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- Copies
- Type
- Paper
- Margins
- Pagination
- Figures and Tables
- Quotations
- Footnotes
- Abstract
- References
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- Formats

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INTRODUCTION TO WRITING A PROJECT OR THESIS

Submission of your master’s project or thesis is one of the last steps in your graduate education. It is a serious, scholarly and formal undertaking by graduate students to demonstrate their ability to investigate, develop, and synthesize materials pertaining to a topic in their field of study. The project or thesis that is submitted not only reflects the student’s scholarship, but also becomes a lasting example of scholarship. Future scholars may read the project or thesis and judge both the writer and the University based on that reading. This being so, it is assumed that a student will produce a work of the highest possible quality.

Before submitting a project or thesis, students must have met all requirements for his or her Master of Science in Criminal Justice, which are outlined in the SCJ Graduate Handbook (i.e., 36 semester hours, including 6 hours of thesis (CJ 695) or 3 hours of project (CJ 693)).

The difference between a thesis and a project is defined in more detail in the following chapters, but some general, overall differences are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT A: 2014-2015 Cohort and prior only</th>
<th>PROJECT B: 2014-2015 Cohort and prior only</th>
<th>THESIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Agency oriented and/or policy specific</td>
<td>Academic audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose/Scope</td>
<td>Applied – more descriptive</td>
<td>Overview of body of literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Typically used to facilitate agency progress</td>
<td>Used to provide a comprehensive examination of criminal justice-related topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerations</td>
<td>Often register for internship for access to agency representative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be emphasized that the decision as to whether a given piece of work is a thesis or a project is the prerogative of the student’s faculty committee, based on the guidelines developed by the Graduate Committee and specified in this manual. It must be further emphasized that any creative project is not sufficient in itself to meet the requirement of a project and must be accompanied by a scholarly document that closely follows the outline presented in Section 3, “Writing a Project.”

The following steps provide an outline for writing and securing approval for the project or thesis. The need for adequate planning cannot be overemphasized! Because of the deadlines for approval, it is recommended that students allow a full academic year to complete the project or thesis. You will also be given the opportunity to complete (or at least begin) many of these steps in your required core courses and elective courses (for example, you will most likely complete a concept paper in your CJ 606 course). Where applicable, the appropriate course that coincides with each step is indicated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Meet with proposed chair. An informal discussion of topic/question would take place to see if faculty member will serve as chair. Once faculty agrees to chair then student develops a 3-5 page concept paper. *The concept paper is often begun in CJ 606 (or a relevant elective course, such as CJ 699 or CJ 691).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Once concept paper is developed student meets with chair. If concept paper is accepted then discussion of other committee members ensues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Student, in conjunction and consultation with chair, recruits committee members. A meeting of all committee members and student where discussion of project/thesis may take place. A timeline for proposal is discussed and agreed upon. Approved Project/Thesis Committee Form is filled out, signed, and given to Director of Graduate Program for signature. Committee form, approved concept paper, and task timeline are placed in student’s file</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Student works with chair to write and revise thesis/project proposal (for thesis or project A) or project outline (project B only) using outline in Graduate Handbook. If research involves human subjects, student must submit and have approved application by human research review committee. *CJ 606 will provide an overview of the HRRC, human subjects issues, and may also provide the student the opportunity to begin his or her HRRC application (if applicable).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. For <strong>Project</strong>: once project proposal (option A) or outline (option B) is accepted by all committee members, the Approved Project Proposal Form is signed by all parties and given to Graduate Director for final signature. <strong>For Thesis</strong>: A thesis proposal defense date, time and location is set and Graduate Director is informed of this at least two weeks prior to defense so it can be posted for faculty and students to attend. A copy of the proposal must be made available for all to examine at least one week prior to defense. Once proposal is defended and accepted by all committee members, the thesis proposal approval form must be signed by all parties and given to Graduate Director for final signature. Approved Project or Thesis Proposal/Outline Form and copy of project/thesis proposal/outline is placed in student’s file.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Student and Chair set and maintains task timeline for completion of final project/thesis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Student writes and revises Project/Thesis with guidance from Chair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Student provides copies of draft of project/thesis to Chair. Upon approval from chair the student provides copies of final project/thesis to committee members.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Student and committee set date, time and location for defense of project/thesis and inform Graduate Director at least two weeks in advance so it can be posted for students, faculty and interested parties can attend. Once project/thesis is accepted, the final project/thesis acceptance form is signed by all parties and given to Graduate Director for final signature.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Submission of hard copies of Projects or Thesis is no longer required. Instead all Projects and Thesis must be filed electronically. An electronic copy (PDF) of your Project with the signed approval page must be submitted the Graduate Coordinator and the Project Chair. In addition, all Theses must also be submitted electronically with the signed approval page to the Office of Graduate Studies and Scholarworks@GVSU. Please see the OGS Guidelines for Preparation of Theses and Dissertation for further questions. <a href="http://www.gvsu.edu/gs/thesis-and-dissertation-information-35.htm">http://www.gvsu.edu/gs/thesis-and-dissertation-information-35.htm</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Chapter Format of Project and Thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT A</th>
<th>PROJECT B</th>
<th>OUTLINE</th>
<th>THESIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Chapter 1 – Introduction</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Includes:</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Problem Statement</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hypothesis Testing/Grounded Theory</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chapter 2 – Literature Review</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GOAL</td>
<td>Discover what we do not know/gap in knowledge or develop hypothesis or grounded theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Chapter 2 – Comprehensive Review</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GOAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chapter 3 – Methodology</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GOAL</td>
<td>To explain what was done to answer research question(s)/justify your research design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Restate hypothesis(es)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Includes:</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Data Collection/Instrumentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sample/population</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Data analysis plan</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(what kind, why, how, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Chapter 3 – Conclusion</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GOAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chapter 4 – Results</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GOAL</td>
<td>Empirical findings with interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Findings and interpretation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agency impact and/or recommendation(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use of the Designated Style Manual

The SCJ graduate program has specified a particular style manual that is to be used in conjunction with this Guide. The most current edition of the designated style manual should be used. The designated manual is the A.P.A. Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. The designated style manual is to be used for the following in the project or thesis:

- citations within the text;
- tables, charts and graphs;
- quotations;
- endnotes or footnotes; lists of works cited or references;
- headings or subheadings;
- any other element not described in this guide.

In addition, theses must follow all requirements of the Office of Graduate Studies Guidelines for the Preparation of Thesis and Dissertations 

Plagiarism

Assumed by GVSU is that each student possesses an exceptional level of academic integrity. Section 223.00 & 223.01 of the Student Code are reproduced below for your reference.

SECTION 223.00 INTEGRITY OF SCHOLARSHIP AND GRADES

Truth and Honesty. The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles, and in so doing protect the validity of University grades. This means that all academic work will be done by the student to whom it is assigned without unauthorized aid of any kind.

Instructors, for their part, will exercise care in the planning and supervision of academic work, so that honest effort will be positively encouraged. Compliance shall include compliance with the following specific rules:

a) No student shall knowingly, without authorization, procure, provide or accept any materials which contain questions or answers to any examination or assignment.

b) No student shall, without authorization, complete, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person.

c) No student shall, without authorization, allow any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, by another person.

d) No student shall knowingly plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his/her own.

e) No student shall submit work that has been previously graded, or is being submitted concurrently to more than one course, without authorization from the instructor(s) of the class(es) to which the student wishes to submit it.

Section 223.01: 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 writings of others 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.

**Plagiarism is a serious offense and is cause for formal University discipline.**

### Use of Copyrighted Material

The U.S. Copyright Law (Ph 94-533) provides federal copyright protection for both published and unpublished works. Therefore, authors who wish to include quotations, illustrations, charts, graphs, musical arrangements and so forth in their theses or projects should make every effort to be sure that reproduction of the copyrighted material does not exceed the doctrine of “fair use,” which considers both the purpose and character of the use of copyrighted material. Unpublished works, as well as works published without valid copyright notice, are eligible for protection. Absence of a c-world (©) does not necessarily mean that a work is in the public domain. Tabular arrangements and compilations are specifically covered under copyright law. Permission to reprint or adapt charts, tables, graphs, tabular arrangements, musical arrangements and so forth must be sought from the copyright holder.

#### Fair Use

If a work is protected by copyright, permission must be acquired prior to incorporation of that work into a new document. Extracts and quotations may be used to a limited extent for purposes of illustration and criticism without permission. Material that is in the public domain, such as legal codes, historical documents, and government publications are usually not subject to copyright restrictions. If in doubt, check with the Committee Chair.

#### Securing Permission

Efforts to obtain permission to use material from other sources should begin well in advance of the final draft. The student is expected to acquire written permission to use the material, and evidence of such permission must be provided with the final copy of the project or thesis, and may be incorporated as an appendix. A statement of permission must appear in a caption or some other obvious location in the project or thesis. The owner of the copyright may request that specific words or phrases be used to indicate that permission was granted. Requests for permission should be directed to the copyright holder, requesting a “one-time, non-profit educational use.”

### Human Subjects Protections & Review

If the research or project involves human subjects, the student must secure approval from GVSU’s Human Research Review Committee (HRRC) **BEFORE** beginning any research or data collection. “Human subjects research” includes **ANY** research that involves humans or records gathered on humans. In addition to direct intervention or manipulation, it includes such activities as surveys, interviews, and videotaping. There are several review categories, depending upon the level of risk to the subjects and the nature of the subject population. The HRRC will determine the appropriate level of review. Although some reviews can be concluded in a shorter period of time, the HRRC normally meets only once per month. Please note that ethics, human subjects considerations, and HRRC review processes will be thoroughly covered in CJ 606: Research Methods I. Further, you will determine the level of review for your project (exempt, expedited, or full board review) in conjunction with standards determined by the federal government and your project/thesis chair.

**Points to remember:**

- **Exempt** research is activity that meets the definition of research as defined by federal regulation but is specifically exempted from application of the regulations by definition;
- All projects and theses that include the use of human subjects must be cleared through the IRB;
- Clearance must be obtained **before** research or data collection begins, as approval cannot be granted retroactively;
- Allow time for the IRB to review a protocol; the faculty committee which conducts this review meets only once a month;
- Submit a copy of the IRB approval to the Graduate Director with submission of the project or thesis.

Human subject review ensures that the basic rights of research subjects are protected. At GVSU, the HRRC serves as the primary mechanism for the protection of human subjects. All research involving human subjects performed at GVSU and/or by GVSU students, staff, and/or faculty must be reviewed and approved by the HRRC prior to beginning the research. The HRRC board meets monthly, except in August. The HRRC does not process applications during exam week or between semesters.
More detailed information about the HRRC can be found at: http://www.gvsu.edu/hrrc/
Further information regarding human subject regulations decisions can be found at:
http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/checklists/decisioncharts.html

Title 45 Part 46 contains the relevant Federal Regulations regarding Human Subjects Research. The Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP) provides these regulations for reference purposes.

CJ 693 – GRADUATE PROJECT OPTION A

The Project A option is only available to students who have entered the program during the 2014-2015 academic year and prior.

Some students will choose to complete a project rather than a thesis. Project option A is typically carried out in cooperation with a criminal justice, juvenile justice, or private security agency under faculty supervision. Students are expected to design a project that will: address the development of a particular policy or set of procedures or plan for responding to specific administrative problems or issues within an agency or institution. The essence of the project is to use the academic research literature to inform policy development, problem-solving, and agency decision-making. Students who are currently working in the field may find the Project especially relevant to the work they do or as a vehicle for assisting their employers.

Please note that all GVSU research projects involving human subjects require approval from the Human Research Review Committee. Even if your project does not involve any risk or very low risk to human subjects, as long as it involves interacting with human beings in any way to gather data or information, prior approval is required.

Prerequisites

Before a student may enroll for project credit hours, they must have 18 credits of graduate coursework completed including CJ 606 and an approved project committee, with the proper documentation completed and submitted to the graduate program coordinator. Assuming agreement over the proposal, a Project Proposal Approval form must be signed by all committee members and forwarded to the Director of the Graduate Program to be approved, signed and then placed in the student's file. IT IS THE STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY TO HAVE ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS SIGN THE Project Proposal Approval Form. Once the form is completed (with all signatures), a permit to register for the credits will be issued by the Director of the School of Criminal Justice

PROJECT COMMITTEE

Students selecting the project option must select a project committee by the time they have completed 18 credits of coursework. The project committee consists of a chair, an additional faculty member, and an agency representative. Any faculty member in the School of Criminal Justice may chair a project committee. The additional faculty member may be from the SCJ or from another department (where the discipline represented is relevant to the student's project). The agency representative must be an executive or supervisor at a level superior to the student if the student is currently working in that agency or organization.

Once a project chair and committee have been selected, the student must then submit an Approval of Project Committee form to the Director of the Graduate Program who will verify that the project committee meets the rules regarding committee membership and will approve, sign and place the form in the student's file.

Special Requirements of the Project Committee Chair

1. Ensure that the project committee meets periodically and functions effectively.
2. Meet periodically with the agency representative to discuss the progress of the project.
3. Organize, facilitate, and lead the student's presentation of project in an appropriate setting.
4. Ensure that materials are read by committee members in a timely fashion.
5. Work with Graduate Director to set day, time and place of oral defense of project and appropriate notification of faculty, students and others.
6. Organize, facilitate, and lead the student's final oral defense of project.
7. Work with the student to facilitate the submission of paperwork needed for graduation.

Responsibilities of the Project Committee and Chair

1. Approve the nature and scope of the project to be developed.
2. Meet with the student to assess and discuss the project proposal.
3. Review drafts of the student’s project and identify needed revisions.
4. Participate in the student's defense of the project.

**PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

**Project Proposal Presentation to Committee**

Students choosing to do a project must prepare a detailed proposal for the project. The proposal demonstrates that the student has clearly identified a policy or administrative problem or issue that is of significance and that can be addressed by the student’s project. The essence of the project is to use the academic research literature to inform policy development, problem-solving, or agency decision-making. The proposal should include the following information: the policy, problem, or issue that needs to be addressed, the extent of relevant literature related to the project (i.e., literature from criminal or juvenile justice administration, organizational or administrative theory, similar policies, procedures, and evaluations utilized in other settings), and the schedule for completion of stages of work. Once the committee approves the project proposal the student can register for CJ 693 and work towards the completion of the project.

**Project Style**

The project is to be written in American Psychological Association (APA) style. Copies of the APA Publication Manual are available at the GVSU bookstores. See style guide below for specifics.

**Oral Defense the Project**

An oral defense of the project before the campus community and his or her committee is required for all Master of Science candidates who choose to write a Project. Upon completion of the Graduate Project, the Project Chair in conjunction with Graduate Director will arrange for an appropriate time and location for the student to make a presentation of the project to the campus community, faculty, students, and agency personnel. Normally, the student will begin with a brief summary of the Project followed by questions from the Project Chair and Committee and general audience. The maximum time for an oral defense is two hours. The oral defense is open to all members of the university community.

The final revised draft of the project must be submitted to the project committee chair at least two weeks prior to the defense date. Students are expected to carefully consider the comments of their project committee. The project committee chair has the responsibility to ensure that the recommendations of the committee are incorporated into the revised project. The Committee Chair has final responsibility for project approval.

The project committee chair has the responsibility to ensure that the defense is conducted in a fair and appropriate manner. Questions will be limited to the project or general knowledge related to the project. An oral defense requires detailed responses from the student rather than “yes” and “no” answers. Oral defense questions should be designed to allow the student to demonstrate his or her ability to integrate information gained from coursework and the project. The project committee chair will determine if questions are appropriate. Following the defense period, the audience and the student will be asked to leave the room while the committee chair leads a discussion of the defense. All faculty members may discuss the student’s performance. However, only the student’s Project Committee shall vote on the acceptability of the project in its present form. A majority vote of the project committee members is required to declare that a student has successfully completed the defense. Students will be notified immediately as to the outcome of the defense. The project committee and chair must then sign the Project Defense Approval form and submit it to the Director of the Graduate Program indicating the outcome of the defense.

The following rules apply to the final oral defense:

1. Depending on the nature of the project, the presentation may take place in the agency or institutional setting.
2. The Graduate Director will announce the defense to the faculty at least TWO weeks in advance of the scheduled defense. The defense announcement should be made to other appropriate departments.
3. A copy of the project must be available to all faculty in the SCJ Office at least ONE week in advance of the defense.
PROJECT A OUTLINE

Project Proposal

Once you have decided on a topic, selected a chair, and selected a committee, you will begin writing your project proposal. The purpose of the project proposal is to set forth a plan for conducting your research. A good plan makes the rest of the tasks easier to execute and gives your chair and committee confidence that you know how to conduct the study. There is no required format for writing the proposal, but there are essential items that need to be addressed even though the order of the items may vary according to personal choice, research methods, topic, and final product produced. For the most part, however, the three chapters described below are typically always included in the proposal.

Essentially, the proposal consists of the first three chapters of the project. Upon completion of the project, it is often necessary to make changes in the first three chapters (what was the proposal). For example, in Chapters 1 and 2, it is necessary to change verbs from future tense to past tense. In addition, you also may want to update the literature review to include the most up-to-date information (since your proposal was written); in some cases, it is necessary to make changes in certain sections of the methodology. For example, if your sample did not turn out as planned, or you conducted the research differently than indicated in the proposal, you will need to make changes in Chapter 3. Your final project should reflect what you actually did and found as opposed to the proposal, which was a plan for what you planned to do.

Chapter 1 is the what chapter. In this chapter, you describe what you are going to research, why you are going to research it, and provide a brief description of how you think you might conduct your research. Chapter 1 should lay out the problem that you address within the agency that you have partnered with. Chapter 2 is the foundation chapter. In this chapter, you review the literature that relates to and supports your topic. Chapter 3 is the how chapter. Here, you describe how you are going to conduct the research (i.e., which method or methods you are going to employ).

Final Project

The final project will contain one final chapter in addition to the three chapters listed in the proposal. Chapter 4 is the results chapter and will include the analysis of the data that was collected and the final “product” (whatever that may be).

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 is the what, why, and how chapter. In this chapter, you describe what criminal justice related issue you are going to address, why it is significant, the process that was used to collect and assess the body of literature reviewed for this project, and a brief summary of the nature and scope of the following chapters.

Outstanding introductions often start with a hook. The hook can be a great quote, a compelling statistic, or an alarming news story. It should be something. It should be something that is going to grab the interests of the reader right away. It also helps make the case for they the project is important, new, interesting, or significant. Outstanding introductions show awareness from the start that the student knows what they are writing about.

Some specific areas that will most likely appear in Chapter 1 are included below. Introductions should incorporate the key literature pertaining to the project, lay out a topic statement, and include a layout of what is to come in the following chapters.

Statement of the Problem

It is very important that the problem be stated clearly. The essence of the problem can be stated in a sentence or two, but it should not stand alone in the section. Statements that describe the area of the problem, conditions that relate to it, or a bit of background can be included to support the problem statement. After reading the problem statement, readers should know clearly what you are studying and can examine that in terms of the proposed methodology.

It is often helpful if you clearly flag the problem statement with something like: “therefore, the problem to be addressed in this study is…” or “thus, there is a clear need to address the problem of…” Remember, this is a statement, so there needs to be a problem that can be addressed.

Background of the Problem
The purpose of this section is to indicate why the problem is a problem and why it should be addressed. You may have put a bit of this in the problem statement section, which is acceptable, but here you will expand this thinking. The purpose of this section is to indicate why the problem is a problem and why it should be addressed. You may have put a bit of this in the problem statement section, which is acceptable, but here you will expand this thinking. In this section, you expand upon the problem with information from the literature or even agency-specific information. By making reference to the literature, you demonstrate that you have a good understanding of the stated problem and some idea of what other research has been conducted or the scope of the problem, within the framework of the agency with which you are working. The background section also will help to enhance the reader’s knowledge of the problem.

You also may want to provide some idea of the breadth and depth of the problem. Statistics may be helpful here. Perhaps the problem has never been researched or has never been researched the way you would like to do it. Perhaps you want to address the problem in a different context than it has previously been addressed. The problem may relate to a social condition that needs to be rectified. Whatever your rationale for why the problem needs to be studied, you need to defend it as worthy of study (i.e., why is it significant?)

**Purpose of the Study**
In the purpose section, you should indicate why you are doing the study. The purpose goes way beyond the specific data you will collect. In other words, the purpose is not to indicate that you will gather this or that data, but why you are gathering that data and what you will do with it. For example, you might study different leadership styles to determine the impact of different styles on subordinates. The reason that you are doing the study is to improve understanding of leadership or to add to the knowledge based on leadership.

In the introduction, you should also define terms that are technical that readers may not understand, such as professional jargon and agency-specific terms. Be sure to define terms that you are using in ways that they are not normally used and terms that have multiple meanings. There is often a tendency to define too many terms; when deciding if a term should be defined, ask yourself if the people who are to read the project are likely to know the term. It also is important to define the terms that are critical to understand the studies cited and discussed in your literature review.

**Research Design**
Some committee chairs and/or members may prefer that you include a brief section regarding the design of your study in Chapter 1. If this is preferred, address the design that you intend to use and indicate why you think it is the appropriate design. For example, “interviews will be used in this study because the intent is to gather information from agency employees on their perceptions of leadership styles within the organization.”

**Hypotheses or Research Questions**
In this section, you state what will be measured or the questions to be answered. You may use hypotheses and/or research questions. If you are doing a qualitative study, you might want to use study objectives. You are more likely to use hypotheses in a quantitative study when you are going to statistically analyze the data to determine if there is a statistical relationship between variables. Generally, researchers address two types of hypotheses. You may not have hypotheses, however, depending on your project. This is something that will be determined once you have decided on a topic and have a better idea of how you will address the problem.

Research questions are the questions that you are trying to answer through your research (i.e., what should be included in an effective evaluation of a homeless youth program? What types of problems do parolees face when they are released from prison?)

**Significance of the Study**
Here, you will indicate why the study is important in terms of what audience, organization, or institution might benefit from the results. How might the results be used to improve something (i.e., policy implications)? How might the results add information to an existing database? In your research at GVSU, you are also required to address the social impact of your proposed study. Some combine the significance the social impact in this section.

**CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

While it is not necessary to do a complete literature review in the proposal, a majority of students do. If you choose not to do a complete review, it is necessary to review enough to determine if a body of literature related to your problem exists and to demonstrate that you can write a review. The final thesis will have an exhaustive literature review; many students try to complete the literature review with the proposal. Each student should be mindful that the literature review is dynamic and will be in constant flux throughout the process (as new research is discovered it should be incorporated into literature review).

A literature review is not a book report on what various authors have said. It is an essay woven around your research problem and your research questions or hypotheses to provide a logical or research basis for the study. Some students feel that they must include
every study they can find in the review. This is not necessary! One of the marks of a scholar is to know what to exclude as well as what to include. A selection of representative literature should be the goal. Literature can be related to the problem in a number of ways. It can be related to one aspect of your study or it can be literature that is in direct support of your study. Throughout the review, you should tie the content to the problem and the research questions or hypotheses. You should also include literature related to the method you are using in the study.

Certainly, the key to a good literature review is organization. In the introduction to the review of the literature, you should provide an advance organizer for the reader. Organize the review in some logical fashion. You may want to begin with literature that is broader and less related to the specific problem and move to literature that is directly related to the problem. This is called the funnel approach and is essentially a deductive approach. Generally, students find this a useful and easy way to organize. You may also do the review the opposite way – an upside down funnel model. At the end of the review, you should have a “Summary” section in which you highlight the salient parts of the literature that support your investigation.

Outstanding literature reviews are able to organize the literature, usually around themes. Outstanding literature reviews show an awareness of the different levels at which the literature may be relevant to the topic and succinctly synthesize information from a broad body of sources. Students should focus on concepts and ideas and not who said what.

What usually separates a thesis from a project is that the thesis is based in theory. An outstanding thesis knows the place of theory and uses it to help tell the story. Indeed, theory shows up in the introduction, literature review and substantive parts of the thesis. While it is rare for students to create a theory, outstanding theses often synthesize theories or use conceptual ideas in creative, nuanced ways.

Committee members vary in their position about the length of the literature review. However, in general, the length depends on the complexity of the research and the amount of existing literature on the topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review Checklist

☐ Locate relevant literature
  – Identify key authors and journals
  – Use bibliographic reference sources
  – Use computerized literature searches
  – Obtain reprints and preprints
  – Look at literature from other disciplines
  – Scan tables of contents of key journals
  – Use reference lists from other articles, chapters and books
  – Use primary sources
  – Avoid the popular press

☐ Critically read the literature
  – Identify themes
  – Identify strengths and weaknesses of individual articles
  – Identify strengths and weaknesses of field as a whole
  – Collect photocopies or notes

☐ Prepare to write
  – Investigate length and format parameters
  – Make a preliminary outline
    • Include page allocations
    • Limit the scope of your review
    • Organize the literature you will cover

☐ Write the review
  – Write the introduction
  – Write subsections
    • Use transitions and integrative phrasing
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Students whose methods are outstanding really understand what they did and why and can discuss them competently and are thorough in their documentation. Some specific areas that will most likely be in the thesis are outlined below. As with each section, this should be discussed with thesis chair and committee.

Description of the Research Design
What is the research design you are using? Is it quantitative or qualitative? If quantitative, what is the design? If you are doing qualitative, is it a case study, historical, field research, phenomenology, etc.? Whatever the specific design used, you need to address why it is an appropriate design for the way you are conducting your study. Keep in mind that a problem may often be addressed with more than one type of research. You are also demonstrating to your committee that you understand the design to be used in the study (and why it is more appropriate than alternative designs).

Target Population
What is the nature of the population, event or situation under study? What are the major factors or characteristics of the population, event or situation? If you are drawing a sample, the target population is the group from which you will draw the sample, and to which you will attempt to generalize the results. The target population can be people, organizations, events, ideas or other entities. It is important to carefully describe attributes and/or characteristics of the target population for those who might want to replicate the research or assist you in interpreting findings in terms of the population.

Sampling Procedure
If you are doing a study for which it is appropriate to draw a sample, you need to indicate the sampling procedure to be used and explain why the one you have chosen is appropriate for your study. Will you use a probability or non-probability sample and why? Some examples of probability samples are simple random sample, stratified random sample, cluster sample and systematic sample. In a probability sample, each member of the sample population must have an equal chance of being selected. Some examples of non-probability samples are convenience, quota, snowball/chain and purposive. If you do not use a type of random sample, you can only generalize to the sample you used (limited exceptions to this statement). You also need to indicate the sampling frame, which is a list of names from which you will select the sample. The names can be people, organizations, colleges, groups, etc.

Sample
Finally, what are the characteristics or demographics of the sample you intend to select? How many or what percent of the sampling frame do you intend to select and why that percent? How is the sample representative of the population you described earlier? If the sample is drawn properly from the sampling frame and the sampling frame is representative of the population, you should be able to generalize research findings to the population from which the sample was drawn.

Treatment / Intervention
Except in isolated cases, you will only have a treatment (otherwise known as “intervention”) if you are doing experimental or quasi-experimental research. In either of these, the best designs include at least a pre- and post-testing with a treatment in between the two. In a true experimental design, subjects are randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group. That is the basic difference between a true experimental design and a quasi-experimental design. With either design, you will typically be using an independent (treatment) variable and one or more dependent (outcome) variables. These variables are typically indicated with the hypotheses. In this type of study, you are measuring the post-test against the pre-test to determine if the independent variable had an impact. When using a treatment, it is necessary to describe - in detail - the nature of the treatment so that others may replicate the study if desired. If there is more than one experimental group with each having different treatments, all treatments must be described.

Instrumentation
The purpose in this section is to describe the measurement instrument or data gathering tool you will utilize in your research. If you are using an existing instrument, and validity and reliability data are available, report that information. If available, you need to include how the developer or an instrument arrived at such findings. You also may need permission to use a published instrument. Written permission, usually via e-mail should be included in the appendix of your completed thesis. If you develop an instrument, describe the process followed during the development and how you will determine the validity and reliability of the instrument. Describe how/why the instrument is appropriate for the data needed. Sometimes it is useful to make a matrix of the research questions
or hypotheses with the instrument items to determine if the instrument is clearly related and that all variables are covered in the instrument (content validity).

**Data Collection Procedures**
These are the fine points related to collecting your data. Describe, specifically, how the data will be gathered. If using survey research, will you use questionnaires or interviews? If questionnaires, will they be mailed or administered to an audience? When and how will they be mailed? Will return postage be provided? How much time will respondents have to reply? If interviews, will they be phone or face-to-face? How much time will it take per interview, to complete the entire process? Will the interviews be taped? Is there a basic set of criteria and/or screening protocol to select research respondents? If there is a pre-test, will there be an end-test or a post-test? When and how will they be administered? If the study is observational, when, where, how, and for how long will the observations be conducted? In addition to these stated strategies, it is important that you convey why such choices are necessary and appropriate.

Will human subjects approval be necessary? Is a consent form needed? Check GVSU’s Human Resource Review Committee (HRRC) / Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies. When you need to complete a Human Subjects Form, it should be submitted with the proposal, because without it, the proposal will not be approved. This is a task that you will likely need faculty co-sponsorship to complete; therefore, as with other decisions regarding your research, you should consult your Chair and committee members.

**Data Analysis**
Describe how the data will be analyzed and presented. Will the data be presented in a descriptive format with tables, graphs, or percentage calculations? Will there be statistical analysis? If so, what statistics will be used and why are they correct choices for your data. If you are doing qualitative research, will you perform content analysis? How will you present the data to your reader?

Keep in mind that there are four levels of measurement – nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio. When you know what type of measurement scale fits the data, you can determine what statistical procedure to use for data analysis. It is important to display the analysis in such a way that the reader can understand and follow it by means of your discussion of it. It is also imperative that you relate the analysis procedure to the hypothesis or research question. For example, you may use two different types of analysis for two different hypotheses or research questions. Your readers need to know what belongs with what.

**Chapter 3: Methodology Checklist**

- Write the different subsections of the method section
  - Design
  - Subjects/sampling
  - Setting and apparatus
  - Variables
  - Procedure
  - Triangulation

- Follow research ethics
  - Read ethical guidelines
  - Write consent and assent forms
  - Obtain approval from relevant research review boards

- Operationalize your variables

- Evaluate the reliability of prospective instruments
  - Interrater reliability (scorer generalizability)
  - Test-retest reliability (temporal stability)
  - Alternate form reliability
  - Internal consistency (item generalizability)
  - Determine which forms of reliability are most appropriate for your study

- Evaluate the validity of prospective instruments
- Face validity
- Content validity
- Criterion-related validity
  - Concurrent validity
  - Predictive validity
- Construct validity
  - Convergent validity
  - Discriminate validity
  - Discriminative validity
- Determine which forms of validity are most appropriate for your study

☐ Look broadly for decent measures
  - Use measurement compendiums
  - Use computer-based databases
  - Use the published literature

☐ Adapt others’ measures with caution

☐ Get copies of measures

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Chapter 4 will not be included in the proposal; rather, chapter 4 will be the last chapter of the final project and will include the results of the research detailed in chapter 3. Chapter 4 is the results/discussion chapter, and includes an analysis of the data you collected (keep in mind that “data” in this sense could take on many different forms, such as numerical data, qualitative data, literature, policies, etc.). You also will include a discussion of the final “product” of your project (e.g., policy and procedure manual, model policy, evaluation tool, statistics describing a problem, etc.). Depending on what your product is, it might be included in the results section (e.g., model policy) or could be discussion in chapter 4, but included as an appendix (e.g., a policy and procedure manual or evaluation tool).

Chapter 4: Results Checklist (all steps are not applicable to every project)

☐ Collect the data
  - Supervise assistants regularly (if applicable)
  - Catch and address problems early

☐ Analyze the data

☐ Review your literature and methods
  - “Freshen” the references
  - Alter methods section to reflect actual procedures

☐ Present the data related to the purposes of the study

☐ Present results in an orderly, logical manner
  - Order and sequence the results
  - Include relevant information
  - Present results clearly
  - Follow conventions in APA style in presenting statistics
  - Create well-crafted, clear tables
  - Prepare well-crafted, clear figures

☐ Create the “final” product of your project; include a discussion in this chapter

☐ Include the actual product or reference it as an appendix
CJ 693 - GRADUATE PROJECT OPTION B

The Project B option is only available to students who have entered the program during the 2014-2015 academic year and prior.

For project option B, students are expected to design a project that will provide a comprehensive overview of a body of scholarship addressing a criminal justice related issue. The paper must be an original work that has not been submitted previously and must not be merely a revision of a previously submitted paper. Students who choose to complete a graduate project are often not interested in pursuing a more advanced degree (i.e., a doctorate). However, completing a project rather than a thesis does not preclude a student from going on to pursue his or her doctorate or other terminal degree. Students should be aware, however, that completing a thesis rather than a project may better prepare them for the rigors of completing a dissertation (a requirement for the Ph.D. or other terminal degree), as a thesis more closely mimics the structure and academic rigor required of a thesis.

Prerequisites

Before a student may enroll for project credit hours, they must have 18 credits of graduate coursework completed including CJ 606 and an approved project committee, with the proper documentation completed and submitted to the graduate program coordinator. Assuming agreement over the proposal, a Project Outline Approval form must be signed by all committee members and forwarded to the Director of the Graduate Program to be approved, signed and then placed in the student's file. IT IS THE STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY TO HAVE ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS SIGN THIS FORM. Once the form is completed (with all signatures), a permit to register for the course will be issued by the director of the School of Criminal Justice.

PROJECT COMMITTEE

Students selecting the project option must select a project committee by the time they have completed 18 credits of coursework. The project committee consists of a chair (the project chair must be a faculty member in the School of Criminal Justice) and two additional faculty members. The additional faculty members may be from the SCJ or from another department (where the discipline represented is relevant to the student's project).

Once a project chair and committee have been selected, the student must then submit an Approval of Project Committee form to the Director of the Graduate Program who will verify that the Project Committee meets the rules regarding committee membership and will approve, sign and place the form in the student's file.

Special Requirements of the Project Committee Chair

1. Ensure that the Project Committee meets periodically and functions effectively.
2. Meet periodically with the agency representative to discuss the progress of the project.
3. Organize, facilitate, and lead the student's presentation of project in an appropriate setting.
4. Ensure that materials are read by committee members in a timely fashion.
5. Work with graduate coordinator to set day, time and place of oral defense of project and appropriate notification of faculty, students and others.
6. Organize, facilitate, and lead the student's final oral defense of project.
7. Work with the student to facilitate the submission of paperwork needed for graduation.

Responsibilities of the Project Committee and Chair

1. Approve the nature and scope of the project to be developed.
2. Meet with the student to assess and discuss the project proposal.
3. Review drafts of the student's project and identify needed revisions.
4. Participate in the student's defense of the project.

PROJECT B REQUIREMENTS

Project Concept Paper
Students choosing to do project option B must submit a concept paper that demonstrates that the student has clearly identified a significant criminal justice related issue and the body of scholarship that they intend to review.
The concept paper should include the following information: the issue that needs to be addressed, the extent of relevant literature related to the project, and a plan for completion of the project, including committee review. Once the committee approves the concept paper the student may register for CJ 693 and work towards the completion of the project.

**Project Style**

The project is to be written in current edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) style. Copies of the APA Publication Manual are available for purchase at the GVSU bookstores or online. See style guide below for specifics.

**Oral Defense of Project Option B**

An oral defense of the final project before the campus community and the individual student’s project committee is required for all Master of Science candidates who choose to write a project. Upon completion of the project, the project chair, in conjunction with the graduate coordinator, will arrange for an appropriate time and location for the student to make a presentation of the project to the campus community, faculty, students, and agency personnel. Normally, the student will begin with a brief summary of the project followed by questions from the project chair and committee and general audience. The maximum time for an oral defense is two hours. The oral defense is open to all members of the university community.

The final revised draft of the project must be submitted to the project chair at least two weeks prior to the defense date. Students are expected to carefully consider the comments of their project committee. The project chair has the responsibility to ensure that the recommendations of the committee are incorporated into the revised project. The project chair has final responsibility for project approval.

The project chair has the responsibility to ensure that the defense is conducted in a fair and appropriate manner. Questions will be limited to the project or general knowledge related to the project. An oral defense requires detailed responses from the student rather than “yes” and “no” answers. Oral defense questions should be designed to allow the student to demonstrate his or her ability to integrate information gained from coursework and the project. The project chair will determine if questions are appropriate. Following the defense period, the audience and the student will be asked to leave the room while the project chair leads a discussion of the defense. All faculty members may discuss the student’s performance. However, only the student’s project committee shall vote on the acceptability of the project in its present form. A majority of the project committee members is required to declare that a student has successfully completed the defense. Students will be notified immediately as to the outcome of the defense. The project committee and chair must then sign the Project Defense Approval form and submit it to the Coordinator of the Graduate Program and the Director of the School of Criminal Justice indicating the outcome of the defense.

The following rules apply to the final oral defense:

4. The graduate coordinator will announce the defense to the faculty at least TWO weeks in advance of the scheduled defense. The defense announcement should be made to other appropriate departments.

5. A copy of the project must be available to all faculty in the SCJ Office at least ONE week in advance of the defense.

**OUTLINE OF PROJECT OPTION B**

**Outline**

Once you have decided on a topic, selected your project chair and committee, and have an approved concept paper, you will develop a comprehensive outline for your project. The purpose of the outline is to set forth a plan for completing the project. A good plan makes the rest of the tasks easier to execute and gives your chair and committee confidence that you know how to complete the project. There is no required format for writing the outline, but there are essential items that need to be addressed even though the order of the items may vary.

**Final Project**

Project option B typically consists of at least three chapters. Chapter 1 is the *what, why, and how* chapter. In this chapter, you describe what criminal justice related issue you are going to address, why it is significant, the process that was used to collect and assess the body of literature reviewed for this project, and a brief summary of the nature and scope of the following chapters. Chapter 2 is the *substantive* chapter. In this chapter, you review, present, and discuss the comprehensive body of literature that addresses your issue. Chapter 3 is the *conclusion* chapter. In this chapter, you summarize the importance of your discussion, present possible implications, and identify avenues for future research.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 is the what, why, and how chapter. In this chapter, you describe what criminal justice related issue you are going to address, why it is significant, the process that was used to collect and assess the body of literature reviewed for this project, and a brief summary of the nature and scope of the following chapters.

Outstanding introductions often start with a hook. The hook can be a great quote, a compelling statistic, or an alarming news story. It should be something. It should be something that is going to grab the interests of the reader right away. It also helps make the case for they the project is important, new, interesting, or significant. Outstanding introductions show awareness from the start that the student knows what they are writing about.

Some specific areas that will most likely appear in Chapter 1 are included below. Introductions should incorporate the key literature pertaining to the project, lay out a topic statement, and include a layout of what is to come in the following chapters.

**Topic/Thesis Statement**

It is very important that the topic be stated clearly. The essence of the topic can be stated in a sentence or two, but it should not stand alone in the section. Statements that describe the area of the topic, conditions that relate to it, or a bit of background can be included to support the problem statement. After reading the topic statement, readers should know clearly what you are studying.

It is often helpful if you clearly flag the problem statement with something like: “therefore, the topic to be examined in this study is…” or “thus, there is a clear need for further study of…”.

**Background of the Topic**

The purpose of this section is to indicate why the topic is worthy of further study. You may have put a bit of this in the topic statement section, which is acceptable, but here you will expand this thinking. You may have put a bit of this in the topic/thesis statement section, which is acceptable, but here you will expand this thinking. In this section, you expand upon the topic with information from the literature. By making reference to the literature, you demonstrate that you have a good understanding of the stated topic and some idea of what other research has been conducted. The background section also will help to enhance the reader’s knowledge of the topic. You also may want to provide some idea of the breadth and depth of the topic. Statistics may be helpful here. Whatever your rationale for why the topic needs to be studied, you need to defend it as worthy of study (i.e., why is it significant?)

**Purpose of the Study**

In the purpose section, you should indicate why you are examining the topic. Why does it need further study? What is so important about it in the first place?

In the introduction, you should also define terms that are technical that readers may not understand, such as professional jargon and agency-specific terms. Be sure to define terms that you are using in ways that they are not normally used and terms that have multiple meanings. There is often a tendency to define too many terms; when deciding if a term should be defined, ask yourself if the people who are to read the project are likely to know the term. It also is important to define the terms that are critical to understand the studies cited and discussed in your literature review.

**Significance of the Study**

Here, you will indicate why the study is important in terms of adding to the existing literature on your topic. How might the results be used to improve something (i.e., policy implications)? How might the results add information to an existing database? In your research at GVSU, you are also required to address the social impact of your proposed study.

CHAPTER 2: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

This chapter should constitute the core of project option B. It will consist of a comprehensive review of the literature dealing with the criminal justice related issue that has been introduced in Chapter 1. The review should be exhaustive; that is, it should consist of all of the contemporary literature that has been published dealing with student’s topic which is accessible through our library system. Typically, the review will consist of refereed (scholarly) journal articles, relevant books and book chapters, government publications, and any other documents that the student and his / her project Chair decide may be relevant to the issue (this may require the student to go outside the discipline of criminal justice and explore sources from other related disciplines such as psychology, sociology, public policy, social work, etc. where relevant). While a student need not summarize every source in great detail, enough information must be provided to demonstrate that the student has an in-depth understanding of each document, and an appreciation for how the
documents fit together as one scholarly body of evidence. Each student should be mindful that the literature review is dynamic and will be in constant flux throughout the process (as new research is discovered, it should be incorporated into the literature review).

A literature review is not a book report on what various authors have said. It is an essay woven around your selected topic and the thesis statement(s) you have developed in Chapter 1. In project option B, the student will be attempting to explain what is presently known about his or her selected criminal justice issue, discuss the relevant scholarly controversies in this area, present what researchers are currently attempting to discover, and speculate about where the field of study needs to move in the future. Some students may feel that they must include every study they find in the review. This is not necessary! One of the marks of a scholar is to know what to exclude as well as what to include. Literature that is not directly relevant to one’s issue should not become part of Chapter 2. Literature can be related to one’s topic in a number of ways: it can be related to one aspect the problem or it may deal with the issue in its entirety. Throughout the review, you should tie the content of each source that you are using to the thesis statement(s) you developed in Chapter 1. You should also discuss the methods that were used to develop the body of literature you are reviewing and identify any potential methodological issues that exist in your area of study.

The key to a good literature review is organization. In the introduction to the review of the literature, you should provide a layout of the organization of the review for the reader. Organize the review in some logical fashion. You may want to begin with literature that is broader, and less related to your specific criminal justice issue, and move to literature that is directly related to your topic. This is called the funnel approach. Generally, students find this a useful and easy way to organize. You may also do the review the opposite way – an upside down funnel model. Alternatively, you can approach your comprehensive review from a historic perspective: begin with older studies and explain how the state of knowledge pertaining to your topic has developed over time (concluding with a summary of what is known at present, and what still remains to be investigated). Finally, some students find it useful to organize their reviews based on methodological rigor. Weaker studies (e.g. those with small, local level samples, those that utilize simple “before and after” research designs etc.) are reviewed first while stronger research (e.g. longitudinal research based on large, representative national samples or true experimental studies etc.) are reviewed at the end. The student would conclude such a review by discussing what the best available evidence suggests about a particular issue. Regardless of the approach chosen, at the conclusion of Chapter 2, you should have a “summary” section in which you highlight the salient parts of the literature, and discuss what it means “as a whole”. Keep in mind that the organization of your literature review should be decided in conjunction with your project chair.

Outstanding literature reviews are able to effectively organize the literature, usually around themes. They also demonstrate an awareness of the different levels at which the literature may be relevant to the topic and succinctly synthesize information from a broad body of sources. A reader should learn more from reading a truly outstanding review than he or she would learn by reading the individual studies (i.e., the reviewer should develop their own insights that move beyond what is found in the individual sources). Students should focus on concepts and ideas, and not who said what. While the ultimate length of this chapter will vary from project to project (i.e., it may be shorter if the student is addressing a focused, but conceptually difficult topic; longer, if the topic is broader, but conceptually easier to grasp); and will be decided upon in consultation with one’s Chair and committee, students choosing project option B should expect to write an absolute minimum of 60 pages for Chapter 2. If there is an insufficient amount of literature available to produce a document of this length, it is likely that the proposed criminal justice issue is unsuitable for project option B.

Chapter 2: Comprehensive Literature Review Checklist

☐ Locate relevant literature
  - Identify key authors and journals
  - Use bibliographic reference sources
  - Use computerized literature searches
  - Obtain reprints and preprints
  - Look at literature from other disciplines
  - Scan tables of contents of key journals
  - Use reference lists from other articles, chapters and books
  - Use primary sources
  - Avoid the popular press

☐ Critically read the literature
  - Identify themes
  - Identify strengths and weaknesses of individual articles
  - Identify strengths and weaknesses of field as a whole
  - Collect photocopies or notes
Prepare to write
- Investigate length and format parameters
- Make a preliminary outline
  - Ensure that the literature has a sufficiently broad scope
  - Include page allocations
  - Organize the literature you will cover

Write the review
- Write the introduction
- Write subsections
  - Use transitions and integrative phrasing
  - Synthesize and critically analyze the literature

Summarize what the body of literature reveals as a whole, and what remains to be learned about your chosen topic.

Be careful not to plagiarize

CHAPTER 3: CONCLUSION

Chapter 3 will be the last chapter in project option B. The main purpose of the chapter is to summarize the information presented in chapter 2 and make recommendations on future research or policy recommendations regarding the specific criminal justice-related topic you have selected. The recommendations may focus on policy changes or models, new initiatives, evaluation tools, proposed training or other areas discussed in the literature review.

Chapter 3: Conclusion Checklist (all steps are not applicable to every project)

Present recommendations in an orderly, logical way
- Order and sequence the results
- Include relevant information
- Work results clearly
- Create well-crafted, clear tables
- Prepare well-crafted clear figures

Review your literature review and method section
- “Freshen” references
- Alter methods section to reflect actual procedures
The purpose of a thesis is to give students experience conducting the kind of inquiry that will be useful in their professional careers. Because professional goals differ, each thesis will have its own character. Some students may wish to conduct an original research project, others may want to conduct an evaluation of a policy or program that exists in their current workplace, and still others may wish to explore some of the theoretical debates surrounding a particular crime or justice issue.

The word "thesis" refers to a formal, scholarly paper that is based first and foremost on a research question. The thesis is an attempt to provide at least one unique answer to that question. It is also a demonstration of a student's ability to locate and synthesize theoretical and empirical knowledge about a given phenomenon, formulate an appropriate method for investigation, analyze related data, and arrive at a sound conclusion. All of the courses taken before the thesis provide opportunities to learn and practice these skills. For this reason, it is a very good idea to start thinking about a thesis topic early in your graduate studies.

There is no acceptable or unacceptable length to a thesis; the nature of the subject must determine the amount of writing necessary. In general, the acceptability of a thesis can be measured by asking whether the work would be suitable for presentation at a professional conference or whether it would be useful for program or policy planning. Examples of all the forms needed for the proposal and the thesis are included in Appendices C through I as well as posted on the Criminal Justice Homepage, www.gvsu.edu/cj.

Please note that all GVSU research projects involving human subjects require approval from the Human Research Review Committee. Even if your project does not involve any risk or very low risk to human subjects, as long as it involves interacting with human beings in any way to gather data or information, prior approval is required.

Prerequisites

Before a student may enroll for project credit hours, they must have 18 credits of graduate coursework completed including CJ 606 and an approved project committee, with the proper documentation completed and submitted to the graduate program coordinator. Once the proposal has been approved, a Permission to Enroll Form may then be issued by the Graduate Director.

Students are also advised, though not required, to complete their chosen "advanced systems" course (i.e., CJ 620, 621, 622, or 623) prior to registering for CJ 695.

THESIS COMMITTEE

All students selecting the thesis option must select a thesis committee by the time they have completed 18 credits of coursework. The thesis committee consists of a chair and two additional full graduate status faculty members. The faculty member selected to chair the committee must be designated by a ** in the list of faculty on page 4 in the MCJ Graduate Student Handbook. One of the other members may be a full- time tenure track faculty member from another department, when the discipline represented is relevant to the student's thesis.

Once a thesis chair and committee have been selected, the student must submit an Approval of Thesis Committee form to both the graduate program coordinator AND the Office of Graduate Studies (see separate thesis manual for this form) who will verify that the thesis committee meets the rules regarding committee membership and will approve, sign, and place the form in the student's file.

Special Responsibilities of the Thesis Committee Chair:

1. Ensure that the thesis committee meets periodically and functions effectively.
2. Facilitate the submission and approval of the thesis proposal.
3. Organize and facilitate the student's proposal defense.
4. Ensure that materials are read by committee members in a timely fashion.
5. Work with graduate coordinator to set day, time and place of oral defense of project and appropriate notification of faculty, students and others
6. Organize, facilitate, and lead the student's final oral defense of thesis.
7. Work with the student to facilitate the submission of paperwork needed for graduation.

Responsibilities of the Thesis Committee and Chair:

1. Approve the nature and scope of the thesis problem to be studied.
2. Meet with the student to assess and discuss the thesis proposal.
3. Review drafts of the student’s thesis and identify needed revisions.
4. Participate in the oral defense of the final thesis and certify that the student has successfully completed the program of study.

**THESIS REQUIREMENTS**

ALL SCJ FORMS MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO THE GRADUATE DIRECTOR. THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES ALSO HAS SEPARATE FORMS FOR THESESES. PLEASE SEE THEIR HANDBOOK AND WEBSITE FOR THESE FORMS, WHICH ALSO MUST BE COMPLETED.

**Thesis Proposal**

Students choosing to write a thesis must prepare a detailed proposal for their thesis research. The proposal demonstrates that the student has reviewed the relevant literature and outlines in detail how the research will be conducted. The proposal should include the following information: the major questions to be addressed, the significance of these questions, the extent of current knowledge in the area of research, the materials and methods to be used to answer the questions, and the schedule for completion of stages of work.

**Oral Defense of Thesis Proposal**

The campus community will be invited to attend, but not allowed to vote. This will provide the opportunity to develop a consensus around the thesis. It will often become a very constructive working session. The date of the defense must be made known TWO weeks prior to the actual defense. A copy of the thesis must be made available at least ONE week prior to defense (it will be placed in the coffee room or other designated area). A thesis announcement (see separate thesis manual for this form) must be posted electronically on an academic program or departmental website, distributed electronically to appropriate list-servs, and posted on appropriate bulletin boards at least TWO weeks prior to the scheduled proposal date. Assuming agreement over the proposal, a Thesis Proposal Approval form must be signed by all committee members and given to the Director of the Graduate Program to be placed in the student’s permanent file.

**Thesis Style**

The thesis is to be written in the current edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) style. Copies of the APA Publication Manual are available for purchase at the GVSU bookstores and online. See specific style guide below for more details.

**Oral Defense of Final Thesis**

An oral defense of the thesis before the campus community and the student’s thesis committee is required for all Master of Science candidates who choose to write a thesis. Normally, the student will begin with a brief summary of the thesis research (15-30 minutes), followed by questions from the thesis committee and chair. The maximum time for an oral defense is two hours. The oral defense is open to all members of the university community. A thesis announcement (see separate thesis manual for this form) must be posted electronically on an academic program or departmental website, distributed electronically to appropriate list-servs, and posted on appropriate bulletin boards at least TWO weeks prior to the scheduled proposal date.

The final revised draft of the thesis should be submitted to the thesis chair at least two weeks prior to the defense date. Students are expected to carefully consider the comments of their thesis committee. The thesis chair has responsibility to ensure that the recommendations of the committee are incorporated into the revised thesis. The thesis chair has final responsibility for thesis approval.

The thesis chair has the responsibility to ensure that the defense is conducted in a fair and appropriate manner. Questions will be limited to the thesis or general knowledge related to the thesis. An oral defense requires detailed responses from the student rather than “yes” and “no” answers. Oral defense questions should be designed to allow the student to demonstrate his or her ability to integrate information gained from coursework and the thesis research project. The thesis chair will determine if questions are appropriate. Following the defense period, the audience and the student will be asked to leave the room while the thesis chair leads a discussion of the defense. All faculty members may discuss the student’s performance. However, only the student’s thesis committee shall vote on the acceptability of the thesis in its present form. A majority of the thesis committee members is required to declare that a student has successfully completed the defense. Students will be notified immediately as to the outcome of the defense.

The thesis chair must then sign the Thesis Defense Approval form and submit it to the graduate program coordinator and the Director of the School of Criminal Justice indicating the outcome of the defense. The thesis chair and committee must also sign the approval page for the Office of Graduate Studies and submit this form to the Office of Graduate Studies.

The following rules apply to the final oral defense:

1. The graduate coordinator will announce the defense to the faculty at least TWO weeks in advance of the scheduled defense. The defense announcement should be made to other appropriate departments.

2. A copy of the thesis must be available to all faculty in the SCJ Office at least ONE week in advance of the defense.


**THESIS OUTLINE**

**Thesis Proposal**

Once you have decided on a topic, selected a chair, and a committee, you will begin creating your thesis proposal. The purpose of the thesis proposal is to set forth a plan for conducting your research. A good plan makes the rest of the tasks easier to execute and gives your chair and committee confidence that you know how to conduct the study. There is no required format for writing the proposal, but there are essential items that need to be addressed even though the order of the items may vary according to personal choice and research method. For the most part, however, the three chapters detailed below are typically always included in the proposal. The content of some of these chapters will vary based on the research method that is selected; this is an issue to be decided upon in conjunction with your thesis chair and/or committee.

Essentially, the proposal consists of the first three chapters of the thesis. Upon completion of the thesis, it is often necessary to make changes in the first three chapters (what was the proposal). For example, in Chapters 1 and 2, it is necessary to change verbs from future tense to past tense. In addition, you also may want to update the literature review to include the most up-to-date information (since your proposal was written); in some cases, it is necessary to make changes in certain sections of the methodology. For example, if your sample did not turn out as planned or you conducted the research differently than indicated in the proposal, you will need to make changes in Chapter 3. Your final thesis should reflect what you actually did and found, as opposed to the proposal, which was/is a plan of what you will/did do.

Chapter 1 is the what chapter. In this chapter, you describe what you are going to research, why you are going to research it, and a brief description of how you think you might conduct your research. Chapter 2 is the foundation chapter. In this chapter, you review the literature that relates to and supports your topic. Chapter 3 is the how chapter. In this chapter, you describe how you are going to conduct the research (i.e., which method or methods you are going to use).

**Final Thesis**

The final thesis will contain two more chapters in addition to the three chapters included in the proposal. Chapter 4 is the results chapter and will include the analysis of the data that was collected. Chapter 5 is the discussion/conclusion chapter where you will offer your own interpretation of your data, relate the findings to your hypotheses and research questions, and the existing literature, as well as offer a discussion of the limitations of your research and the possible policy implications of your findings. Finally, directions for future research should also be offered.

Below is an example outline that could be used for writing the thesis. It is divided into sections that generally need to be included in a proposal, but, of course, the length will vary with each topic and individual subject under consideration. Again, this will be determined after consultation with your thesis chair and/or committee.

**CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION**

**Introduction to the Study**

The thesis should not read like a detective story. It should not be a “whodunit” or “mystery novel” where the answer to the “puzzle” comes at the end. Rather, it should start with: this is the problem I plan to address, this is why I plan to address it, this is how I will approach it, and here is a preview of where I think this is all going. It is important to establish the scope of the problem or why it is necessary that you address it in the introduction (e.g., why is it important to determine sex offender notification statutes increase fear of crime, why is it important to determine if random drug testing is effective at reducing drug use among high school and college students).

Outstanding introductions often start with a hook. The hook can be a great quote, a compelling statistic, an alarming new story, etc; it should be something that is going to grab the interests of the reader right away. It also helps make the case for why the project is important, new, interesting or significant. Outstanding introductions show awareness right from the beginning that the student knows what they are talking about.

The purpose of the introduction is to provide a general overview of the problem area, but not necessarily to the specific problem to be addressed. Some researchers disagree with this and say that the problem statement should be in the first section of a proposal. Some specific areas that will most likely appear in Chapter 1 are included below. Introductions should incorporate the key literature pertaining to the project, lay out a topic statement, identify the methods that will be used to study the topic/answer the research questions/test the hypotheses/address the problem, and include a layout of what is to come in the following chapters.
Statement of the Problem
It is very important that the problem be stated clearly. Even though it is a statement, some students prefer to start with a question and then covert it into a statement (or a paradox). The essence of the problem can be stated in a sentence or two, but it should not stand alone in the section. Statements that describe the area of the problem, conditions that relate to it or a bit of background can be included to support the problem statement. After reading the problem statement, committee members should know clearly what you are studying and can examine that in terms of the proposal methodology. A properly stated problem should,
1) state possible relationships between two or more variables;
2) identify a question to be addressed even if implied, and;
3) have the possibility of being measured/described in some acceptable manner.

It is often helpful if you clearly flag the problem statement with something like – “Therefore, the problem to be addressed in this study is…” or “Thus, there is a clear need to address the problem of…” Remember this is a problem statement so there definitely needs to be a problem that can be addressed.

Background of the Problem
The purpose in this section is to indicate why the problem is a problem, and why it should be addressed. You may have put a bit of this in the problem statement section and that is acceptable, because here you will expand such thinking. In this section, you expand upon the problem with from the literature. By making reference to the literature, you demonstrate that you have a good understanding of the stated problem and some idea of what other research has been conducted. You will also advance your reader’s knowledge of the problem.

You may want to provide some idea of the breadth and depth of the problem. Statistics may be helpful here. Perhaps the problem has never been researched, or never been researched in the way want to do it. Perhaps you want to address the problem in a different context than it has previously been addressed. The problem may relate to a social condition that needs to be rectified. Whatever your rationale for why the problem needs to be studied, you need to defend it as worthy of study – why is it significant?

Purpose of the Study
In the purpose section you should indicate why you are doing the study. The purpose goes beyond the specific data you will collect. In other words, the purpose is not to indicate that you will gather this or that data, but why you are gathering that data. For example, you might study different leadership styles to determine the impact of different styles on subordinates. The reason that you are doing the study is to improve understanding of leadership, or to add to the knowledge based on leadership.

Theoretical Conceptual Support for the Study
Is there an existing theory, construct or considered opinion on which the study may be theoretically or conceptually based? Is there a logic that supports the study? Sometimes it is necessary to use more than one theoretical construct to support the study. For example, if you were studying juvenile delinquency, you may want to partially support your research with Hirschi’s theory and you may want to support Hirschi with Akers’s theory. You also want to include other juvenile-oriented theories or perhaps even crime/environment specific theories.

Some like to call this section ‘Theoretical Support’ or ‘Theoretical Framework’ when the study is quantitative or when a theory will be tested or used. In other cases, this section may be termed ‘Supporting Rationale’ if the study is qualitative. Some academics prefer a brief support section in Chapter 1 and an expansion in Chapter 2. You will determine this in conjunction with your thesis chair.

Research Design
Some committee members may prefer that you include a brief section regarding the design of the study in Chapter 1. If this is preferred, address the design that you intend to use in the study and indicate why you think it is the appropriate design. For example, “Survey research will be used in this study because the intent is to gather data on opinions people have about foreign policy.” It is important to understand that this section is intended to be quite brief, as you will address the design in detail in Chapter 3.

Definitions of Terms
It is not appropriate to define terms that are not used in the study. Define terms that are technical that readers may not understand. Define professional jargon. Define terms that you are using in ways that they are not normally used and terms that have multiple meanings. Sometimes there is a tendency to define too many terms. When trying to decide if a term should be defined, ask yourself if the people who are to read the thesis are likely to know the term. It is also important to define the terms that are critical to understanding studies cited and discussed in the text of the thesis.

Hypotheses or Research Questions
In this section, you state what will be measured or the questions to be answered. If you are doing a qualitative study, you may want to use study objectives. You are more likely to use hypotheses in a quantitative study when you are going to statistically analyze the data to determine if there is a statistical relationship between variables.

Hypotheses can be stated as difference statements, if-then statements, continuous statements or mathematical statements. The most common way of stating hypotheses is the difference statement. Some researchers hold that it is not appropriate to state a direction unless you have some evidence to support the direction. In both if-then statements and continuous statements, a direction is stated. When using a difference statement, you are not specifying a direction so the data could be on either end of the normal curve.

When using research questions, you ask if a relationship exists between two or more variables. You can use tests of statistical significance when you use research questions, or you can use other types of analysis. In some ways, research questions give you more flexibility than hypotheses do. You may want to use descriptive procedures or a qualitative analysis or a mixture when you work from research questions.

Significance of the Study

In this section, you indicate why the study is important in terms of what audience, organization, institution, etc. might benefit from the results. How might the results be used to improve something (policy implications)? How might the results add information to an existing database? In your research at Grand Valley State University, you are also required to address the social impact of your proposed study. Some combine the significance and the social impact in this section.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

While it is not necessary to do a complete literature review in the proposal, a majority of students do. If you choose not to do a complete review, it is necessary to review enough to determine if a body of literature related to your problem exists and to demonstrate that you can write a review. The final thesis will have an exhaustive literature review; many students try to complete the literature review with the proposal. Each student should be mindful that the literature review is dynamic and will be in constant flux throughout the process (as new research is discovered it should be incorporated into literature review).

A literature review is not a book report on what various authors have said. It is an essay woven around your research problem and your research questions or hypotheses to provide a logical or research basis for the study. Some students feel that they must include every study they can find in the review. This is not necessary! One of the marks of a scholar is to know what to exclude as well as what to include. A selection of representative literature should be the goal. Literature can be related to the problem in a number of ways. It can be related to one aspect of your study or it can be literature that is in direct support of your study. Throughout the review, you should tie the content to the problem and the research questions or hypotheses. You should also include literature related to the method you are using in the study.

Certainly, the key to a good literature review is organization. In the introduction to the review of the literature, you should provide an advance organizer for the reader. Organize the review in some logical fashion. You may want to begin with literature that is broader and less related to the specific problem and move to literature that is directly related to the problem. This is called the funnel approach and is essentially a deductive approach. Generally, students find this a useful and easy way to organize. You may also do the review the opposite way – an upside down funnel model. At the end of the review, you should have a “Summary” section in which you highlight the salient parts of the literature that support your investigation.

Outstanding literature reviews are able to organize the literature, usually around themes. Outstanding literature reviews show an awareness of the different levels at which the literature may be relevant to the topic and succinctly synthesize information from a broad body of sources. Students should focus on concepts and ideas and not who said what.

What usually separates a thesis from a project is that the thesis is based in theory. An outstanding thesis knows the place of theory and uses it to help tell the story. Indeed, theory shows up in the introduction, literature review and substantive parts of the thesis. While it is rare for students to create a theory, outstanding theses often synthesize theories or use conceptual ideas in creative, nuanced ways.

Committee members vary in their position about the length of the literature review. However, in general, the length depends on the complexity of the research and the amount of existing literature on the topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review Checklist

- Locate relevant literature
  - Identify key authors and journals
− Use bibliographic reference sources
− Use computerized literature searches
− Obtain reprints and preprints
− Look at literature from other disciplines
− Scan tables of contents of key journals
− Use reference lists from other articles, chapters and books
− Use primary sources
− Avoid the popular press

☐ Critically read the literature
− Identify themes
− Identify strengths and weaknesses of individual articles
− Identify strengths and weaknesses of field as a whole
− Collect photocopies or notes

☐ Prepare to write
− Investigate length and format parameters
− Make a preliminary outline
  • Include page allocations
  • Limit the scope of your review
  • Organize the literature you will cover

☐ Write the review
− Write the introduction
− Write subsections
  • Use transitions and integrative phrasing
  • Synthesize and critically analyze the literature

☐ Introduce your study and hypotheses
☐ Be careful not to plagiarize

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Students whose methods are outstanding really understand what they did and why and can discuss them competently and are thorough in their documentation. Some specific areas that will most likely be in the thesis are outlined below. As with each section, this should be discussed with thesis chair and committee.

Description of the Research Design
What is the research design you are using? Is it quantitative or qualitative? If quantitative, what is the design? Is If you are doing qualitative, is it a case study, historical, field research, phenomenology, etc.? Whatever the specific design used, you need to address why it is an appropriate design for the way you are conducting your study. Keep in mind that a problem may often be addressed with more than one type of research. You are also demonstrating to your committee that you understand the design to be used in the study (and why it is more appropriate than alternative designs).

Target Population
What is the nature of the population, event or situation under study? What are the major factors or characteristics of the population, event or situation? If you are drawing a sample, the target population is the group from which you will draw the sample, and to which you will attempt to generalize the results. The target population can be people, organizations, events, ideas or other entities. It is important to carefully describe attributes and/or characteristics of the target population for those who might want to replicate the research or assist you in interpreting findings in terms of the population.

Sampling Procedure
If you are doing a study for which it is appropriate to draw a sample, you need to indicate the sampling procedure to be used and explain why the one you have chosen is appropriate for your study. Will you use a probability or non-probability sample and why?
Some examples of probability samples are simple random sample, stratified random sample, cluster sample and systematic sample. In a probability sample, each member of the sample population must have an equal chance of being selected. Some examples of non-probability samples are convenience, quota, snowball/chain and purposive. If you do not use a type of random sample, you can only generalize to the sample you used (limited exceptions to this statement). You also need to indicate the sampling frame, which is a list of names from which you will select the sample. The names can be people, organizations, colleges, groups, etc.

**Sample**
Finally, what are the characteristics or demographics of the sample you intend to select? How many or what percent of the sampling frame do you intend to select and why that percent? How is the sample representative of the population you described earlier? If the sample is drawn properly from the sampling frame and the sampling frame is representative of the population, you should be able to generalize research findings to the population from which the sample was drawn.

**Treatment / Intervention**
Except in isolated cases, you will only have a treatment (otherwise known as “intervention”) if you are doing experimental or quasi-experimental research. In either of these, the best designs include at least a pre- and post-testing with a treatment in between the two. In a true experimental design, subjects are randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group. That is the basic difference between a true experimental design and a quasi-experimental design. With either design, you will typically be using an independent (treatment) variable and one or more dependent (outcome) variables. These variables are typically indicated with the hypotheses. In this type of study, you are measuring the post-test against the pre-test to determine if the independent variable had an impact. When using a treatment, it is necessary to describe - in detail - the nature of the treatment so that others may replicate the study if desired. If there is more than one experimental group with each having different treatments, all treatments must be described.

**Instrumentation**
The purpose in this section is to describe the measurement instrument or data gathering tool you will utilize in your research. If you are using an existing instrument, and validity and reliability data are available, report that information. If available, you need to include how the developer or an instrument arrived at such findings. You also may need permission to use a published instrument. Written permission, usually via e-mail should be included in the appendix of your completed thesis. If you develop an instrument, describe the process followed during the development and how you will determine the validity and reliability of the instrument. Describe how/why the instrument is appropriate for the data needed. Sometimes it is useful to make a matrix of the research questions or hypotheses with the instrument items to determine if the instrument is clearly related and that all variables are covered in the instrument (content validity).

**Data Collection Procedures**
These are the fine points related to collecting your data. Describe, specifically, how the data will be gathered. If using survey research, will you use questionnaires or interviews? If questionnaires, will they be mailed or administered to an audience? When and how will they be mailed? Will return postage be provided? How much time will respondents have to reply? If interviews, will they be phone or face-to-face? How much time will it take per interview, to complete the entire process? Will the interviews be taped? Is there a basic set of criteria and/or screening protocol to select research respondents? If there is a pre-test, will there be an end-test or a post-test? When and how will they be administered? If the study is observational, when, where, how, and for how long will the observations be conducted? In addition to these stated strategies, it is important that you convey why such choices are necessary and appropriate.

Will human subjects approval be necessary? Is a consent form needed? Check GVSU’s Human Resource Review Committee (HRRC) / Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies. When you need to complete a Human Subjects Form, it should be submitted with the proposal, because without it, the proposal will not be approved. This is a task that you will likely need faculty co-sponsorship to complete; therefore, as with other decisions regarding your research, you should consult your Chair and committee members.

**Data Analysis**
Describe how the data will be analyzed and presented. Will the data be presented in a descriptive format with tables, graphs, or percentage calculations? Will there be statistical analysis? If so, what statistics will be used and why are they correct choices for your data. If you are doing qualitative research, will you perform content analysis? How will you present the data to your reader?

Keep in mind that there are four levels of measurement – nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio. When you know what type of measurement scale fits the data, you can determine what statistical procedure to use for data analysis. It is important to display the analysis in such a way that the reader can understand and follow it by means of your discussion of it. It is also imperative that you relate the analysis procedure to the hypothesis or research question. For example, you may use two different types of analysis for two different hypotheses or research questions. Your readers need to know what belongs with what.
Chapter 3: Methodology Checklist

☐ Write the different subsections of the method section
  - Design
  - Subjects/sampling
  - Setting and apparatus
  - Variables
  - Procedure
  - Triangulation

☐ Follow research ethics
  - Read ethical guidelines
  - Write consent and assent forms
  - Obtain approval from relevant research review boards

☐ Operationalize your variables

☐ Evaluate the reliability of prospective instruments
  - Interrater reliability (scorer generalizability)
  - Test-retest reliability (temporal stability)
  - Alternate form reliability
  - Internal consistency (item generalizability)
  - Determine which forms of reliability are most appropriate for your study

☐ Evaluate the validity of prospective instruments
  - Face validity
  - Content validity
  - Criterion-related validity
    • Concurrent validity
    • Predictive validity
  - Construct validity
    • Convergent validity
    • Discriminate validity
    • Discriminative validity
  - Determine which forms of validity are most appropriate for your study

☐ Look broadly for decent measures
  - Use measurement compendiums
  - Use computer-based databases
  - Use the published literature

☐ Adapt others’ measures with caution

☐ Get copies of measures
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Chapter 4 is included in the final thesis only; it is not included in the proposal. Chapter 4 is the results chapter. It is a straightforward presentation of the data without speculation or editorializing (the speculation and commentary will come in chapter 5). The organization of the chapter is key to the reader’s ability to follow and understand the data. It is usually useful to list the research questions or hypotheses one by one, presenting the related data after each. Tables and graphs must be labeled and organized properly. This organization will be a bit different if you are conducting qualitative research, however.

The data analysis/results component is the “heart” of the thesis. Students who function at the outstanding level make links between the conceptual apparatus and what they found. Regardless of whether the data are qualitative or quantitative, students should see complex patterns and interrelationships and interesting things in the data and explain them thoroughly.

Chapter 4: Results Checklist

- Pilot test your procedures
- Recruit and train assistants
- Schedule settings and arrange materials
- Collect the data
  - Supervise assistants regularly
  - Catch problems early
- Score the data
  - Verify scoring
  - Enter data into computer
  - Verify data entry
- Analyze the data
  - Obtain help if unfamiliar with computer programs
  - Label variables and printouts
  - Obtain printouts of raw data and variable distributions
  - Peruse printouts for unusual values and verify them
  - Check accuracy of transformation programs
  - Examine whether data meet the assumptions of your statistics
- Review your literature review and method section
  - “Freshen” references
  - Alter methods section to reflect actual procedures
- Present the data related to purposes of the study
- Present results in an orderly, logical way
  - Order and sequence the results
  - Include relevant information
    - Name of statistic
    - Relevant details about the statistic
    - Statistical values for significant effects
    - Means
    - Standard deviations
    - Sample size
  - Work results clearly
  - Follow conventions in psychology regarding presentation of statistics
  - Create well-crafted, clear tables
Chapter 5 is the concluding chapter in your final thesis. It is typically called the discussion chapter. It should include a brief summary of how the study was conducted and interpretation of the results presented in chapter 4. In this chapter, you should relate the results to your hypotheses and research questions and existing literature. You may also include careful speculation about the results (i.e., what do you think is going on?). You should also provide recommendations for future research (i.e., based on your conclusions and interpretation, what still needs to be done?) as well as cautious policy implications (i.e., based on your findings, what kinds of implication could be put in place).

This section should summarize and discuss how the final thesis addresses issues that have been raised. It re-acquaints the reader with the conceptual framework and the design of the study. It summarizes the entire effort. If there are findings to report, they should be synthesized for inclusion in this section. Conclusions presented should validate both the need for the research and explain how the present thesis responded to that need. Recommendations might include comments regarding content, technique, and the process of creating a master’s thesis of this type. Material too detailed to be included in the body of the text should be presented in the appendices.

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS CHECKLIST

- Summarize your findings
  - Avoid technical detail
  - Use clear language
- Interpret your findings
- Place your findings in context - Consider how your findings converge with, clarify or contradict past findings
- Consider the implications of your findings
  - Theoretical implications
  - Methodological implications
  - Applied implications
- Include a humility subsection
  - Consider internal validity issues
  - Consider external validity issues
  - Consider measurement issues
  - Consider statistical issue
- Include comments about future directions
- Use these tips:
  - Be a critical thinker
  - Avoid common problems
  - Select an appropriate organization
# Example Grading Matrix for Project/Thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Quality levels</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>Short, focused, creative, and very synthetic, has a hook; states the problem and shows why it is interesting and important; explains the significance of the study; introduces the literature review; sets the context; locates the project in what had been done before; lays out a thesis and an organizational structure; provides a preview and a road map of where the research is going and what is in the coming chapters.</td>
<td>Well written, but less eloquent; poses a clear research question; express clarity of purpose; focuses on the key issues; is good, solid but not surprising.</td>
<td>Workmanlike; reasonably clear and focused; has a marginal hook but is not exciting; conveys what the research is about; shows understanding of the topic; provides an inkling of the theoretical and methodological approach; may leave something out but does not say anything absolutely wrong.</td>
<td>Not grounded in anything; very defensive; tone is very politicized; takes inappropriate stances; goes off on incomprehensible tangents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literature Review</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a grounded understanding of the literature; provides reasons for looking at the literature differently; draws on literature differently; draws on literature in a convincing way; brings together and summarizes a broad body of material and makes meaningful distinctions without being exhaustive; knows what needs to be cited and what does not; analysis is organized around themes; is succinct; indicates the significance of the research.</td>
<td>Provides a meaningful summary of the literature; includes both classic and recent citations; is not a laundry list of “Smith said this” and “Jones said that”; demonstrates a nuanced understanding of the literature; takes a body of material and leans it toward a particular direction; brings various intellectual resources to bear on the topic; builds a case for the research and for the hypotheses.</td>
<td>Is ill conceived or seems wrong; not analytical, integrated, or synthesized; a stacked annotation, “this person said this” and “this person said this”; just regurgitates material; confusing; not clear why some literature is being cited and other literature is not.</td>
<td>Omits people who have done the same thing the student is doing; has not looked at commonly understood bodies of relevant literature; cites articles that are out of date; misinterprets the literature; misquotes major theorists; shows lack of understanding of the literature and where their research fits in the field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theory</strong></td>
<td>Provides a good, logical, sensible, coherent argument; clearly indicates understanding of the major perspective; shows up in the introduction, literature review, and in the substantive parts of the dissertation; is in student’s own language; relates to other traditions and other ideas; evaluates a specific problem through a theoretical lens; evaluates different theories; sees multiple relationships; links observations to theory; uses conceptual ideas in a creative way; synthesizes theories; develops or creates theory.</td>
<td>Is weakly understood; does not specify assumptions; shows slippage between the conceptual apparatus and the problem.</td>
<td>No theory; completely unclear; ideas, theory, and material are not aligned.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>Appropriate, clever, original, thorough; very well done; has basic validity; exhibits good judgment about what needs to be said and what can go in an appendix; connects questions and theory with methods; does something that ordinarily cannot be done; uses a novel method or multiple methods (triangulation); uses cutting-edge statistical techniques</td>
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<td>More workmanlike; does not provide lengthy definitions of techniques already in the literature; use of a different technique might have been more appropriate or made it more interesting</td>
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<td>Fatally flawed; mismatch between method and problem; does not seem to understand the method; uses method improperly; the operationalization is inappropriate; no clear relationship between hypotheses and variables; variables do not capture the concept; no variance in one of the major variables; measure are not valid or reliable; statistical techniques are inappropriate or poorly explained</td>
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<tr>
<td>Results/data analysis</td>
<td>Appropriate; uses advanced techniques; interprets data properly; sees complex patterns in the data; does a high-level, iterative analysis of the data; uses tables, figures, charts, and maps to display the data cleverly; makes clear links between the conceptual apparatus and results; highlights the most important, original, and significant contributions; goes beyond supporting the argument and disproves common theories</td>
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<td>Data rich; provides plausible arguments; sees interrelations that are not obvious; has rich illustrations</td>
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<td>Analyses are well executed but not sophisticated or substantial; data are not rich; does not have enough substance; is not clear that the data are really evidence of the concepts; findings are null; provides too much information; loses significant and important findings in the midst of endless discussions of insignificant ones; includes every regression equation</td>
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<td>Marginal analysis of the data; student does not know why he or she is using the technique; uses advanced techniques but sees nothing in the data; has obvious misinterpretations of the data; shows every iteration of the model but cannot discern what is important; mindless presentation of data without interpretation; uses graphic displays to create misleading perceptions; evidence does not support the argument; results do not follow from the analysis and are interpreted incorrectly; oversells or over generalizes the results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion and conclusion (usually in Thesis, not necessarily in project)</td>
<td>Briefly summarizes what was done and reaches into new areas and different ways of seeing things; ties the whole study together; shows that the questions, methods, analyses, and findings are consistent; connects to the theoretical puzzles or debates they started with and takes them to another level; underscores the findings; discusses what is interesting and surprising about the results; recognizes the study’s strengths, weaknesses, and limitations; sees the big picture significance of the work; speculates on and provides and astute discussion of future directions; has implications for the subfield, sociology, or social science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discusses what is now known that was not known before; shows the limits of the research; indicates where future research might improve upon what was done; proposes logical follow-on research; focuses on very specific findings and neglects to bring out the general implications</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Restates what has already been said; summarizes rather than analyzes; overstates the results; does not see or generalize the big picture; indicates that further research is necessary but does not provide specifics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Just a summary; no conclusion; takes a section out of the introduction and puts it in the conclusion; oversells the results</td>
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</table>
STYLE GUIDE FOR MASTER'S PROJECT/THESIS PREPARATION

Master’s Project Copies
The following copies are necessary:
1) Electronic version submitted to the graduate coordinator in Microsoft Word

Master’s Thesis Copies
The following copies are necessary:
1) Electronic version submitted to the Graduate Director in Microsoft Word
2) Electronic version submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies (pdf)
3) Original paper copies of the signed submission agreement for ScholarWorks@GVSU, thesis approval page, thesis title page, and abstract submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies

All theses must be electronically filed in the GVSU electronic repository (current ScholarWorks@GVSU). After your committee has approved your thesis and signed the approval page, submit a pdf of the entire document to the Office of Graduate Studies thesis coordinator. Original paper copies of the signed submission agreement for ScholarWorks@GVSU (see separate thesis manual for this form), the thesis approval page, the thesis title page, and abstract should also be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies. These should be printed on white, 25-pound acid-free bond paper.

Once your thesis is accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies, it will be submitted to the university libraries for inclusion in ScholarWorks@GVSU. The inclusion of your work in ScholarWorks@GVSU will make it openly available on the internet, furthering scholarship in your field of study. If you wish, release of your thesis may be embargoed for a specified period of time from when the library receives it. Contact the library’s ScholarWorks@GVSU coordinator if you would like more information regarding embargos. Consult the library’s home page to identify the current ScholarWorks@GVSU coordinator.

Master's Thesis Option for All Students

Publishing Process

When your manuscript and abstract are approved by your committee and dean as ready to publish, the University Libraries will send your thesis to ProQuest to be filmed, stored, and listed in a computerized database; the abstract will be printed in Master's Abstracts. A bound copy will also be shelved in the University Libraries. Please contact Sarah Pepper, Administrative Assistant, Room 210 in Zumberge Library, phone 616-331-2621, and make arrangements to bring or mail the following:

Complete ProQuest's Masters Thesis Agreement Form, with one copy of the title page and abstract attached to the form. You will find the form at the ProQuest website. (username = dissertations password = publish). If there are two or more authors, a complete form for each author must be included. Please choose the "traditional publishing" option.

A check for $55.00 made out to ProQuest OR a completed “Copyright Registration Form” and a check for $110.00 made out to ProQuest.

Deliver one unbound original of the Master's thesis for the Library to send to ProQuest. This original will be returned to you when ProQuest returns it to the Library - in about four months.


Type
Type must be consistent throughout the entire manuscript and must be clean, dark, black ink. Typing should only be on one side of the paper. Double space all textual materials except for table titles and headings, figure captions, references (but double-spacing is required between references), footnotes and long quotations. A serif typeface is preferred for text because it improves readability and reduced eye fatigue. The preferred typefaces are: 12-pt. Times New Roman or 12-pt. Arial. A sans serif type is used in figures, however, to provide a clean and simple line that enhances visual presentation. These typefaces include: Arial, Helvetica or Century.
**Paper**
Original and copies of the projects and theses must be prepared on 8-1/2” x 11” white paper or twenty-pound substance and 100 percent rag or cotton content. Most requirements for rag content and weight of paper are established to provide durable copies of projects and theses for the library.

**Margins and Spacing**
Left, right, top and bottom margins must be 1” wide. The only printing that may appear in a margin is the page number. Double-space throughout the paper, including the title page, abstract, body of the document, references, appendices, footnotes, tables, and figure captions. Space once after all punctuation. This includes using one space (not two!) following punctuation marks at the ends of sentences.

**Page Numbering**
Assign a number to each page in the project or thesis. Preliminary pages are numbered in lower-case Roman numeral figures centered at the bottom of the paper. The title page is counted as page one, but left unnumbered, so that “ii” on the next page will be the first number to appear.

The text itself should be numbered in Arabic figures beginning with -1- on the first page of the text placed in the upper right corner. The Arabic numeration continues to the end of the volume, including the appendices, bibliography and the final vitae page. *All pages must be numbered.* It is suggested that it is more practical to leave numbering the pages until the final step in the process.

**Figures and Tables**
In projects and theses, figures and tables are frequently incorporated at the appropriate point in text as a convenience to readers. Short tables may appear on a page with some text. Each long table and each figure is placed on a separate page immediately after the page on which the table or figure is first mentioned. Figure and table captions are typed below the figure or table, or in some cases, on the preceding or facing page. Number all tables/figures with Arabic numerals in the order which they are first discussed in the text. Give every table and figure a brief but clear and explanatory title.

**Quotations**
Incorporate a short quotation (fewer than 40 words) into text and enclose the quotation with double quotation marks. Display a quotation of 40 or more words in a freestanding block of typewritten lines, and omit the quotation marks. Indent from left and right margins ½ inch for block quotes.

**Footnotes**
Footnotes are intended to supplement or amplify substantive information in the text; they should not include complicated, irrelevant or nonessential information. Because they are distracting to readers (and expensive to include in printed material), such footnotes should be included only if they strengthen the discussion. A content footnote should convey just one idea; if you find yourself creating paragraphs or displaying equations as you are writing a footnote, then the main text or an appendix probably would be a more suitable place to present your information. For more information about Footnotes, see pages 325-326 in the APA Manual (5th Edition).

**Abstract**
Type the abstract itself as a single paragraph in block format (i.e. without paragraph indentation) and do not exceed 120 words. Type all numbers – except those that being a sentence – as Arabic numerals.

An abstract is a brief, comprehensive summary of the contents of the manuscript; it allows readers to survey the contents of the manuscript quickly. The abstract can be one of the most important paragraphs in your manuscript, as most people will have their first contact with your manuscript by seeing just the abstract. The abstract needs to be dense with information, but also readable, well organized, brief and self-contained.

**References**
Only references cited in the text are included in the reference list.

**Appendices**
An appendix is helpful if the detailed description of certain material is inappropriate to the body of the paper. Include an appendix only if it helps the readers to understand, evaluate or replicate the study. If your paper only has one appendix, label it Appendix; if your paper has more than one appendix, label each one with a capital letter (Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.) in the order in which it is mentioned in the main text. Each appendix must have a title; however, in the text, refer to the appendixes by their labels not their titles.
Acknowledgements
Identify grants or other financial support (and the source) for your study; do not precede grant numbers by (No. or #). Next, acknowledge colleagues who assisted you in conducting the study or reviewing your project or thesis. In this paragraph, you may also explain any special agreements concerning authorship, such as if you and your colleagues contributed equally to the study (which is not the case for a project or thesis). Finally, you may end this paragraph with thanks for personal assistance, such as in manuscript preparation. Typically, this paragraph is included in the author’s note, which is, traditionally, not a requirement for a project or thesis; however, a paragraph acknowledging thanks to contributors is optional.

School of Criminal Justice Project Format
1. Cover Page (fits in cover window)
2. GVSU Degree Title Page
3. Signed Project Approval Form
4. Title Page - page i (not shown)
5. Acknowledgement Page (optional) - page ii
6. Abstract - page iii
7. Table of Contents (see example) - page iv
8. List of Tables and Figures (see example) – page v
9. Chapter One (page 1 unnumbered – number all subsequent pages 2, 3, etc.)
10. Chapter Two: Literature Review
11. Chapter Three: Methodology
12. Chapter Four: Results
13. References
14. Appendices

See separate thesis manual for thesis pagination and format.
Title of Project

By

Name of Student

Date

PROJECT

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master’s of Science in Criminal Justice
in the School of Criminal Justice
of Grand Valley State University

Grand Rapids, MI

Project/Thesis Committee

Name (Chair)
Name of committee member
Name of committee member
COPY OF SIGNED APPROVAL FORM
Title of Project

By

Student Name
Acknowledgements

Thank all those that you wish to which may include committee, faculty, family and/or friends.
Abstract

Your project or thesis must contain an abstract, which is a short summary that includes the methods, sample, findings, and conclusion of your project. Abstracts should be single-spaced within paragraphs and double-spaced between paragraphs. A descriptive first paragraph should give the project title, author name, and other relevant school-specific information. Following this is the narrative portion of the abstract which should be between 220 and 270 words, and not exceed one page in length. Note that this word limit is much longer than the maximum of 120 words for most abstracts in APA journals. This should enable writers to make the abstract as self-contained as possible, which is necessary because the abstract is published and indexed separately from the dissertation in research databases.
Table of Contents

• Chapter 1 – Introduction
  o Introduction to the Study
  o Statement of the Problem
  o Background of the Problem
  o Purpose of the Study

• Chapter 2 – Review of Literature
  o Introduction to the Literature
  o Next heading
  o Next Heading
  o Conclusion of the Literature

• Chapter 3 – Methodology
  o Introduction
  o Sample
  o Research Design and Concepts
  o Research Subjects

• Chapter 4 – Results
  o Introduction to Data and Analysis
  o Next heading
  o Next heading
  o Conclusion of Data and Analysis

• Chapter 5 – Recommendations
  o Introduction to Discussion and Conclusions
  o Next heading
  o Limitations of this Research
  o Recommendations for Future Research
  o Concluding the Research

• References
• Appendix
List of Figures and Tables

TABLES

Table 1. Title of Table 1  page #
Table 2. Title of Table 2  page #
Table 3. Title of Table 3  page #
Table 4. Title of Table 4  page #

FIGURES

Figure 1. Title of Figure 1  page #
Figure 1. Title of Figure 1  page #
Figure 1. Title of Figure 1  page #
Figure 1. Title of Figure 1  page #
Figure 1. Title of Figure 1  page #
Chapter 1 begins here.

APA style uses headings to help organize papers. The headings indicate the topic of a section. Most papers only use one or two levels, but more complicated papers can use up to five levels. How many levels you use dictates the format of your headings. Subheadings must have at least one other subheading at the same level. The title of the paper does not count as a level. The title is centered and uses upper and lower case. It is not bold or italicized or in a larger font. APA does not include an “Introduction” heading because it is assumed that papers begin with an introduction. However, the conclusion should include a heading if headings are used. Do not include extra spacing above or below any headings—the entire document is double-spaced. Do not label headings with numbers or letters. The number of headings needed for your article will depend on its length and complexity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Heading</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Centered, Boldface, Uppercase And Lowercase Heading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Flush Left, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Start Chapter two here….

For more information about the Literature Review, please see pages 26-27 in the APA Manual (6th Edition)
Chapter 3: Methodology

Start Chapter 3 here….

For more information about the Methodology, please see pages 29-32 in the APA Manual (6th Edition)
Start Chapter 4 here…. 

For a project this would be results as well as some recommendations

For a thesis recommendations warrant its’ own chapter

For more information about the Results, please see pages 32-35 in the APA Manual (6th Edition)
Chapter 5: Recommendations

Start Chapter 5 here….

For more information about the Discussion/Recommendations, please see pages 35-37 in the APA Manual (6th Edition)
References

The APA Publication Manual (2010) contains 95 examples of different reference types. Here are a few examples of the most commonly used formats taken directly from the APA Manual (chap. 7). For more information and examples please see pages 193-224 in the APA Manual (6th Edition).

**Journal article with DOI:**


**Journal article with DOI, more than seven authors:**


**Journal article without DOI (when DOI is not available):**


- Include the issue number if the journal is paginated by issue.
- If there is no DOI assigned and the reference was retrieved online, give the URL of the journal home page.
- No retrieval date is needed.

**Reference to an entire book:**


**Reference to chapter in edited books:**

Appendix A

APA Helpful Formatting Hints

For more information about the Appendices, please see pages 38-40, 230 in the APA Manual (6th Edition)
Three horizontal lines, or rules, are a feature of APA tables. Vertical lines or rules are allowed only in exceptional circumstances. The first rule comes below the title, the second below the column headings, and the third at the bottom of the table. There is no specific instruction specifying the size or height of rule; a slightly bold line may help the table standout. Whatever your preference, be consistent, use the same height for rules in all tables in your paper.

Table #.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the Table in Heading Caps and Italics Flush With the Left Margin</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Stub head</td>
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<td>Stub (row heading)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. General table notes apply to the entire table. These may include clarifications of the values in the table, an attribution to the source or copyright permission, explanations of abbreviations, and so on. These are set in a smaller font. Need not be complete sentences.
<sup>a</sup>Specific notes follow general notes, beginning on a new line flush left with the table margin. <sup>b</sup>Notes can continue within the same block of text.
*<sup>p</sup> < .05 [a probability note comes last]

For more information about the Tables, please see pages 128-150, 151, 230 in the APA Manual (6<sup>th</sup> Edition)
Figures, pictures and graphs, are not typeset like tables but are photo reproduced. The question of when to use a figure is as important as what figure or graph to use. These issues aside, the presentation of figures revolves around the caption or legend for the graphic.


For more information about the Figures, please see pages 150-167, 230 in the APA Manual (6th Edition)
APPENDIX B:
HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW COMMITTEE (HRRC) INFORMATION

THE HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW COMMITTEE (HRRC)

The Human Research Review Committee (HRRC) is comprised of GVSU faculty, staff and community members who review proposed research studies involving living persons. For the most up-to-date information please go to: http://www.gvsu.edu/hrrc/.

The HRRC ensures that the basic rights and welfare of research participants are fostered and protected. The HRRC supports researchers through its coordinated activities in education, regulatory compliance oversight, and post approval monitoring.

All research involving human subjects performed at GVSU and/or by GVSU students, staff, and/or faculty must be reviewed and approved by the Human Research Review Committee prior to beginning the research.

THE HRRC - STRUCTURE and PROCESS

Ethical Principles
- GVSU is guided by the ethical principles regarding all research involving humans as set forth in the report of the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research entitled: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research (often referred to as the "Belmont Report"). The report may be found on-line through the HRRC homepage.
- All institutional and non-institutional performance sites for this institution, domestic or foreign, will be obligated by this institution to conform to ethical principles which are at least equivalent to those of this institution, as cited in the previous paragraph or as may be determined by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Secretary.
- Before any human subject is involved in research in relationship to this institution, an Institutional Review Board (IRB; known locally as the Human Research Review Committee or HRRC)) will give proper consideration to:
  - the risks to the subjects
  - the anticipated benefits to the subjects and others
  - the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result
  - the informed consent process to be employed

Jurisdiction of the IRB
45 CFR 46.109, 46.112, 46.113; 21 CFR 56.109, 56.112, 56.113
- The HRRC has the authority to approve, require modifications in (to secure approval), or disapprove ALL research (funded and not funded) involving human subjects conducted at GVSU as well as research conducted elsewhere by GVSU faculty and staff except research where the only involvement of human subjects is in one or more exempt categories (see Exempt Research Checklist).
- Research that has been approved by the HRRC is subject to review and disapproval by institutional officials, but those officials may NOT approve research that has been disapproved by the HRRC.
- The HRRC has the authority to suspend or terminate previously approved research that is not being conducted in accordance with the HRRC’s requirements or that has been associated with unexpected serious harm to subjects.

HRRC Meetings
45 CFR 46.108(b), 21 CFR 56.108(c)
- Except when an expedited review procedure is used, proposed research must be reviewed at convened meetings at which a majority of the members of the HRRC are present, including at least one member whose primary concerns are in nonscientific areas. In order for the research to be approved, it shall receive the approval of the majority of the members present at the meeting.

Research Integrity
Research, scholarship and creative activities are central to fulfilling the mission of the University. It is policy of the
University that all employees, students, partners and affiliates always perform their roles related to research, scholarship and creative activity with ethical integrity. This requirement reflects a culture publicly committed to developing and fostering the highest standards of professional ethics. Research integrity is demonstrated in the decisions and actions that exemplify our core ethical values.

HHS Office of Research Integrity "Role of the Research Integrity Officer" Video

HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW COMMITTEE
CONTACT INFORMATION
049 JHZ, Allendale Campus
616-331-3197
hrrc@gvsu.edu

**Submission Guide**

Need to know how to submit a research study (called a protocol)?

1st step: Learn about the federal regulations and relevant ethics standards. The simplest place to begin is CITI web based training (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative, Miami, FL). This free, learner-led on-line training program offers more than two dozen modules related to human subjects research and protections. CITI Training. The HRRC recommends that when you have completed training, print the completion certificate and include it with your protocol submission form as evidence of your familiarity with the legal and ethical standards for human subjects research protections.

2nd step: Submit your study via IRBNet. If you have not used IRBNet in the past, you will need to register first. You will also need to determine what level of review your study will fall under. Determining Level of Review

3rd step: Get authorization to conduct the research study from your unit head (if a faculty member) or from your faculty advisor if a student.
Note: Your authorizing official must also be registered on IRBNet to electronically approve your study. Please inform them of this to ensure they will be able to approve your study.

Note: All protocols also must be approved by the Human Research Review Committee before research activities can begin. This includes all exempt protocols.

You will find answers to commonly asked questions in the FAQ Section.

ALL Protocols MUST be submitted online via IRBNet.

IRBNet Forms and Documents

IRBNet is a web based document management system. All GVSU research projects that require Human Research Review Committee (HRRC) approval must be submitted and stored on this system. Below are two sets of documents that you will need as you prepare to submit a research study for approval. These forms and instructions are also available on the IRBNet system in the FORMS LIBRARY on drop down menus. Any document may be downloaded and saved on a hard drive or removable storage device.

You must register on IRBNet and provide a valid e-mail address. Due to vulnerability and software interface needs,
we recommend using a GVSU e-mail address rather than a commercial e-mail address. To register, go to: https://www.irbnet.org/release/public/register.jsp.

DO NOT USE THE DEMO VIDEO there. It is a marketing tool, not helpful for registering.

**IRBNet Registration Information**

http://www.gvsu.edu/hrrc/index.cfm?id=85D51EEF-EFB4-AF9E-C2FF9E5557E3431C

All researchers, IRB Board Members, and authorizing officials (Deans, Department Chairs, Unit Heads, Faculty Advisors) must register with IRBNet once before beginning to use the system.

Click any "VIEW PICTURE" link below to see an image of the registration step.

**Step 1:** Visit IRBNet New User Registration

**Step 2:** Fill out required information, and click [CONTINUE]

**Step 3:** Review User Agreement, and Click [Accept]

**Step 4:** Select "Grand Valley State University" as your Affiliated Organization. You may do this by either typing "Grand Valley State University" in the search box, and clicking [SEARCH], or by scrolling the alphabetical list, and clicking on "Grand Valley State University, Allendale, MI". Then click [CONTINUE]

**Step 5:** Enter your contact information. One telephone number, and an email address is required. This email address will be used for IRBNet and HRRC Communications. Click [CONTINUE] when finished.

**Step 6:** Confirm your information. If all information is correct, click [REGISTER] to complete your registration.

**Step 7:** You should receive a confirmation email from activation@IRBNet.org, titled "IRBNet Activation Required". You must open, and click the link within this email to confirm your registration. Once you complete the directions in this email, you are registered and may begin your appropriate work. If you do not receive the confirmation email within 24 hours of registering, please contact the HRRC.

**After registering, you may begin submitting studies online, or approving studies.** The Forms and Documents page contains sample forms, and Instructions for various tasks using IRBNet.

**STUDENTS:** If you are unsure of whether your planned research project requires HRRC approval, complete the Checklist for Student Protocol Submission (#1 in the Forms box below). Take your results to your research advisor who will help you determine if HRRC approval is necessary.

For new protocols, two actions are required. The first is completed by the researcher, the second is completed by the authorizing official. See the appropriate instructions in the Instructions for Submitting Materials box.

1. Submitting a NEW protocol study. Note: must include
   a. New Protocol Review Application
   b. Protocol Study Materials
2. Signing (Authorizing/Approving) a study.
### IRBNet Home Page (and login)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructions for Submitting Materials on IRBNet</th>
<th>Revision Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Submitting a NEW Protocol Study</td>
<td>3/31/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Editing a study package after submission but prior to approval</td>
<td>3/31/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Signing (Authorizing) a study</td>
<td>3/31/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Making required revisions to a reviewed study</td>
<td>3/31/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Changing procedures in an approved study</td>
<td>3/31/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Renewing a study that is about to expire</td>
<td>3/31/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Closing a research study</td>
<td>3/31/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Reporting unanticipated problems/serious adverse events</td>
<td>3/31/09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### IRBNet Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IRBNet Forms</th>
<th>Revision Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Checklist for Student Protocol Submission</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Application and Checklist for Exempt Protocol</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Application and Checklist for Expedited Protocol</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Application and Checklist for Full Board Protocol</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Independent Investigator Agreement Form</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 GVSU Email Use Policy</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 GRPS (Grand Rapids Public Schools) Research Agreement</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 FWA Authorization Agreement</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 HIPAA Authorization to Disclose PHI</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 HIPAA Authorization for Future Recruitment</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 HIPAA Authorization for Future Research Use</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Data Use Agreement</td>
<td>10/23/08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After closing (completing) your study, you must complete the Closed Protocol Reporting Form. The protocol reporting form is a quick and easy way for the HRRC to collect required information from investigators about characteristics of their study. To complete the form, you will need the data from your study, including participant demographics.

**Closed Protocol Reporting Form:** [http://www.gvsu.edu/hrrc/?action=home.protocolreporting](http://www.gvsu.edu/hrrc/?action=home.protocolreporting)

Before submitting the Closed Protocol form online, please save it to your computer as *Closed Protocol*. Then follow the instructions below (#7 - Closing a Research Study) to upload this document to IRBNet.

Additional forms also may be required depending on the nature of the research study. For questions, call (616-331-3197) or e-mail (hrrc@gvsu.edu) the HRRC office.
APPENDIX C:
PROJECT FORMS
Grand Valley State University
School of Criminal Justice

APPROVAL OF PROJECT A COMMITTEE

The following faculty members agree to serve as a Project Committee for:

_________________________________________________
Student’s Name

_________________________________________________
Student’s Signature

_________________________________________________
Committee Chair

_________________________________________________
Signature

_________________________________________________
Faculty Member

_________________________________________________
Signature

_________________________________________________
Agency Representative – Name and Title

_________________________________________________
Signature

Approved:

_________________________________________________
Coordinator of Graduate Program

Note: This signed form will be placed in the student's file.

APPENDIX D
Grand Valley State University
School of Criminal Justice

APPROVAL OF PROJECT B COMMITTEE

The following faculty members agree to serve as a Project Committee for:

_________________________________________________
Student’s Name

_________________________________________________
Student's Signature

_________________________________________________
Date

_________________________________________________
Committee Chair

_________________________________________________
Signature

_________________________________________________
Date

_________________________________________________
Faculty Member

_________________________________________________
Signature

_________________________________________________
Date

_________________________________________________
Faculty Member

_________________________________________________
Signature

_________________________________________________
Date

Approved:

_________________________________________________
Coordinator of Graduate Program

_________________________________________________
Date

Note: This signed form will be placed in the student's file.
APPENDIX E

Grand Valley State University
School of Criminal Justice

PROJECT A PROPOSAL APPROVAL

This acknowledges that _________________________ has submitted an acceptable project proposal entitled:

(student name)

_______________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________

Project Committee:

Chair (printed name) Signature Date

Faculty Member (printed name) Signature Date

Agency Representative (printed name) Signature Date

Coordinator of Graduate Program (printed name) Signature Date

Note: This signed form and a copy of the proposal will be placed in the student’s file.
APPENDIX F
Grand Valley State University
School of Criminal Justice

PROJECT B OUTLINE APPROVAL

This acknowledges that _________________________ has submitted an acceptable project outline entitled:

(student name)

_______________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________

Project Committee:

Chair (printed name)                  Signature                  Date

Faculty Member (printed name)        Signature                  Date

Faculty Member (printed name)        Signature                  Date

Coordinator of Graduate Program (printed name) Signature                  Date
APPENDIX G

Grand Valley State University
School of Criminal Justice

PROJECT DEFENSE APPROVAL

This acknowledges that __________________________ has completed (student name)
all requirements for the master's project (CJ 693). It further attests that the student
presented the Project in the presence of the undersigned committee members.

The undersigned agree that this project entitled:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

is accepted by the faculty of the School of Criminal Justice, Grand Valley State
University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Criminal Justice
Degree with ________________.

Project Committee:

_________________________________________ Date
Chair

_________________________________________ Date
Faculty Member

_________________________________________ Date
Faculty Member or Agency Representative

Approved:

_________________________________________ Date
Coordinator of Graduate Program

Note: This signed form and a copy of the Final Project will be placed in the student's file.
APPENDIX D:
THESIS FORMS

Grand Valley State University
School of Criminal Justice

APPROVAL OF THESIS COMMITTEE

The following faculty members agree to serve as a Thesis Committee for:

_________________________________________________
Student’s Name

_________________________________________________
Student's Signature

_________________________________________________
Committee Chair

_________________________________________________
Signature

_________________________________________________
Committee Member

_________________________________________________
Signature

_________________________________________________
Committee Member

_________________________________________________
Signature

Approved:

_________________________________________________
Coordinator of Graduate Program

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Note: This signed form will be placed in the student's file.

APPENDIX I

Grand Valley State University
School of Criminal Justice

THESIS PROPOSAL APPROVAL

This acknowledges that _________________________ has submitted an acceptable project proposal entitled:

(student name)

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

Project Committee:

Chair (printed name)  Signature  Date

Member (printed name)  Signature  Date

Member (printed name)  Signature  Date

Coordinator of Graduate Program (printed name)  Signature  Date

Note: This signed form and a copy of the proposal will be placed in the student's file.
The signatories of the committee below indicate that they have read and approved the thesis of <your full legal name> in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of <Master of XXXX>.

______________________________________________________
<name of thesis chair>, Thesis committee chair            Date

______________________________________________________
<name of member>, Committee member                        Date

______________________________________________________
<name of member>, Committee member                        Date

Accepted and approved on behalf of the
<Name of Academic College>

__________________________________
Dean of the College

__________________________________
Dean of Graduate Studies

Date                                      Date

Accepted and approved on behalf of the
Graduate Faculty

Please send the completed information electronically to: gradstudies@gvsu.edu