee must approve all members of the committee. As per SHSU Policy, each committee must be comprised of three members who hold graduate faculty rank; however, additional members may be added per approval of your chair. Each member, however, must be approved SHSU [graduate faculty](#). If a person is requested to be on a committee who is not a member of the SHSU faculty, then a form must be initiated by you and your chair of the thesis committee and then approved by the respective doctoral program director. The form is found on the University Graduate Studies website at [Non SHSU Employee on Thesis/Thesis Committee Request](#).

Typically, the traditional four-chapter thesis proposal includes the first three chapters of the thesis: Chapter 1--Introduction; Chapter 2--Literature Review; and Chapter 3--Methodology. Theses in the College of Education are written in accordance with APA style (unless the journal ready manuscript requires another style for that chapter). It is essential that students obtain and follow closely the latest approved version of the [Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association](#).

It is recommended that you retain an editor to assist in the editing process of the proposal. The program will provide you with a list of potential editors and fees.

Once you receive feedback from your Chair, and all corrections are made, you should schedule the thesis proposal meeting and ensure with the appropriate departmental secretary that there is a room available and share any special needs (such as a video conference set up or speaker phone).

The proposal is generally provided to the committee members three weeks prior to the date of the proposal meeting. The committee members then typically have a two-week time period to read the proposal and get feedback to the student within a week of the proposal so that the student can have the time to consider responses prior to the proposal. Some chairs will ask the student to make all corrections and bring a clean copy of the proposal to the proposal meeting for each committee member. (The Lunenburg Doctoral Research and Distance Learning Lab may be scheduled with Ms. Debbie Allen (debbieallen@shsu.edu) for use by doctoral/masters students conducting research or printing research. No drinks or food may be brought into the Lab, but there is a nice lounge outside the Lab. Also, you must bring your own paper for printing.)

Typically, in the proposal meeting, your chair will require a powerpoint presentation to accompany your proposal. The presentation is generally no more than 30 minutes in length with a 30 minute discussion that follows. Afterward, you will likely meet with your chair for another 30 minutes. The time allocated is typically between 1 to 1.5 hours.

The thesis proposal meeting is basically an oral examination of the proposed study by the entire committee. It is a time in which potential problems in the proposal are noted, discussed, and addressed. The committee must approve the proposal (written and oral) prior to your initiating the study. Your committee members are likely to have some ideas for revision of your proposed thesis. It is possible that the thesis committee may request a second thesis proposal meeting if there are substantial revisions to be made; however, most meetings end in approval of the thesis proposal with revisions documented by you and your chair.

Any subsequent changes in topic or the proposed method of investigation may require a second proposal meeting and must be approved in writing by the committee.

After the comprehensive exams (unless the thesis proposal is considered to be the comprehensive exam for your department), while working on the thesis, you must remember to complete all remaining departmental and area of specialization requirements, as well as to *register continuously* for the thesis hours. You must be enrolled in thesis hours to propose.

The Four-Chapter Thesis Proposal

The proposal for the four-chapter thesis is typically the first three chapters. The first chapter, Introduction, though it may be altered for a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods study, generally follows this outline:

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study
Statement of the Problem
Purpose of the Study
Significance of the Study
Definitions of Terms
Theoretical Framework
Research Questions (or Hypotheses)
Limitations
Delimitations
Assumptions
Organization of the Study.

You may wish to review the Lunenburg and Irby (2008) text for a description of these sections. There are other authors, of course, that review these sections in their texts. The second chapter contains the review of literature. In this review of literature chapter, Lunenburg and Irby (2008) have suggested that you critique the literature and

synthesize it by considering its (a) historical context, (b) gaps, (c) approaches, (d) trends and themes, (e) practical significance reported in studies, (f) reconciliation of conflicting theories, and (g) inconsistent findings. Tables are suggested in compiling the review. There are basically five types of literature you will find: (a) theoretical, (b) personal or expert opinion, (c) government documents, (d) evaluation reports, and (e) studies (qualitative and quantitative).

The third chapter is used to present your proposed methodology. The sections suggested for this chapter basically include:

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

Context of the Study
Participants of the Study
Instrumentation
Data Collection
Data Analysis.

A benefit of the proposal being the first three chapters is that, if there are to be four chapters, 75% of the thesis is virtually complete upon the proposal approval. There may be a few additional items that must be added or corrected to the review of literature, but basically the first three chapters are complete. Remember that for the thesis, the proposal is written in future tense, but the thesis is written in past tense as your study will have been completed.

The Journal-Ready Thesis Proposal

This type of proposal is slightly different from the four-chapter thesis proposal. This proposal will likely consist of about 20 pages. This does not mean that it is an easier proposal or has less rigor. Basically, the journal-ready proposal will become chapter one of the thesis. There are typically four chapters within this thesis as well:

Chapter I INTRODUCTION
Chapter II CRITIQUE OF THE LITERATURE (One of the Manuscripts)
Chapter III MAIN STUDY (One of the Manuscripts)
Chapter IV SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE
 RESEARCH, AND NEXT STEPS.

Basically, there are two journal-ready publications that emerge from this type of thesis. In the end of this type thesis, you will have two manuscripts deemed publishable by your committee. They do not have to be published, only deemed publishable in high-quality

journals as determined by your department. Both manuscripts *must be on related topics* which fall under an overarching problem.

The outline of the journal-ready proposal is noted in the SHSU Guidelines book specifically for Arts and Sciences. However, for the purposes of the College of Education, the following guideline is recommended:

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

- A. Introduction and Statement of the Problem (includes literature)
- B. Statement of the Purpose of Each of the Types of Studies to be Included:
 - 1. CHAPTER 2 Critique of the Literature (purpose of the critique of the literature)
 - 2. CHAPTER 3 Main Study (purpose of the main study)
- C. Significance of the Work to be Completed (this may also be divided by types of manuscripts)
- D. Definitions of Terms
- E. Theoretical Framework
- F. Research Questions (per type of study within the thesis)
- G. Limitations, Delimitations, and Assumptions (per type of study within the thesis)
- H. Organization of the Thesis.

Companion Thesis Proposal

The companion thesis is typically written in a traditional format with the exception of a fifth chapter. The outline for the proposal will be the same as the traditional thesis with the first chapter constituting the proposal. The only difference in this proposal is that on most occasions, the proposal is presented with the companion partners (two to three candidates). The proposals may be presented together; however, the defense of each proposal should stand alone; you must be able to defend what you plan to do in terms of methodology and procedures in your independent research study.

Forms for the Proposal

There is a form that must be completed and placed on file with your file in the thesis program. This form is the [Thesis Proposal Defense](#). A copy of it for your information is below (Note the types of decisions that can be made.):

College of Education
Thesis Proposal Defense

Name of Candidate: _____

Date of Proposal Defense: _____

Title: _____

Check One:

Accepted with no changes.

Not accepted.

Delayed pending _____

Accepted with changes (attach copy of changes to this document, along with a copy of the original proposal):

We, the thesis supervisory committee, agree to the above disposition regarding the Thesis proposal.

Chair

Candidate

Member

Member

Member

Member

Copies: For the Student's file in _____ (Program name).

Thesis Completion Process

The thesis completion process should not be one that is unwieldy if you simply follow the steps and carefully read this handbook and work with your chair consistently. You will want to schedule regular meetings with your chair of the thesis.

After the Proposal- IRB

The proposal was successfully defended and you now say—what next? The first thing to do after you complete the proposal is to complete your request to the Institutional Review Board to begin your research. The proposal is just the first step. This completes the steps in the process. The first step is to learn what you must do (you should have had experience with this during your doctoral program, so this step should be familiar). Here is the link to the [training manual](#) from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. You should already have a certificate on file for compliance purposes. The actual [IRB application](#) can be completed online. Once you receive approval from the IRB, you may begin your data collection (with approval from your chair of the thesis). It is advised that the candidate, with consultation of the thesis chair, establish timelines for data collection and analysis. Unanticipated events or IRB requirements may require changes in the study methods of the original proposal. If such changes are required, the candidate must secure approval of all committee members. Any committee member may request that the committee meet again with you to discuss the changes. You and the thesis chair are responsible for resolving any conflicting points of view among committee members regarding the thesis. Any change in methods must be approved by the SHSU IRB.

Continuous Enrollment and Total Number of Years

You are expected to finish a masters degree within 1 to 3 years. You actually have 6 years from the time of enrollment to graduation. You must continuously enroll in thesis hours until graduation. Should you request an additional year, you must write a letter of request through the respective the chair of the department to the Dean of the College.

As indicated, per SHSU Policy, continuous enrollment in thesis hours is required. If you complete your thesis with all signatures prior to the beginning of a semester, but you do not meet the graduation deadlines, you must pay for thesis hours that following semester; no waivers will be provided by the SHSU Office of Graduate Studies after Spring, 2010 for Summer Session, 2010. All summer timelines must be met for graduation for Summer 2010, and no waivers will be made for Fall, 2010. If you do not meet the deadline, then the University Graduate Office has deemed it necessary for you to pay the full tuition for another thesis three-hour credit.

Authorship on Future Manuscripts from the Thesis

Authorship of any future publications from your thesis should be discussed with your chair early, even during the proposal process. It is expected that you will invite committee members, particularly your chair, to participate in authoring and/or acknowledge their expertise in the writing of any publishable articles. It is expected that the authors in co-authored articles take full responsibility to work with you and the chair in terms of the substance and editing of the manuscript. Authorship in terms of first, second, third, etc., must follow ethical guidelines of APA.

Thesis Defense

Your thesis defense will be an oral presentation and discussion of the written thesis. In the defense, you will share the results of the study and demonstrate to the committee members that you have completed a quality product of research and that it is worthy of the bestowing of a master's degree. Typically, this defense is in an open forum with other doctoral students and other faculty members invited.

Your thesis chair will not allow you to schedule your defense until your thesis document is written with quality and edited well. Please do not be disappointed when this process may require numerous revisions and an editor. Your completed thesis will need to be to your chair in time for the chair to review it and approve it to get the final document to your committee at least three weeks prior to the defense. As soon as your thesis is in an almost complete stage, you will need to schedule the defense and the room, along with any special needs. You should offer your committee members two to three dates to see which is best for all.

Your committee members will be able to respond to you with their corrections within two weeks of your submission of the final document so that you will be prepared to defend any questions the members might have at the defense. Additionally, your chair might want all revisions corrected and those pages brought to the defense. Be certain to check with your chair.

The format of the presentation will be discussed with you by your chair. Usually, the chair welcomes the guests and thanks the committee members. The purpose of the defense is to ensure that you can speak academically about what you have written. You should stand when presenting and should use a professional powerpoint presentation template. Most of the time, the questions are reserved until you have completed your presentation. However, the chair will be in control of the meeting and will share at the beginning how the questions will be handled. The types of questions you will receive are those that require you to (a) discuss further your methods, findings, theoretical framework, or interpretations, (b) share what you know more in-depth on your topic, (c) interpret the *so what* (the significance) of your study, and/or (d) specify clarifications at certain points in the written thesis document. The guests are allowed to ask questions as well.

Your presentation at the defense will likely last approximately 30 minutes. The remainder of the time which will likely be around 30 to 45 minutes will be taken in discussion and questioning. Reyes (2009) offered some very helpful tips on the dissertation defense in [The Dissertation Defense: Being Well-defended in a Good Way](#), but this could be applied to a thesis defense as well. She indicated the following six tips which are helpful to all students:

1. *Start by reviewing the research questions and the instruments and analyses used.* Remind them why the research questions are relevant and/or lack of current research on the topic.
2. *Then, get straight to the point and present the findings.* Make it short and sweet: "Regular sleep was positively related to a good mood" and present the data to support your conclusions.
3. *Stick to what you know.* Do not feel the need to have an overhead for every point you want to make-you do not have to present *all* your findings. Just as your discussion highlights some results more than others, the defense will likely focus on the more interesting findings as well. [Know the material sufficiently well so as not to have to read the slides.]
4. *Focus their attention.* Remember that whatever you present, either in overheads or orally, you are opening yourself up to questioning. If you are not that comfortable with statistics, consider minimizing the number of tables you present on overheads (instead refer to the table/page orally). Again, just as your discussion may emphasize and explore some findings more than others, it is acceptable for you to focus your defense in a similar manner. Practically speaking, it is simply not possible to discuss all the nuances of a 200-page research project within 2 hours.
5. *Practice with an audience beforehand.* Because you have probably been looking at this thesis for a minimum of 243 light years, fresh eyes will ensure that you are making smooth transitions and a clear presentation. Practicing in the actual room in which you will be defending is highly advisable, especially if you will be able to test-run using Power Point, a laptop, or other audio-visual aids.
6. *Project professionalism.* Dressing in formal attire will contribute to your credibility and perception as a future colleague. Though completely optional, you may also consider providing beverages, even just bottled water, to further create a professional atmosphere. (¶ 11)

Additionally, she noted

There will be revisions. Every defense should result in some revisions, accept them as a matter of course so do not to take the critiques personally. Though revisions require more work, they are intended to improve your paper. This document will be sitting on a library shelf with your name on it. It wouldn't be bad

if it were the best draft it could be. Whether or not the revisions seem petty or like busy work, the fact is you need their signatures. Another skill in the graduate student's repertoire is learning to accommodate the wishes of the committee members: whatever makes them happy.

The extent of revisions tends to vary by chair and program. Some chairs may only permit you to defend if it is more or less a finished product. Others may accept the revisions as part of the defense process. They will allow you to defend, fully expecting input from the committee members that will lead to a fair amount of revisions. If the latter is the case, it may be helpful to have a friend recording their input during the defense so you can maintain focus on the discussion. (§ 16-17)

Once your defense has been completed, all guests will be asked to leave. After any further discussion with you, you, too, will be asked to leave the room. After the committee discusses any changes among themselves and agrees to those, they will determine whether you have passed the defense. Sometimes, committees will say you have passed the oral exam, but the written component of the thesis needs additional edits. Some committee members will want to see their revisions you made returned (with their notes on the document), while others will defer to you and your chair to be responsible for making the edits requested. Once all is in order, the committee members will sign the front page of the thesis (You should have that ready on bond paper at the defense in case they indicate that the committee members will sign immediately in blue ink.). After all revisions have been made, the thesis will be forwarded for a final review by the Dean's Office, submitted to the COE Graduate Advisor, Molly Doughtie.

You will be able to defend your thesis with ease by the time you have completed it—you will be the expert on your topic. Your committee members will have read it and given you feedback as well. By the time you defend, you may have edited your work and rewritten no less than 20 to 30 times. The first draft will only be the beginning to fine tune the ultimate performance event (your thesis) in your master's studies. Make certain that the thesis follows all of the SHSU Guidelines.

Thesis Timeline

The College of Education has a *different timeline than the University*. It is an earlier timeline which takes precedence over the university timelines and which allows time for the Office of Graduate Studies Reviewer, the Dean's Office, and the Library to review the thesis. Following is an example of the timeline for Spring 2010 semester and Summer 2010 semester. The Route Sheet example also follows.

- Deadlines for the **Summer 2010** Semester
 - By June 10 students must defend their thesis
 - By June 25 students should submit thesis to College of Education Graduate Advisor's Office, Molly Doughtie.
 - By July 9 students should submit final thesis (with Dean's and others' signatures) and route sheet to the Library.
 - July 16 is the last day to make final copies of the thesis and submit to NGL for binding. Also, this is the last day to submit route sheet to the Dean of Graduate Studies.
 -
- Deadlines for the **Fall 2010** Semester
 - By October 11 students must defend their dissertation
 - By October 25 students should submit dissertation and route sheet to the College of Education Graduate Advisor, Molly Doughtie.
 - By November 19 students should submit final dissertation (with Dean's and others' signatures) and route sheet to the Library.
 - November 23 is the last day to make final copies of the dissertation and submit to NGL for binding. Also, this is the last day to submit route sheet to the Dean of Graduate Studies.
-
- Deadlines for the **Spring 2011** Semester
 - By March 10 students must defend their thesis
 - By April 1 students should submit thesis to the COE Graduate Advisor, Molly Doughtie
 - By April 16 students should submit final thesis (with Dean's and others' signatures) and route sheet to the Library.
 - April 23 is the last day to make final copies of the thesis and submit to NGL for binding. Also, this is the last day to submit route sheet to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

ROUTE SHEET FOR THESIS

This Route Sheet, when completed and properly signed, will be delivered to the Registrar by the Office of Graduate Studies as evidence that the thesis has been completed as required for the respective doctoral degree for the anticipated graduation date of _____.

Name of Candidate: _____

Major Subject: _____

Minor Subject: _____

Title of Thesis: _____

Signatures:

Thesis Chair/Co-Chair (Type name) Date

Thesis Co-Chair (Type name) Date

Dean of College, Dr. Genevieve Brown Date

Newton Gresham Library Director, Ann Holder Date

Dean of Graduate Studies, Dr. Kandi Tayebi Date

Registrar, Teresa Ringo Date

Timeline Checklist

The following checklist will assist you in completing your thesis as part of meeting the timeline. Your department will provide you with a checklist like this one. You and your chair will sign it.

Note: Routing of the thesis will be completed by the student and may require the student's presence on campus several times during the process; any other arrangement must be approved by the Library and the respective Chair of the thesis. After the committee makes all corrections, begin routing your thesis. After all corrections have been made, then the thesis is forwarded to the College of Education Graduate Advisors' Office. *Theses must be received by the Library for final signature four weeks prior to graduation.*

1. Committee Chair and Committee Members check the thesis for the following: content, grammar, permission to use copyrighted material, plagiarism, APA rules (or journal's format), all front pages complete and correct, methodology correctly implemented and correctly interpreted, effect sizes as appropriate included, thorough critique of the literature, and references correct and included.
2. Print two signature sheets on **bond paper (bond should be facing up and in the same direction as the print)** signed in **blue ink** by committee and bring to the thesis defense. Defend thesis. Have the signature sheets signed (if the committee agrees that you have passed the defense- there may be times when the committee will request another defense, though this is unusual.)
3. Print two abstract pages (signature page only) on **bond paper (bond should be facing up and in the same direction as the print)** signed in **blue ink** by Thesis Chair.
4. Make corrections from committee and/or thesis chair. Keep the tabbed corrections with each step of this process and turn back in to the thesis chair with corrected thesis. Meet with the chair of the thesis to review all corrections and ensure that they are made.
5. Print off and fill out the official thesis route sheet as shown above. Make sure your thesis title is NOT in all caps. Thesis chair approves all corrections and signs route sheet.
6. Corrected, final copies of theses are submitted to the Dean's Office to the Graduate Advisor. Route sheet is signed by the Dean and returned to the respective department for final steps.
7. Submit thesis with signed route sheet to the Library. Please note in the explanation that follows this listing how the library receives completed thesis with route sheet and signed pages. Also see the outline as to how the submission is routed for binding. Required numbers of copies of the thesis paid by the student (Library assists with calculation of cost for all binding and submission to UMI; those costs are noted in the SHSU Guidelines as well.) are: Two bond copies for the Library, one plain paper copy for the department, one plain paper copy to the committee chair, and a plain paper copy the Dean's Office. *All other specifics on numbers of copies will be provided by the respective doctoral director.* The Library will forward the route sheet to the Dean of Graduate Studies for signature. Once the route sheet is received by Registrar's office, the candidate is cleared for graduation.
8. Reserve your academic regalia; contact Barnes and Noble on campus at 936 294-1862 for more information.

Thesis Elements

Please ensure that you follow the guidelines in the University's [*Directions on Form, Preparation, and Submission of the Final Copies of Master's Theses and Doctoral Theses*](#).

The SHSU Guide includes information on plagiarism and special requirements and procedures such as quality of paper, typeface, headings, and spacing. The preparation of the thesis is noted that it must be error free and cannot be printed on an inkjet printer. It must be printed on a laser printer.

Copyright is an important element that is shared in the SHSU Guidelines. It states:

Since a thesis is legally classified as a publication, care must be taken not to violate copyright laws. If the thesis contains any material (e.g. figures, tables, test instruments, text, or photographs) taken from copyrighted sources, the student must determine if a letter of permission from the copyright holder is needed. This is true even if the student or thesis adviser is an author of the material; in such cases, a letter from the publisher may still be needed. Doctoral students should inform the copyright holder that the thesis will be sent to UMI Thesis Services and sold on demand (see Microform Copies). If a letter is needed, it must be included in a separate appendix; proper credit should be given in the text. A copy of the letter must be provided to the office of the Director of Library Services (the university's copyright officer). Kenneth D. Crews has prepared a booklet for thesis authors, *Copyright Law & Graduate Research: New Media, New Rights, and Your New Thesis*; it is available from UMI's website at <http://www.umi.com/hp/Support/DServices/copyright/>.

If a part of the thesis has been published prior to the thesis being finalized, you will need to get a permission letter from the copyright holder to use your publication as part of the thesis; otherwise, it would violate copyright and become a plagiarism issue as well. The SHSU Guidelines Manual indicates:

Graduate students may publish material that subsequently will be used as part of the thesis provided that the chair of the student's thesis or thesis committee is notified in writing at the time the student submits the paper for publication. The notification should include the article title, the journal name, the names of all authors, and the date of submission. The student must be the first author of each article used. The names of all authors, in journal-submitted order, and the name of the journal (with volume, page numbers, and date, if known) must be given as a footnote to the title on the first page of each manuscript so as to indicate the current status of each manuscript. Evidence of permission to use articles that have been published or accepted for publication prior to completion of the thesis or thesis must be included in the appendices. Students should be aware that the agreement signed when a journal accepts an article for publication usually assigns all rights to the journal and the student may no longer possess rights to the material.

References

- Lunenburg, F. C., & Irby, B. J. (2007). *Writing a successful thesis or thesis: Tips and strategies for students in the social and behavioral sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Reyes, E. A. (2009). The thesis defense: Being well-defended in a good way . *APA Online*. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/apags/edtrain/disdefenseadvice.html>

THE CAPSTONE PROJECT

A Capstone Project may be required in lieu of a thesis by some of the departments. You will need to check with your respective department chair. Each department will have differing Capstone Project requirements; for example, in one department, the Capstone Project may be attached to an internship, while in another department, there may be a specified course to which it is attached. Please check with the Chair of your respective department or the graduate advisor of your program to get the details of each project.

Generally, a Capstone Project is the product of action research requiring planning and implementing a program, activity, or intervention and taking data over time related to the effects of the implementation of such. The result is a written product.

In the Capstone Project, you will have a faculty member who will take the lead as the Director of your project. You may have other faculty members who serve as committee members per your departmental guidelines. There is typically a presentation of your Capstone Project that may or may not be open to the public.

Candidates who have exemplary Capstone Projects may be asked to share their written products on the COE Graduate Programs website.

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