

**GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE
MASTER'S PROJECT**

2009-2010

ED 693: MASTER'S PROJECT

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

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SECTION I: ED 693 MASTER'S PROJECT SYLLABUS

Course Description

The student identifies a problem, reviews literature, creates a product based on applicable literature, research or theory that addresses the problem, and develops a plan for implementation and evaluation. Prerequisite: 27 credit hours; ED 660; Application Required

Difference Between a Project and a Thesis

A project involves curriculum or program development and applies theory to practice, while a thesis is a traditional research project where the student gathers data, analyzes that data, and presents the results along with their interpretations. Whereas a project creates a product that is often used in a professional capacity by the student, a thesis uses data analysis to answer a research question or test a hypothesis of interest to the student.

Suggested Text

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, D.C.: author.

American Psychological Association. (2005). *Concise Rules of APA Style*. Washington, D.C.: author.

Student's Role

This course is the culmination of the master's degree. It will result in a significant project, usually taking one semester to complete. In it, the student synthesizes and integrates knowledge gained in the master's degree program. The student is held accountable for planning, implementation, and evaluation. In content courses, the professor is the primary agent. In this course, it is the student.

Goals

To provide the student with an opportunity to work directly on a project relevant to schools and/or pupils.

To demonstrate graduate knowledge and skill in research, problem identification, summarizing applicable work done by others, identification of alternatives, deciding on a promising solution to the problem and evaluation of its efficacy.

To carry out a scholarly project that is mutually beneficial to the school and/or its pupils and the graduate student.

Objectives

The student will demonstrate the ability to identify a problem within an educational context.

The student will demonstrate the ability to review scholarly research relevant to the problem.

The student will demonstrate the ability apply research to develop a product that addresses the problem.

The student will develop a plan for implementation and evaluation of the product in a particular educational context.

The student will demonstrate an understanding of the ethical requirements of research, and how philosophical and theoretical assumptions affect evaluation.

Co-Authorship

Occasionally, students are permitted to co-author their projects based on a compelling justification. However, this is AT THE SOLE DISCRETION of the individual faculty member overseeing your ED 693. Not all faculty members permit co-authorship. If you intend to co-author with another student, you should bring this to the attention of your graduate advisor at the time of your application to inquire whether this will be permissible.

SECTION II: OVERVIEW OF THE MASTER'S PROJECT

All pages must have a 1 ½ inch left margin to allow for binding. Use a 1 ¼ inch right, bottom and top margin on all pages. The exception to this requirement is the title page, which is centered. See below for details.

Title Page

The title of your paper should be a description of your main topic and should identify the actual variables (major ingredients) or theoretical issues under investigation. Your title must be centered, 2 ½ inches from the left and right edges of your paper and 3 inches from the top edge of the page. Single space the title and use upper and lowercase lettering. Type the word “by” (centered) directly below the title. On the line directly below “by” type your first, middle, and last names (centered, in upper and lower case letters), followed by the date. Refer to the sample title page on page 26 for additional information that must be included as part of the title page.

Acknowledgment Page

This page is generally optional, but some faculty may require it. Please refer to the sample acknowledgement on page 30.

Abstract

The abstract is a 100 to 250 word summary of your project. Please refer to the sample abstract on page 31.

Table of Contents

This page is usually completed last. Please refer to the sample Table of Contents on page 33-34.

Chapter One: Project Proposal

It is expected that the project proposal will be written and approved prior to all additional work regarding the project. An outline of the contents of the proposal can be found on pages 7-8. You can expect to write and rewrite your proposal several times before you begin the extensive review of the literature and before you complete your end product, the project itself. Proposals generally are six to ten pages in length. This proposal is the first chapter of your Master's Project. [Students should anticipate that any proposals written as part of ED 660 may require additional (possibly substantive) editing by their ED 693 advisor.]

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Once your project proposal is approved, you will review educational or other appropriate research and literature which focuses on the specific steps and/or solutions your Proposal has outlined to solve the problem you identified. This chapter also involves an explanation of your overarching theoretical or conceptual framework which represents the “lens” through which you have chosen to examine your problem. The information you pull together for this Literature Review will serve as the knowledge base for the project you create. Your review of literature must be thorough and scholarly. In some instances, it should also attempt to acknowledge and, in the process, critique literature which is oppositional to your viewpoint (rather than simply ignore opposing perspectives). All statements or assertions need to be backed up with research

or writings and documented in citations. You are required to use a *minimum of twenty-five sources* in your paper. The vast majority of these sources should be summarized and reviewed as part of Chapter Two.

Chapter Three: Project Components

Following the submission of your Literature Review, in Chapter Three you will describe: the components of your project, conclusions drawn, and your plans for implementation and evaluation.

References

All sources used in chapters 1 through 3 of the Master's Project need to be documented in a reference list. **Conversely, each entry in the reference list must be cited in text.** The reference list should immediately follow the third chapter. **Do not include references for articles or chapters that are not cited in your paper.** Follow the most recent edition of APA manual for formatting your reference list.

Appendixes

An appendix allows you to provide the reader with detailed information that would be distracting to read in the main body of your paper. Examples of common appendixes include: the actual project (curriculum unit, teacher evaluation instrument, mentoring handbook, etc.), copyright permission letters, lists, a large table, copies of a survey instrument, etc. Arabic page numbering continues through all pages of the appendixes.

Note: You MUST include written permission to include copyrighted material in your project. For more information regarding copyright issues, please see pages 22-24. If you are uncertain as to whether or not you need copyright permission, contact Rita Kohrman, Education Resource Librarian, at 616-331-2622 or kohrmanr@gvsu.edu. You should also check GVSU's Library website for information on requesting copyright permission. The Library website is accessible at <http://www.gvsu.edu/library>.

Data Form

The 693 Data Form will need to be completed and included as the last page of your Master's Project. A sample of this form is included on page 36 of this manual. On it you will list a descriptive title of your Master's Project, your complete name, the semester of completion, and a list of at least 5 to 7 ERIC descriptors that identify the topic of your project. **Prior to getting your Master's Project bound, your 693 supervisor must sign the data form as an indication that your Master's Project is acceptable and complete.**

Other Requirements

The entire Master's Project is comprised of chapters one through three, plus a title page, table of contents, abstract, references, appendixes (the project itself, permission forms, etc.), and a 693 Data Form. Your paper must be word processed, double spaced, printed from a quality printer, and completed in a scholarly manner following the standards and current education guidelines of the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA).

Binding the Master's Project

For the master's project binding process please check the following link to the library website:

<http://www.gvsu.edu/library/index.cfm?id=F65E06F9-BEE4-7CDC-A2CE6EA38399D5D3#project>

Please check with your project advisor for additional information regarding online submission of projects.

SECTION III: CHAPTER DESCRIPTIONS

Chapter One: Project Proposal

Problem Statement

Your proposal should begin by introducing the specific problem, issue, curricula, program or topic of your research. The first sentence should be a simple, clear statement of the problem under study. **Note:** Page one of the Project is the first page of Chapter One. However, this first page does not receive a page number. Page numbering (in Arabic numerals) should begin with page 2 of Chapter One (with page numbers in the upper right-hand corner of each page).

Importance and Rationale of the Study

Following the problem statement, you must describe why this problem is worthy of study. Why is it important? What sources can you use to strengthen your case? It is wise to develop an outline before writing this section. The outline should help you develop good arguments to prove why yours is an important problem, worthy of your time and energy in the search for an answer or solution. Make sure to justify why this study is important.

Background of the Study

Give a succinct history of your topic, including facts and pertinent data. Focus on how your problem, issue, topic, curricula, or program came to be and the degree to which the problem exists. Follow this with what can be done about it. This may include a variety of options and a rationale for why you selected your option over other possibilities. You will want to identify the problem you are studying and relate it to the contributions of others to the field. Cite only that research which is specifically pertinent to your problem.

Statement of Purpose

After you have introduced the problem, justified why it is important, and developed the background material, you are in a position to tell what you will do. Explain to the reader your main purpose for creating this project. Example: "The purpose of this study is to develop, present, and evaluate an elementary teacher in-service program for teaching mathematics for understanding" or "The purpose of this project is to develop a model mentoring program for new teachers." You should continue by describing exactly what the project will include and not include. Furthermore, address how your purpose for this project directly addresses the problem you outlined initially.

Objectives of the Project

Clearly state the objectives of your project. Make sure your objectives are realistic in relation to the purpose set out for your project. You should clearly develop the rationale for each objective in your project. As you do this, you may want to bear in mind the following question: What do I hope the development of this project will specifically accomplish? In other words, in what ways will it solve the problem(s) you outlined in the first section?

Definition of Terms

Be sure to define key terms you will use in your project. You may want to make a list as you work on your proposal. Be sure that you define each important term in the context of your project. For technical terminology or those terms drawn from the literature, you should have a

citation reference (author, year) to clarify the particular application or orientation of the definition. For non-technical terminology, you may simply need to provide operational definitions to let the reader know how the term is being used in the context of your project.

Project students often refer to various curricular and other programs by their acronyms, particularly those employed in their districts. These should also appear in your Definition of Terms section. Remember, you are writing these projects NOT JUST for yourself or those in your district already knowledgeable, but ALSO for those less informed. *The general rule for such writing is to assume that your audience is LESS informed than yourself and requires some degree of educating on the matter.*

Scope of the Project

Explain the scope of your project. In other words, describe what your project will address AND what it will not address. In this way you will be setting the “boundaries” of your project. Additionally, you should acknowledge and describe some of the factors that are beyond your control (e.g., administrative support, teacher buy-in, resources, professional development, etc.) that may nevertheless impact the overall success of your project.

NOTE: You will submit this chapter (usually 6-10 pages) first since it needs to be approved before proceeding. The proposal chapter is foundational to the rest of the Master’s Project. Try to get started on your proposal as soon as you know you will be taking the course. Your professor will want to receive your first draft proposal early in the semester. It will be quite normal if you rewrite this two or three times. Please get started as soon as you are able. Remember to follow the directions outlined herein.

Use the “Guiding Questions” for each chapter to help focus your writing. Guiding Questions for each chapter begin on page 14.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this chapter (comprised of an introduction, theory/rationale section, various headings created by you organizing your review of the literature, a summary, and a conclusion), you will review educational or other appropriate research and literature which focuses on the specific steps and/or solutions your Proposal has outlined with respect to the problem, issue, curricula, or program. The information you pull together for this Literature Review serves as the knowledge base for your project. It should be clear how each source will be used in the development of your project.

Introduction

The introduction of your Literature Review should be a blueprint of what the reader can expect to encounter in the rest of the chapter. Briefly let the reader know what areas of literature will be reviewed.

Theory/Rationale

The problem you have chosen to address in your project represents the "what." But problems do not exist in a vacuum. Sometimes, they are only identified as problems because of the particular theoretical perspective of the viewer. So for others, the issue may not be a problem. And even if you think you have identified something that seems self-evidently problematic and divorced from any particular theory for identification purposes (e.g., student motivation or reluctant readers), there are multiple ways to address that problem, and those "ways" are all based upon some theoretical perspective. That is the basis for arguing that one "way" to identify or address or solve the problem is inherently superior to another.

While you may have a number of articles that represent several theoretical approaches to identifying and addressing your problem, one or two should dominate. The primary theory or two you discuss represents the specific lens or filter through which you have identified your issue/problem (the "what") and in so doing, you also provide an explanation for "why" it is an issue/problem. Simply put, the theoretical lens you choose to identify your problem has an explanatory "why" built into it. A different theory might see the same problem differently (different reason for why it is a problem) and thereby offer a different means for addressing it. What we are trying to do is not simply have grad students accumulate a collection of articles that speak to their sense of things about a given problem without the theory in those articles having some commonalities, that when put together, offer a more sophisticated sense of the issue – why it is an issue and its implications. This affords a macro, yet fuller perspective on things (more encompassing).

The theoretical orientation or framework, then, often represents the dominant theory that informs your thinking on the issue you have chosen to investigate. You should have one or two theorists who have informed your thinking on your problem MORE than others – whose sense of the issue and their perspectives on WHY it is an issue (including possible remedies) are more significant than others. Their thinking drives yours in this matter. It is their work, their perspective that will receive more attention and discussion in Chapter 2, and a number of the other articles you employ will be of a similar orientation (they may even cite your primary theorist or two in their references).

Research/Evaluation

“Research/Evaluation” is your main heading, and you will create various “sub-headings” based upon the way in which you intend to organize your review of the literature. In general, the Literature Review should include findings from the most recent years and should be organized by topic, not by author. The Literature Review should cite studies and their findings in a clear and compelling manner. The Literature Review should read smoothly. The most major sources used in the development of your project **MUST** be cited fully in the Literature Review.

Your review of literature must be thorough and scholarly. Frequently, a literature review is presented in the form of a funnel going from research and writings that provide a general background for your problem/project to the more specific research and/or policies that directly address your project. All assertions and generalizations need to be supported by cited research and writings.

Summary

The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with an overview of the theories and research that you have written about previously in this chapter. Summarize succinctly the main or key points you have raised in the preceding sections. Cite your sources throughout. The reader should be able to read this section **WITHOUT** having read the previous parts of the chapter and **STILL** acquire a good sense of the theoretical perspectives that informed your thinking. The previous sections of the chapter allow you to explain at length those theories that are the foundation of your project. This section condenses or summarizes them. The dominant theorist(s) will obviously get greater (more) attention in this section as well, much as they should have in the previous sections.

Conclusions

The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with the conclusions you have drawn from all your sources. After having identified the key theories and explained them at length earlier in this chapter, the function of this section is to bring it all together in a series of general conclusions. Much like the “Summary” section, the reader should be able to read this section and acquire a sense of what it is that you have generally concluded from all the literature that you have reported on earlier in the chapter.

NOTE: The reader should be able to read **ONLY** the Summary and the Conclusions of this chapter, and **STILL** acquire a good overview of what was discussed at length previously in the chapter. Thus, the skill required in these two sections relates to your ability to maximize the power of your words – be judicious, less rather than more – in order to convey the most important aspects of the theories and research you have identified, and what conclusions you have come to as a result.

SOURCES: Most of your twenty-five sources will be summarized in your literature review. The majority of your sources should be primary sources and some should be peer-reviewed (please consult with your advisor to fully understand their expectations in regard to the quality of your sources). In academic writing, the use of secondary sources is generally frowned upon. The expectation is that you **TRY** to go to the primary (original) source. The problem with secondary sources is that you are allowing another author to summarize someone else’s research. You have no way of knowing how accurate the interpretation is or whether it actually reflects your sense of

what the original author said. Use of secondary sources in the literature review should be limited and for good cause (e.g., unable to locate the original source).

CITATION OF SOURCES: As you read and take notes for your literature review, do not forget to write down your bibliographic source material along with the notes you take so you have it handy when it comes time to cite the information in your paper. Be sure you have all of the information you need for the APA reference style. Use of ideas from other authors (i.e., paraphrasing) must be cited and direct quotations must be indicated using quotation marks and the standard citation form. All sources cited must be included in the “References” that immediately follow Chapter Three.

RESOURCES: As you do your literature review, you will want to take advantage of the online catalog VOYAGER and ERIC database searching capability available through the GVSU Libraries. If you have an Internet connection, you may access these databases after you type in your GVSU user id and password, or you may visit one of the libraries located on the Allendale, Pew, or Meijer Campuses. ERIC documents (ED) are kept on microfiche on the fourth floor of Zumberge Library. The Education Research Index (EBSCO) database is also frequently used as a starting place for researching the literature associated with your topic. The PsycInfo database is also an excellent source if your topic has any psychological aspect (special education, reading, leadership styles, etc.). The Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Yearbooks of the National Society for the Study of Education, Handbook of Research on Teaching, as well as the online catalog, ERIC documents and educational periodicals (Educational Leadership, Phi Delta Kappan, Review of Educational Research, etc.) are frequently good sources. If you know of a person who is an expert in the field, it may be a good idea to interview him/her to gain greater insights. In addition, students may use other online full-text databases available through the GVSU library webpage (<http://www.gvsu.edu/library>). Reference librarians can be of help to you as well. You are encouraged to make an appointment with Rita Kohrman, Education Resource Librarian (616-331-2622 or kohrmanr@gvsu.edu), for assistance with your research.

Chapter Three: Project Description

Introduction

Your introduction to Chapter Three needs to restate your problem and the goals and objectives you have identified that will help you solve the problem. You need to tell the reader how this chapter will be organized. What will you describe first, second, third?

Project Components

This is where you describe your project, including all the component parts of your entire project. This is where you describe what you did. It will include a description of your curricula, program, project components, etc. If you have actually developed units, lessons, test, etc. to use in your project, include actual copies in your appendixes.

In this section you're explaining how you devised your project by describing all the necessary steps that you have taken. Make sure you include the methods, strategies, and approaches that you have utilized to solve the problem, to develop the curricula, to design the program, etc.

Project Evaluation

Explain what steps you would take in order to evaluate the effectiveness of your project if/when it is implemented. In other words, how will you know if your project has actually been successful? What will the indicators be exactly? How would you go about gathering that data?

Project Conclusions

Summarize the conclusions you can draw from your research in relation to the original problem you stated in Chapter One. In essence, you will state the information you have obtained through your research, and the conclusions which can be drawn from this information.

Plans for Implementation

Up to this point you have described what you did and your conclusions about your project. Now is the time to make suggestions for the use of this information. You may wish to suggest additional steps that should be taken or additional research that should be done. This is your opportunity to translate your theoretical and observational information into practical suggestions for teachers, principals and school systems.

In addition, clearly specify how you plan to implement these findings. How will you share your work with colleagues and other professionals?

SECTION IV: GRADING CRITERIA

The Master's Project will be assessed using the guidelines included in this document. In addition, your Master's Project will be assessed for completeness, consistency, accuracy, quality, scholarly writing, relevance to the educational community and completion in a timely manner.

Rewriting various sections of the Master's Project and its components is expected. In general, no grade will be assigned until the project is in acceptable form. In addition, students are vigorously encouraged to strive to have their project published such that others in the educational community may benefit from their work.

This research should be able to be completed in one semester. Your final Master's Project is needed before the end of the semester if you want your grade recorded on time. If your Master's Project is not received in final form in time for your professor to grade it or if it is received and still needs revision, you may end up with an unsatisfactory grade. Incompletes are not necessarily awarded without proof of extenuating circumstances. An "Incomplete" may be given when a student demonstrates that reasons generally beyond the control of the student prevented completion of the course requirements by the end of the semester. If you are awarded an "Incomplete," you will have one semester to complete the unfinished work. If it is not completed, the incomplete automatically becomes an "F." To replace an "F," you would need to take and pay for ED 693 again. [Note: When a student repeats a course, the final attempt counts towards the student's GPA but the grades for all attempts still show on the transcript.]

To guide you in your writing, sample projects may be obtained from your 693 supervisor. Additionally, some student projects are located at the Steelcase Library (Pew Campus) for your review.

Plagiarism

Any ideas or material taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged. Offering the work of someone else as one's own is plagiarism. The language or ideas taken from another may range from isolated formulas, sentences, or paragraphs to entire articles copied from books, periodicals, speeches, or the writing of other students. **The offering of materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment also is considered plagiarism.** Any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been taken from another is guilty of plagiarism.

Such activity may result in failure of a specific assignment, an entire course, or, if flagrant, dismissal from Grand Valley. For further information see the *Student Code*.

SECTION V: ED 693 GUIDING QUESTIONS

Chapter One: Project Proposal

Problem Statement

- Does the first sentence clearly state the problem?
- Is the problem supported by at least 2-4 supporting sentences?
- At the end of this section, do you know what the problem is and is not?

Importance and Rationale of the Project

- Do you know why this problem is important?
- Do you know the significance or extent of the problem?
 - Nationally or internationally?
 - Locally or regionally?
- Have other sources been used to make the case?
- Is the problem worthy of study?

Background of the Project

- Has the history of this problem been identified?
- Have significant data, information, facts already available on this topic been included?
- At the end of this section, do you have a sense of how this problem fits into the larger educational context?

Statement of Purpose

- Do you know what the overall purpose of the project is?
- Do you know specifically what will be done in this project?
- Do you know exactly what the project/study will include? Will not include?
- Is this project unique? If so, in what way?
- Does your purpose directly address the problem?
- Is the audience specified?

Objectives of the Project

- Are objectives for the project clearly stated?
- Is there a brief overview of the appropriate activities for achieving the desired objectives?
- If appropriate, upon what standards are these objectives based?

Definition of Terms

- Have key terms been defined?

Scope of the Project

What is the scope of this project?

What will it address? What will it not address?

What factors may hinder or completely obstruct the effectiveness or implementation of this project?

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

Does the initial paragraph give an overview of the chapter by telling you what categories of literature (i.e., sections) will be reviewed?

When the introduction is finished, is the organization of Chapter Two clear to the reader?

Theory/Rationale

Does the literature review state the theory/rationale that drives this project?

Does the literature review explicitly connect the theoretical framework/rationale to the categories of literature that are reviewed?

Research/Evaluation (Under this heading, you will create various sub-headings based upon your organization of the literature you review.)

Does the literature provide you with a general understanding of the field?

Does the literature provide you with a detailed understanding of the research and writing appropriate to the specific components of this project?

Are empirical research results cited?

Are original, primary sources used?

Summary

Does the summary succinctly summarize the key research reviewed in this chapter?

Could someone read just your summary and have a general idea of how the research was organized in this chapter and what the key points were?

Conclusion

Does the conclusion synthesize the literature and clearly indicate a need for this project?

Does the conclusion provide a smooth transition from Chapter Two to Chapter Three?

Other Considerations:

Are at least 25 separate sources used and cited to develop chapters one and two?

Is the literature review organized in a logical manner (i.e., either chronological, sequential, topical, problem-solution, or cause-effect)?

Does this organizational pattern help to develop the rationale for the project?

Are explicit transitions used to connect ideas among sections?

Are ideas within individual paragraphs logically connected?

Is each main idea supported by adequate details that fully develop the idea?

Does each section flow coherently?

Is there a brief summary at the end of each section?

Are sections identified appropriately according to APA and the content within the section?

Is every generalization or assertion cited appropriately?

Have quotations been limited and properly cited according to APA?

Chapter Three: Project Description

Introduction

Does the introduction restate the problem and the proposed solution to the problem?
Is there an overview of how this chapter will be organized and presented?

Project Components

Briefly restate the local historical context for this project.
Briefly restate the desired objectives of this project.
What is your rationale for the project you created?
Is a description of what was actually created (i.e. the project) provided?
Are references made to actual units, lessons, tests, handbooks, etc. that have been developed for the project? Are these included as appendixes?

Project Evaluation

How will the project be evaluated for success?
What are the criteria for determining the success of your project?

Project Conclusions

Are conclusions made about the original problem outlined in Chapter One?
Is the research from Chapter Two used to interpret the conclusions drawn in this section?
What questions remain unanswered about this topic?

Plans for Implementation

Are suggestions given for the use of the information gained in this project?
Is it clear how and when this information will be shared with other professionals?
Who actually will share this information and with whom will it be shared?

Format and Style Issues

Are all chapters and sections present?

Are separate sections designated using APA format?

Are citations in the body of the paper written in correct APA format?

Are all quotations cited, noted, and using APA format?

Is it double spaced?

Does the title page follow the guidelines in this handbook?

Is the left margin 1.5 inches?

Are pages numbered (upper right-hand corner)?

Does the reference list use APA style?

Is it easy to read and understand?

Does it flow?

Is it written in a consistent style (primarily third person)?

Is the language appropriately clear and specific?

Is nonsexist language used?

Are specific terms defined in context?

Are all words spelled correctly? Are you sure?

Is there subject/verb/referent agreement? Is correct grammar used?

Does the format follow the guidelines specified in the 693 handbook?

Has permission been gained to use copyrighted material? Is the letter of permission included in an appendix?

Does this represent graduate level work?

Page Numbering

The acknowledgement page, abstract, and table of contents should be numbered with lower case roman numerals (centered at the bottom of the page) beginning with roman numeral “i” for the acknowledgment, or the abstract if there is no acknowledgment. Numeric pagination begins on page two of Chapter One with the number “2” in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

Headings

Regardless of the number of levels of subheadings within a section the heading structure follows the same format.

Level 1 Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

Level 2 Flush Left, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

Level 3 Indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.

Level 4 Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase paragraph ending with a period.

Level 5 Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph ending with a period.

Three levels of headings (see section 3.03 of the APA Manual) look like this:

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Parent Involvement

Utilizing needs assessments. Your text would automatically follow this “heading” like this.

Notice that the 3rd level is tabbed in the same amount of space as a paragraph tab. It is italicized, and only the first word is capitalized. A period is placed at the end, and your text immediately follows.

SECTION VI: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

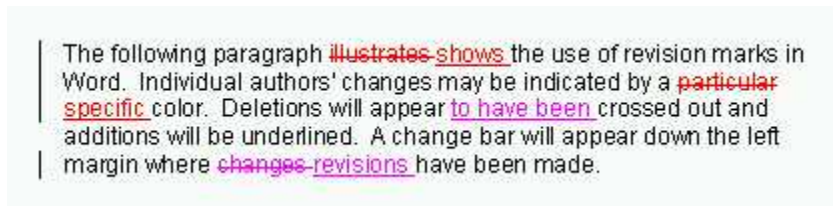
Citing Electronic Sources

You can find examples of how to properly cite electronic sources at the following website sponsored by the American Psychological Association (APA):

<http://www.apastyle.org/electsource.html>

Microsoft's® Reviewing Toolbar

Microsoft Word allows multiple users to edit the same document and to leave revision marks on that document to indicate insertions, deletions, and formatting changes by each reviewer. One may track the changes and then decide to view them on screen, on printout, or not at all. See the following text that provides illustrations of revision marks available in Word.



To turn the Reviewing Toolbar on:

- Click on the View menu.
- From the View menu, click on Toolbars.
- Click on Reviewing.

The Reviewing toolbar will appear on the screen. Allowing your mouse pointer to hover over each button will give you a Screen Tip which labels the button and describes its use.

(Taken and adapted from: Information Technology, Phillips Exeter Academy. (n. d.). *Document Review, Revisions and Change Tracking in Word*. Retrieved on November 30, 2003, from <http://help.exeter.edu/Documentation/Wordtrackchanges.html>)

University Support

There are many resources available to assist students with the development of their Master's Project. For **research assistance** contact Rita Kohrman, Education Resource Librarian, at (616) 331-2622 or kohrmanr@gvsu.edu.

For **general assistance with writing** (e.g., grammar, style, format, etc.) contact the Grand Valley State University Writing Center at (616) 331-2774. Graduate consultants are available on the PEW Campus in Grand Rapids Mondays through Thursdays from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in room 101B DeVos Center. You can also call for help at (616) 331-6407.

SECTION VII: PERMISSIONS

It is necessary to request and receive permission to include **the work of others** in your project. You may want to prepare the letters so that you are granted the specific permission you are requesting. You may use the samples provided as models. Be sure to include both the letters of permissions you create and the responses in their own appendix in your bound document. If the appropriate permissions are not included, your project may not be accepted. Discuss options with your 693 supervisor.

If your project includes data collected from **human subjects**, including adults or children, you must submit a proposal to the GVSU Human Research Review Committee. This process can take up to 2-weeks and is required **before** you may begin to collect or use data for your project.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Written permissions need to be included for the following:

- A. **Permission to conduct a survey:** If you are doing a survey, you will need to complete and include three types of permissions: 1) approval from the GVSU Human Research Review Committee, 2) written permission from an administrator in your district (your principal, supervisor or whomever is authorized to grant such permissions) to proceed, and 3) written permission from the parents of students who are under 18 or the survey subjects themselves if they are over 18, giving their informed consent to participate in the survey. In each of these permissions, you should describe clearly and completely what the purpose of the survey is, how it will be used, and how it will be reported. Attach a copy of the survey itself if appropriate. These permissions must be received prior to your beginning the collection of data.
- B. **Permission from institutional owners (e.g., district, schools, foundations):** You need to request permission for use of materials produced by them or their employees for use in your project (e.g., district scope and sequence).
- C. **Permission to use an individual creative product (e.g., yours, a professor's, workshop presenter's):** Permission should state how the materials included in the project may be used by others (e.g., copied for classroom use, disseminated with credit given to author).
Note: If permission cannot be secured, then you can describe work and refer reader to where material can be purchased or found (e.g., AIMS materials).
- D. **Permission to use materials developed and disseminated by the state or other standards organizations (e.g., state standards, program administrative rules, etc.):** Write to the state or standard's group to ask permission to include these in your work. If permission is not received prior to the deadline, include a copy of your letter in the appendix. *Note:* This permission is necessary if you are including major portions of the work (> 30%). Shorter sections may be cited without additional permission.
- E. **Other permissions:**
 1. Schools may give permission to use school data such as MEAP scores. Data may be used in its aggregated format only.
 2. Written permission from parents of children under 18 and from adults over 18 to have a work sample or picture included in the project.

Note: If anonymity is requested, you may include a sample letter of permission in the appendix and state that the author has the signed permission on file. Retain these for your records.

COPYRIGHT ISSUES

Signed evidence of permission is required when including a copyrighted item in the Master's Project. Ask yourself these questions: How important is the item for the success of the project? Can I describe the item in the text of my project without actually reproducing or adapting the item? Do I have enough time to request AND receive a reply from the copyright holder? Consult the APA manual, Chapter 8, section 8.04 for further information.

Finding out Who is the Copyright Holder:

Books: check with the publisher. Publisher telephone numbers, web pages, or email addresses are often included following the title page. A librarian at any of our libraries can assist you in finding out information about publishers.

Journals: check with the publisher. Publisher telephone numbers, web pages, or email addresses are often located in a section providing information about the journal. A librarian at any of our libraries can assist you in finding out information about publishers.

Web/Electronic Sources: look for the hyperlinks labeled "Contact Us," "About Us," copyright, permission, email address. Sometimes it is easier to find the telephone number on the web page.

Citation Format:

See page Chapter 2 Section 2.12 of the APA manual for instructions for how to note copyright permissions when an item is used within the body of the project.

If the item is placed in the appendix, the citation is placed under the item. The citation should be in the format stated in APA manual, or in the manner requested by the copyright holder.

A copy of the signed permission letter, email, or fax from the copyright holder is included in a separate appendix.

Seek permission for the following:

Pages from a Journal or Book

Obtain permission to include pages of another person's work in your project. Permission may be in the form of a letter, email, or fax. The citation should be in the format stated in the APA manual, page 38

Government Materials

(Not all state and federal published materials are copyright free. Contact the publishing agency to verify if the item is copyrighted.)

U.S. Dept. of Education: "Unless specifically stated otherwise, all information on the U.S. Dept. of Education's web site at www.ed.gov is in the public domain, and may be

reproduced, published or otherwise used without the Department's permission. This statement does not pertain to information at web sites other than www.ed.gov, whether funded by ED or not."

- United States Department of Education. (n.d.) *Copyright status notice*. Retrieved February 4, 2005, from <http://www.ed.gov/notices/copyright/index.html>

Michigan Dept. of Education: "All copyrighted material and other means of proprietary or copyright identification must be kept intact and unmodified. Modification of the materials or use of the materials for purposes **not granted** by the State of Michigan is a violation of Michigan's copyright and other proprietary rights."

- Michigan Department of Education. (2005) *Michigan terms of use and linking policy*. Retrieved February 4, 2005, from <http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-5644-2089--,00html>

Citations should be in the format stated in the APA manual.

School District Materials

All communications and materials developed by a school district employee belong to the school district. The citation should be in the format stated in the APA manual.

Adaptations

Obtain permission to reproduce OR adapt all or part of a table or figure. Include citation at the bottom of the adaptation, with this statement: Reprinted (or adapted) with permission. The citation should be in the format stated in the APA manual, section 2.12. For additional information on permission to quote, reprint or adapt please see the APA manual section 6.10.

Tests and Questionnaires

Determine who owns the copyright; obtain permission for print **AND** electronic reproduction. Include citation at the bottom of the test or questionnaire. The citation should be in the format stated in the APA manual, section 2.12. Professional or commercial tests/questionnaires **often DO NOT** allow for the use of even one question.

Photographs

People: obtain a signed release from the person, parent, or guardian. Place a copy of the signed permission letter in the appendix. Keep the original letters of the signed release in your files.

Photo: obtain written permission for reuse of any photo (print or electronic) from the copyright holder. Include citation (copyright holder/photographer) at the bottom of the photo. Place a copy of the signed permission letter in the appendix. Keep the original letters of the signed release in your files. The citation should be in the format stated in the APA manual, section 2.12.

Web/Electronic Sources

Just because it is found on the Internet, does not mean that the item can be included freely in the project.

Communications

The person who wrote the communication (letter, memo, email, etc.) owns the item.

Sample Copyright Permission Letter

Date

Name and Address or Email
of Copyright Holder

Dear _____:

I am currently enrolled in the Grand Valley State University (GVSU), Advanced Studies in Education Program, and I am writing a Master’s Project for the completion of my Master’s Degree in Education. My *project* is entitled “Title.” May I receive permission to include in the appendixes of my Master’s Project a copy(ies) of the following item(s)?

Author and full citation of work
Description or title of chart, picture, list, letter, survey, etc. you wish to include in the appendixes. (Attach a copy of the piece to be reproduced.)

Your signature at the bottom portion of this letter confirms your ownership of the above item. The inclusion of your copyrighted material will not restrict your re-publication of the material in any other form. Please advise if you wish a specific copyright notice to be included on each page. My *project* may be cataloged in the GVSU library and will be available to other students and colleges for circulation.

Sincerely,

Name
Address
Phone Numbers
Fax Number
E-mail

.....
PERMISSION IS GRANTED to you (Your Name) to include the requested material(s) in (his or her) GVSU Master’s of Education *Project*.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Date: _____

Use the following permission signature format if a publishing house or other organization owns the copyright.

Name of Company/Organization
Permission granted by: _____
Title: _____
Date: _____

HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

All research involving human subjects (e.g., a survey administered to students or faculty as part of your project) performed at GVSU and/or by GVSU students ***must be reviewed*** and approved by the Human Research Review Committee ***prior to beginning the research***. For more detailed information regarding the university's policies on research involving human subjects as well as the Application for Review, please go to the following website:

http://www.gvsu.edu/research_dev/index.cfm?id=B27B6479-FEBF-9BF7-BDA6D693E6DC0773

Prior to submitting your Application for Review, you must consult with your 693 Supervisor.

If you have questions about the Human Subjects Review process or whether it applies to your project, please consult with your 693 Supervisor.

Policy on Research Integrity

The university has developed policies and procedures to comply with the Federal Government's regulations regarding dealing with and reporting possible misconduct in science. Allegations of misconduct in science should be referred to the appropriate dean or appointing officer and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (excerpted from *Grand Valley State University Policy and Procedures for Handling Allegations of Misconduct in Science*; for the complete policy refer to the *Faculty Handbook*). Students involved in research who suspect that an incident of misconduct in science has occurred should report the incident to the dean of their academic division.

SECTION VIII. SAMPLE PAGES

Templates for the following sample pages can be found at the following website :

http://www.gvsu.edu/coe_grad/index.cfm?id=5EA8B09A-07DC-91BD-233261887FDEF9D4

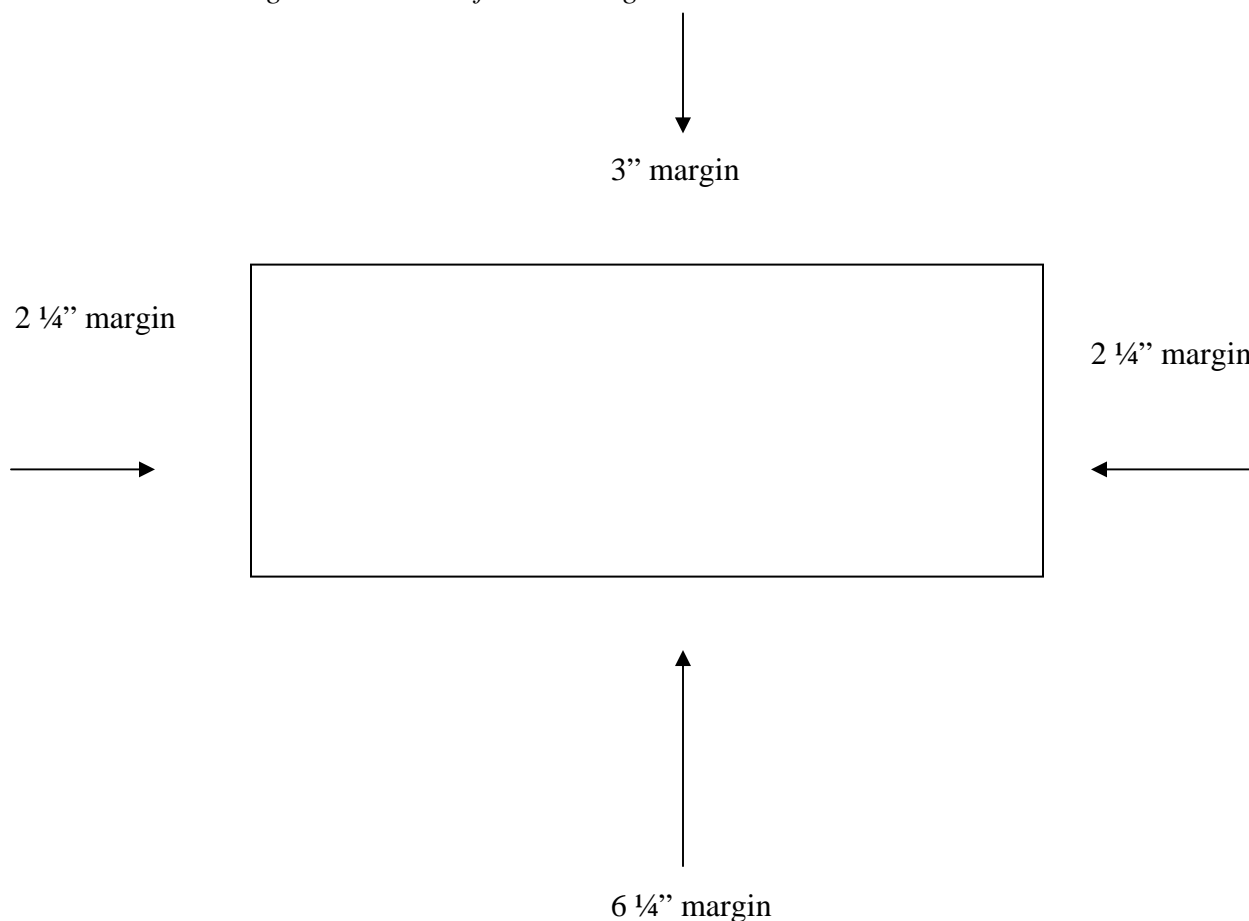
Sample Title Page (12-pt typeface)

An Examination of the Role of Technology
in Elementary Language Arts
by
Susan Marie Student
December 2007

Master's Project
Submitted to the College of Education
At Grand Valley State University
In partial fulfillment of the
Degree of Master of Education

Window Dimensions for Projects

Please follow the measurements below for the placement of your title on the title page in order for the title to be visible through the window of the binding cover.



Hints/Tips!

1. Set Left and Right Margins at 2.25".
2. Set Top margin at 3.0" and set Bottom margin at 6.25".
3. Center Title Page both Horizontally and Vertically.
4. To check if the Title Page fits within the Window, put it on top of this sheet and hold it up to the light. The Title Page should fit within the above square.

If you have any questions contact:

Sarah Pepper
210 JHZ Library
Grand Valley State University
Allendale, MI 49401
(616) 331-2621

Sample Acknowledgments Page

[The Acknowledgments are optional and follow the title page. A sample format is indicated below.]

Acknowledgments

In writing this final project, I have benefited from the encouragement, advice, and constructive criticism of Professors William B. Mabie, Susan L. Jones, and James M. Montgomery. My thanks go to them, as to the many others at Grand Valley State University, who have given much needed help. Last, but not least, I thank my family for their encouragement, help and support. Without their assistance this would not have been possible.

Susan Marie Student

[Note: Name only--no titles]

Note: The Acknowledgment is numbered with a Roman numeral, centered at the bottom of the page.

Sample Abstract

Abstract

Research has revealed important information about learning and effective teaching, yet most teacher evaluation systems in public schools throughout the country, including Leslie Central High School, have not been revised to reflect this new information. This project explores the recent history of teacher evaluation systems as well as contemporary thought regarding how to improve these systems. An effective teacher evaluation program must acknowledge the differing needs of teachers at various points in their careers and must expand beyond a traditional model that is based exclusively on administrator observation. The Teacher Evaluation System for Leslie Central High School addresses the varying needs of new teachers, experienced teachers, and struggling teachers. Additionally, it combines summative elements of evaluation that will assist administrators in making employment decisions, with formative elements of evaluation that will serve to support and encourage professional growth.

[Note: The Abstract is numbered with a Roman numeral, centered at the bottom of the page.]

Sample Table of Contents for Master's Project

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[Note: The Table of Contents is numbered with a Roman numeral, centered at the bottom of the page.]

Sample Data Form

Note: In order to fill out the data form without removing the formatting in place, hit the "insert" key and use underline formatting in Word. On Mac OS X, hit "ovr" in Microsoft Word and use underline formatting. Both of these will allow you to complete the form while using the current

**GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
ED 693/695 Data Form**

NAME: _____

MAJOR: (Choose only 1)

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| _____ Adult/High Ed | _____ Elem Ed | _____ SpEd Admin |
| _____ CSAL | _____ Ed Diff | _____ SpEd ECDD |
| _____ Early Child | _____ Mid & H.S. | _____ SpEd EI |
| _____ Ed Tech | _____ Read/Lang Arts | _____ SpEd LD |
| _____ Ed Leadership | _____ School Counseling | _____ TESOL |

TITLE: _____

PAPER TYPE: (Choose only 1) **SEM/YR COMPLETED:** _____

- __X__ Project
_____ Thesis

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL _____

ERIC DESCRIPTORS

[Using key words or phrases, choose several ERIC descriptors (5 - 7 minimum) to describe the contents of your project. ERIC descriptors can be found online at <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?nfpb=true&pageLabel=Thesaurus&nfls=false> Please delete these instructions from your Data Form.]

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

**** Note:** This page must be included/bound as the last page in your Master's Project.

SECTION IX: EVALUATION

Project Rubric

Research Elements	Distinguished (3)	Proficient (2)	Progressing (1)
Research Question -Knowledge of problem -Importance of problem and rationale -Clear statement of purpose -Knowledge of background -Key terms, limitations	Shows thorough knowledge of problem, context, and importance. The research question is well-reasoned, and the findings would make an important contribution to knowledge or practice	Shows adequate knowledge of the problem and educational context. Contains clear statement of purpose. Findings may contribute to knowledge or practice.	Shows limited knowledge of the problem and/or its context. Statement of purpose is limited in clarity or reasoning or potential importance.
Literature Review -Synthesize the research -Analyze key work in the field -Develop an argument for the project -Identify gaps in the literature -Identify the theoretical perspective driving the project	Analyzes key research as it directly relates to the research question. Develops a logical argument for study based on research. Shows how study would fill gaps in research. Thorough understanding of theoretical stance.	Summarizes works in the field that relate to the research question. States how this study would contribute to knowledge or practice. States theoretical perspectives.	Cites work in the field, but may be limited in scope, relevance, analysis, or explanation of how this work relates to this research question. Explanation of theoretical perspective may be limited.
Research Description -Restate the problem -Explain components of the project in detail -Include background and historical context -Offer solution problem along with conclusions -Describe evaluation criteria and plans for dissemination	Describes components and evaluation criteria thoroughly, including clear and well supported rationales. Findings (actual or projected) are analyzed thoughtfully, lead to reasonable conclusions, and include plans for use.	Components and evaluation criteria are adequately described. Rationales are stated. Findings (actual or potential), conclusions, and dissemination plans are stated.	Components and evaluation criteria are described but may be limited in thoroughness or rationale. Results, conclusions, and dissemination plans are included but may be limited in detail, logic, or usefulness.
Presentation -Chapters are aligned with APA guidelines -Citations use APA format -Reference list is complete, has at least 25 items, and is aligned with APA format -Title page, table of contents, appendixes in correct format -Abstract contains adequate description of the project	Presentation adheres to APA guidelines and graduate-level writing expectations. Contains no more than 5 writing errors and no more than 5 errors related to APA format.	Presentation uses APA guidelines and conforms to basic writing expectations. Contains no more than 10 writing errors and no more than 10 errors related to APA format.	Presentation conforms poorly to APA format and writing expectations. Contains up to 15 writing errors and up to 15 errors related to APA format.

SECTION X: BINDING REQUIREMENTS

For the master's project publishing process please check the following website:

<http://www.gvsu.edu/library/index.cfm?id=F65E06F9-BEE4-7CDC-A2CE6EA38399D5D3#project>

Please check with your project advisor for additional information.