

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

**Spring 2005**

**ED 695: RESEARCH APPLICATIONS**

**GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY**

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## **SECTION I: 695 RESEARCH APPLICATIONS SYLLABUS**

### **Course Description**

Candidates for advanced degrees must demonstrate not only their mastery of the subject matter but also their ability to integrate and synthesize it. They must also demonstrate their ability to generate new knowledge and/or apply existing knowledge to specific practical situations. Depending on the area of emphasis, this demonstration may take the form of a project or thesis. Planned with and directed by a graduate faculty member. Three Credits. Offered at least once a year. **Prerequisite:** Permission of advisor and completion of at least 27 semester hours.

**Note:** The course requirement may only be met through successful completion of a written master's project or thesis. No comprehensive exam exists or is available in lieu of the project or thesis.

### **Difference Between a Project and a Thesis**

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

### **Suggested Text**

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, D.C.: author.

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

### **Student's Role**

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

### **Goals**

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

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

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

### **Objectives**

The student will demonstrate the ability to identify, define and pose an informed solution for

an important educational problem through the development of a project proposal.

The student will demonstrate the ability to utilize educational knowledge and research as they apply to the project proposal.

The student will write a Literature Review that is focused on the topic and solution identified in the project proposal.

The student will demonstrate the ability to integrate and synthesize educational knowledge by presenting a scholarly project designed to focus on and solve the problem identified in the project proposal.

## **SECTION II: OVERVIEW OF THE MASTER'S PROJECT**

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

### **Title Page**

The title of your paper should be a description of your main topic and should identify the actual variables (major ingredients) or theoretical issues under investigation. Your title must be centered, 2 ½ inches from the left and right edges of your paper and 3 inches from the top edge of the page. Single space the title and use upper and lowercase lettering. Type the word “by” (centered) directly below the title. On the line directly below “by” type your first, middle, and last names (centered, in upper and lower case letters), followed by the date. Refer to the sample title page on page 27 for additional information that must be included as part of the title page.

### **Acknowledgment Page**

This page is optional. Please refer to the sample acknowledgement on page 29.

### **Abstract**

The abstract is a 100 to 250 word summary of your project. Please refer to the sample abstract on page 30.

### **Table of Contents**

This page is usually completed last. Please refer to the sample Table of Contents on page 31-32.

### **Chapter One: Project Proposal**

It is expected that the project proposal will be written and approved prior to all additional work regarding the project. An outline of the contents of the proposal can be found on pages 11-11. You can expect to write and rewrite your proposal several times before you begin the extensive review of the literature and before you complete your end product, the project itself. Proposals generally are six to ten pages in length. This proposal is the first chapter of your Master's Project.

### **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

Once your project proposal is approved, you will review educational or other appropriate research and literature which focuses on the specific steps and/or solutions your Proposal has outlined to solve the problem, issue, curricula or program. The information you pull together for this Literature Review will serve as the knowledge base for the project you create. Your review of literature must be complete and scholarly. All statements or assertions need to be backed up with research or writings and documented in citations. A minimum of twenty-five sources are expected. The review of literature must be reviewed by your supervisor as you complete the outlined steps. The Literature Review becomes the second chapter of your Master's Project.

### **Chapter Three: Project Components**

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

## References

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

## Appendixes

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

**Note:** You MUST include written permission to include copyrighted material in your project. For more information regarding copyright issues, please see pages 19-21. If you are uncertain as to whether or not you need copyright permission, contact Rita Kohrman, Education Resource Librarian, at 616-331-2622 or kohrmanr@gvsu.edu. You should also check GVSU's Library website for information on requesting copyright permission. The Library website is accessible at <http://www.gvsu.edu/library>.

## Data Form

The 695 Data Form will need to be completed and included as the last page of your Master's Project. A sample of this form is included on page 33 of this manual. On it you will list a descriptive title of your Master's Project, your complete name, the semester of completion, and a list of at least 5 to 7 ERIC descriptors that identify the topic of your project. **Prior to getting your Master's Project bound, your 695 supervisor must sign the data form as an indication that your Master's Project is acceptable and complete.**

## Other Requirements

The entire Master's Project is comprised of chapters one through three, plus a title page, table of contents, abstract, references, appendixes (the project itself, permission forms, etc.), and a 695 Data Form. Your paper must be typed (or word processed using a letter quality printer), double spaced, and completed in a scholarly manner following the standards and current education guidelines of the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA).

## Binding the Master's Project

If you have chosen to do a project, uniform velobinding (ask for the velo vinyl special--black covers, black strip) is available at Kinko's and is required for durability and professional appearance. Your faculty supervisor will check the Mater's Project for appropriate formatting. Once you have received approval, your supervising professor will need 2 bound copies.

## **SECTION III: CHAPTER DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Chapter One: Project Proposal**

#### **Problem Statement**

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

#### **Importance and Rationale of the Study**

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

#### **Background of the Study**

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

#### **Statement of Purpose**

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

#### **Objectives of the Project**

Clearly state the objectives of your project. Make sure your objectives are realistic in relation to the purpose set out for your project. You should clearly develop the rationale for each objective, hypothesis, question, or step in your project. As you do this, you may want to bear in mind the following question: What are the components, objectives or steps of this project and how will I deal with each one?

#### **Definition of Terms**

Be sure to define key terms you will use in your project. You may want to make a list as you work on your proposal. Be sure that you define each important term in the context of your project.

### **Limitations of the Project**

Indicate the limitations of your project. In order to avoid any misunderstanding, you will briefly describe or list what the study is not attempting to address.

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

Use the "Guiding Questions" for each chapter to help focus your writing. Guiding Questions for each chapter begin on page 11.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

### Contents

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

### Organization

In general, the Literature Review should include findings from the most recent years and should be organized by topic, not by author. The Literature Review should cite studies and their findings in a clear and compelling manner. The Literature Review should read smoothly. The most major sources used in the development of your project **MUST** be cited fully in the Literature Review.

Your review of literature must be complete and scholarly. Frequently, a literature review is presented in the form of a funnel going from research and writings that provide a general background for your problem/project/study to the more specific research and/or policies that directly address your project. All assertions and generalizations need to be supported by cited research and writings. At the end of the literature review, you should include a short summary of the literature related to your problem and project. Include a minimum of twenty-five sources in your review of literature.

### Resources

As you do your literature review, you will want to take advantage of the on-line catalog VOYAGER and ERIC database searching capability available at the GVSU Libraries located on the Allendale, Pew, or Meijer Campuses. ERIC documents are kept on microfiche on the fourth floor of Zumberge Library. Education Complete on ProQuest database is also frequently used as a starting place for researching the literature associated with your topic. *The Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, Yearbooks of the National Society for the Study of Education, *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, as well as the on-line catalog, ERIC documents and educational periodicals (*Educational Leadership*, *Phi Delta Kappan*, *Review of Educational Research*) are frequently good sources. If you know of a person who is an expert in the field, it may be a good idea to interview him/her to gain greater insights. In addition, students may use the on-line full-text databases available through the GVSU library webpage (<http://www.gvsu.edu/library>). Reference librarians can be of help to you as well. You are encouraged to make an appointment with Rita Kohrman, Education Resource Librarian (616-331-2622 or [kohrmanr@gvsu.edu](mailto:kohrmanr@gvsu.edu)), for assistance with your research.

### Citation of Sources

As you read and take notes for your specific research paper, don't forget to write down your bibliographic source material along with the notes you take so you have it handy when it comes time to cite the information in your paper. Be sure you have all of the information you need for the APA reference style. Use of ideas from other authors must be cited and quotations must be indicated using a standard citation form. All sources cited must be included in the "References" that immediately follow Chapter Three.

## **Chapter Three: Project Description**

### **Introduction**

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

### **Project Components**

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

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

### **Conclusions**

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

### **Recommendations/Plans for Dissemination**

Up to this point you have described what you did and your conclusions about your project. Now is the time to make suggestions for the use of this information. You also may wish to suggest additional steps that should be taken or additional research that should be done. This is your opportunity to translate your theoretical and observational information into practical suggestions for teachers, principals and school systems. In addition, clearly specify how you plan to disseminate these findings. How will you share your work with colleagues and other professionals?

## SECTION IV: GRADING CRITERIA

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

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

This research should be able to be completed in one semester. Your final Master's Project is needed before the end of the semester if you want your grade recorded on time. If your Master's Project is not received in final form in time for your professor to grade it or if it is received and still needs revision, you will be given an "Incomplete" when grades are turned in. (You will have one semester to complete the unfinished work. If it is not completed, the incomplete automatically becomes an "F." To remove an "F," you would need to take and pay for 695 again.)

To guide you in your writing, sample projects may be obtained from your 695 supervisor. Additionally, projects are located at the K-12 Curriculum Resource Center (KCRC), 1136 ASH, on the Allendale Campus (616-331-2086).

### Plagiarism

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

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

### Policy on Research Integrity

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

## SECTION V: ED 695 GUIDING QUESTIONS

### Chapter One: Project Proposal

#### *Problem Statement*

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

#### *Importance and Rationale of the Project*

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

#### *Background of the Project*

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

#### *Statement of Purpose*

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

#### *Objectives of the Project*

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

#### *Definition of Terms*

- Have key terms been defined?

*Limitations of the Project*

What is the scope of this project?

What will it address? What will it not address?

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

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

### *Introduction*

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

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

### *Theory/Rationale*

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

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

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

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

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

Are empirical research results cited?

Are original, primary sources used?

### *Summary*

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

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

### *Conclusion*

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

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

### **Overall Structural Considerations**

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

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

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

Are explicit transitions used to connect ideas among sections?

Are ideas within individual paragraphs logically connected?

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

Does each section flow coherently?

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

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

Is every generalization or assertion cited appropriately?

Have quotations been limited and properly cited according to APA?

## Chapter Three: Project Description

### *Introduction*

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

### *Project Components*

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

### *Project Evaluation*

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

### *Project Conclusions*

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

### *Project Plans for Dissemination*

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

## **Format and Style Issues**

Are all chapters and sections present?

Are separate sections designated using APA format?

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

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

Is it double spaced?

Does the title page follow the guidelines in this handbook?

Is the left margin 1.5 inches?

Are pages numbered (bottom-centered)?

Does the reference list use APA style?

Is it easy to read and understand?

Does it flow?

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

Is the language appropriately clear and specific?

Is nonsexist language used?

Are specific terms defined in context?

Are all words spelled correctly? Are you sure?

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

Does the format follow the guidelines specified in the 695 handbook?

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

Does this represent graduate level work?

## **Page Numbering**

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

## Headings

Generally, most students will either use two levels of headings or three levels of headings. **Two levels of headings (see p. 114 of the APA Manual) look like this:**

Chapter Two: Literature Review

*Introduction*

**Three levels of headings (see p. 115 of the APA Manual) look like this:**

Chapter Two: Literature Review

*Parent Involvement*

*Utilizing needs assessments*



Notice that the 3<sup>rd</sup> level is tabbed in the same amount of space as a paragraph tab. It is italicized, and only the first word is capitalized.

## SECTION VI: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

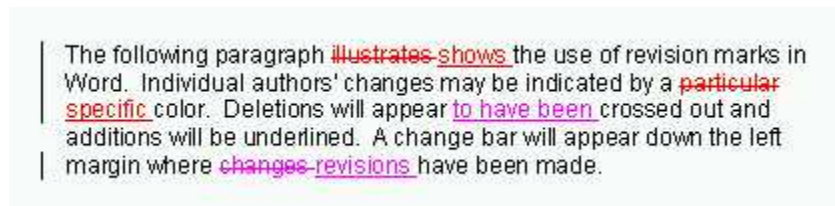
### Citing Electronic Sources

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

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

### Microsoft's® Reviewing Toolbar

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



To turn the Reviewing Toolbar on:

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

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

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

### University Support

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

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

## SECTION VII: PERMISSIONS

It is necessary to request and receive permission to include **the work of others** in your project. You may want to prepare the letters so that you are granted the specific permission you are requesting. You may use the samples provided as models. Be sure to include both the letters of permissions you create and the responses in their own appendix in your bound document. If the appropriate permissions are not included, your project may not be accepted. Discuss options with your 695 supervisor.

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

### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Written permissions need to be included for the following:

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

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

## **COPYRIGHT ISSUES**

Signed evidence of permission is required when including a copyrighted item in the Master's Project. Ask yourself these questions: How important is the item for the success of the project? Can I describe the item in the text of my project without actually reproducing or adapting the item? Do I have enough time to request AND receive a reply from the copyright holder? Consult the APA manual, section 3.41, pp. 121-122, and section 7.01, p. 333 for further information.

### **Finding out Who is the Copyright Holder:**

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

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

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

### **Citation Format:**

See page 300 of the APA manual for instructions for how to note copyright permissions when an item is used within the body of the thesis/project.

If the item is placed in the appendix, the citation is placed under the item. The citation should be in the format stated in APA manual, section 3.73, or in the manner requested by the copyright holder.

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

### **Seek permission for the following:**

#### **Pages from a Journal or Book**

Obtain permission to include pages of another person's work in the your project. Permission may be in the form of a letter, email, or fax. The citation should be in the format stated in the APA manual, section 7.01, p. 333, and section 3.73, p.174.

### **Government Materials**

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

**U.S. Dept. of Education:** "Unless specifically stated otherwise, all information on the U.S. Dept. of Education's web site at [www.edu.gov](http://www.edu.gov) is in the public domain, and may be

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

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

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

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

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

### **School District Materials**

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

### **Adaptations**

Obtain permission to reproduce OR adapt all or part of a table or figure. Include citation at the bottom of the adaptation, with this statement: Reprinted (or adapted) with permission. The citation should be in the format stated in the APA manual, section 3.73, pp. 174-175.

### **Tests and Questionnaires**

Determine who owns the copyright; obtain permission for print **AND** electronic reproduction. Include citation at the bottom of the test or questionnaire. The citation should be in the format stated in the APA manual, section 3.93, pp. 206-207. Professional or commercial tests/questionnaires **often DO NOT** allow for the use of even one question.

### **Photographs**

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

**Photo:** obtain written permission for reuse of any photo (print or electronic) from the copyright holder. Include citation (copyright holder/photographer) at the bottom of the photo. Place a copy of the signed permission letter in the appendix. Keep the original letters of the signed release in your files. The citation should be in the format stated in the APA manual, section 3.92, pp. 197-198.

### **Web/Electronic Sources**

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

### **Communications**

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

**Sample Copyright Permission Letter**

Date

Name and Address or Email  
of Copyright Holder

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Name  
Address  
Phone Numbers  
Fax Number  
E-mail



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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name of Company/Organization  
Permission granted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW**

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

[http://www.gvsu.edu/research\\_dev/index.cfm?id=B27B6479-FEBF-9BF7-BDA6D693E6DC0773](http://www.gvsu.edu/research_dev/index.cfm?id=B27B6479-FEBF-9BF7-BDA6D693E6DC0773)

A sample copy of the Application for Review can be found on the next page.

If you have questions about the Human Subjects Review process or whether it applies to your project, please consult with your 695 Supervisor or contact the Chair of Grand Valley's Human Research Review Committee, Paul Huizenga, at 616-331-2472 or [huizengp@gvsu.edu](mailto:huizengp@gvsu.edu).

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS

1. Regulations published in the Federal Register (attached) will help in preparing this application.
2. Apply to the Research & Development Center, 301C DeVos.
3. For exemption or expedited review, please append information\* **which clearly states the basis for exemption or expedited review** consistent with the federal regulations. Consult with the director of Research & Development, if necessary. **Send the original PLUS TWO copies of the form and supporting materials\*\*** to the Research and Development Center, 301C DeVos. That documentation should include the following information:
4. Supporting materials for all categories must include the following:
  - A. Name all investigators (including principal investigator) on this project and state their affiliations.
  - B. Indicate where the research will be conducted. Attach copies of permission letters from cooperating institutions or individuals if that is possible.
  - C. Expand upon the methods as they apply to human subjects. Include the number of subjects, the length of time for a subject's participation in the study, procedure for recruitment, subject population characteristics (e.g., state of health, age, sex, ethnic background), criteria for inclusion or exclusion of individuals, and cost to the subject or remuneration, if any. Provide a rationale for selection of this population and include samples of surveys or questionnaires that will be used in the research.
  - D. Describe potential risks and benefits to the human subjects, and indicate safeguards to avoid or minimize risks (e.g., coding to protect confidentially).
5. The higher the potential risks to subjects, the more detailed this application should be. If the list above omits information which is pertinent to the committee's deliberations, add it. The applicant is responsible for providing all relevant information to the Human Research Review Committee.

---

\*This is not asking for a complete thesis proposal.

\*\*Effectiveness of a proposal is not necessarily proportionate to its length. A proposal consists of the cover page form on top, stapled in the upper left corner to the documentation.

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW COMMITTEE

Principal Investigator(s):

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address and Telephone

Number of Principal Investigator(s): \_\_\_\_\_

GVSU Department or

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of the Project:

\_\_\_\_\_

Summary of the Project:

In what capacity does this project involve human subject? (E.g., surveys, interviews, clinical trial, use of medical records, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Check one:

- This is a report on research on human subjects which is exempted by 46.101 of the Federal Register 4616:8336, January 26, 1981. (Refer to instructions on the reverse of this form.)
- This is a request for expedited review as described in 46.110 of the Federal Register 46(16):8336, January 26, 1981. (Refer to instructions on the reverse of this form.)
- This is a request for full review. (Refer to instructions on the reverse of this form.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Unit Head/Department Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number of Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Sample Letter Requesting Permission for Student to Participate in a Study**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am currently taking a course at Grand Valley State University in which we are learning about the educational needs and preferences of students. I am requesting your permission to learn more about your child's educational needs. This information can help your child be an even more successful student. I will share what we learn and make some recommendations about learning experiences which seem appropriate for your child.

Participation in this is voluntary. If you are willing for your child to participate, I would appreciate your signing and returning this letter to me. Any information that is disseminated will not identify your child. If you have any questions about your rights in the study, you may contact the Chair of Grand Valley's Human Research Review Committee, Paul Huizenga at 616-331-2472 or huizengp@gvsu.edu.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

*Your name*

-----

I give permission for my child \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in this project.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or guardian

**The following are sample letters to use materials developed by your school district or to study students in your district. The letter should be addressed to your principal, supervisor or whomever is responsible for granting such permission in your district.**

Date

To own district/school:

May I receive permission to conduct my study in my classroom/my school using \_\_\_\_\_ materials and summary data obtained from students using \_\_\_\_\_. I will not be using any individual student data that could be traced to the student (such as copies of writing or test scores).

I plan to use student work and/or test scores in summary form only. If you have any questions about the study, please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_. If you have any questions about the human subjects rights in the study, you may contact the Chair of Grand Valley’s Human Research Review Committee, Paul Huizenga at 616-331-2472 or [huizengp@gvsu.edu](mailto:huizengp@gvsu.edu).

*Your name and position*

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ (signature, position and date)

-----

Date

To Whom It May Concern:

*Your name* has the permission of the \_\_\_\_\_ District to use and include the following materials in her Master’s Project for Grand Valley State University:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ District materials pertinent to her study and included in her Master’s Project.
2. Materials created by \_\_\_\_\_ staff which are pertinent to this body of work .
3. Materials developed by *your name* for this study.

All materials pertaining to \_\_\_\_\_ Public Schools as well as all materials produced by employees of \_\_\_\_\_ district may NOT be reproduced without written permission for the district.

Sincerely,

*Signature, Position  
School District name*

**SECTION VIII. SAMPLE PAGES**

**Sample Title Page (12-pt typeface)**

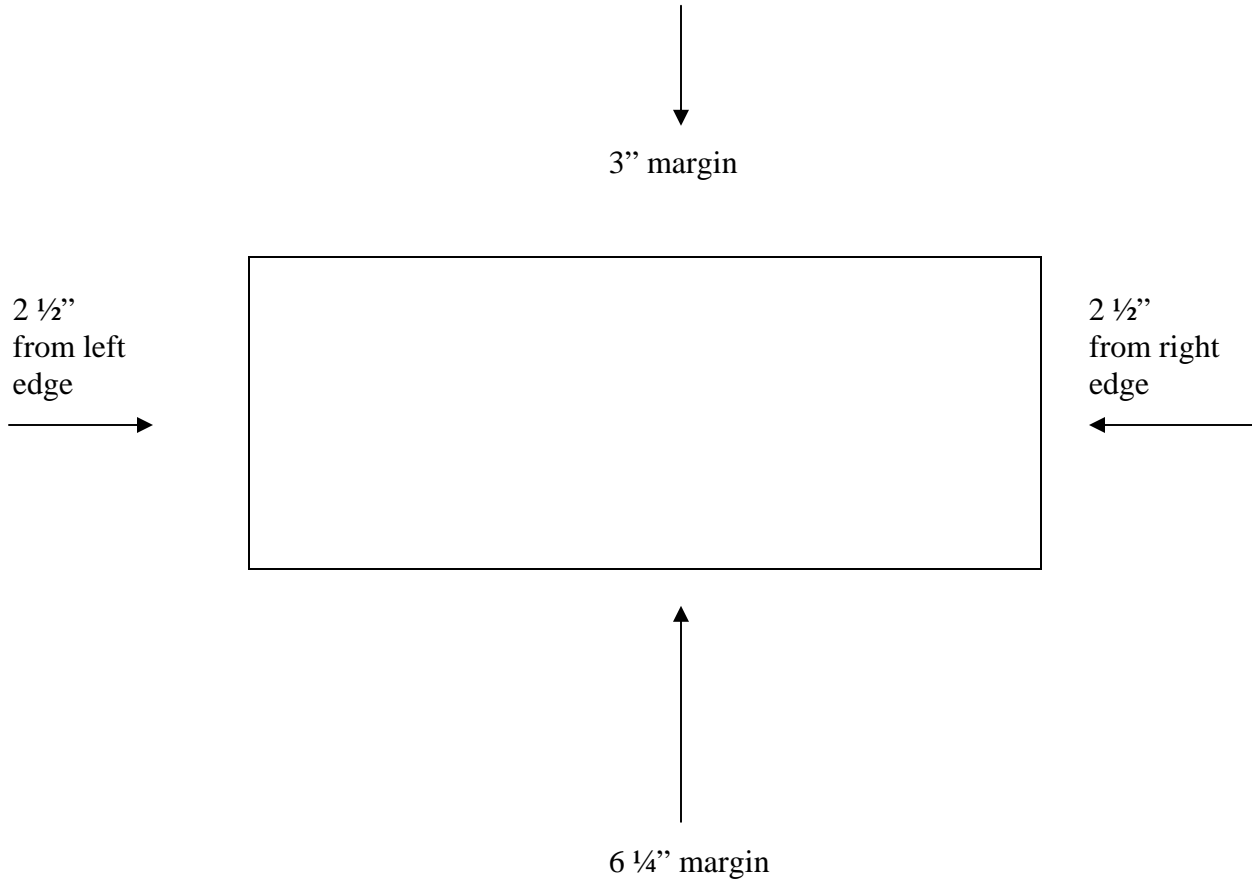
An Examination of the Role of Technology  
in Elementary Language Arts  
by  
Susan Marie Student  
December 2005

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

Grand Valley State University

## Window Dimensions for Projects

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



## Sample Acknowledgments Page

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

### Acknowledgments

In writing this final project, I have benefited from the encouragement, advice, and constructive criticism of Professors William B. Mabie, Susan L. Jones, and James M. Montgomery. My thanks go to them, as to the many others at Grand Valley State University, who have given much needed help. The financial benefits of a fellowship, and the intellectual training from the faculty in the College of Education, have made graduate study a pleasure and a privilege in a country that is not my own.

Steven Anthony Michael

(Note: Name only--no titles)

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

**Sample Abstract**

Abstract

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

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

**Sample Table of Contents for Master's Project**

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

Sample Data Form

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY  
ED 695 Data Form

**\*This page will need to be recreated on your word processor using a 1 1/2" left margin.**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MAJOR: (Choose only 1)

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

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

PAPER TYPE: Project                      SEM/YR COMPLETED: \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL \_\_\_\_\_

Using key words or phrases, choose several ERIC descriptors (5 - 7 minimum) to describe the contents of your project. ERIC descriptors can be found online at [http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?\\_nfpb=true&\\_pageLabel=Thesaurus&\\_nfls=false](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=Thesaurus&_nfls=false)

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

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

## SECTION IX: EVALUATION

## Project Rubric

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

**Final Supervisor Evaluation**  
(To be completed by the student)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of 695 Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please evaluate your supervising professor in each of the following categories:

	Poor				Excellent
1. Helped to clarify Master's Project requirements in Handbook	1	2	3	4	5
2. Guidance to appropriate resources	1	2	3	4	5
3. Assistance in defining the scope of the project	1	2	3	4	5
4. Availability both on scheduled meeting dates and otherwise	1	2	3	4	5
5. Promptness of response to questions submitted	1	2	3	4	5
6. Usefulness of comments/corrections	1	2	3	4	5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: This evaluation may be turned in to any College of Education administrative assistant or student worker on the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor of the Eberhard Center in order to ensure anonymity.**

## **SECTION X: BINDING REQUIREMENTS**

Master's Projects in the GVSU Advanced Studies in Education program are to follow the following binding directions:

Bound copies of the Master's Project may be done at Kinko's - The Copy Center, 233 Fulton N.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49503 (in Eastbank Towers across the river from the Eberhard Center) in the following manner: VELO VINYL SPECIAL (black cover, black strip) with window and plastic sheet behind it. This should cost between \$4.00 and \$5.00 depending upon thickness of the work.

**When manuscript and abstract are approved by the candidate's faculty supervisor, students are to provide their faculty supervisor with two bound copies. One will be left with the professor for grading. The faculty supervisor may send the second copy to the Library for cataloging.**