



**College of Education
Master's Research Project Handbook**

Supplement to:

ED 518 Research Methods in Education
and ED 519 Master's Project

Revised April 2010

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
Why a Master's Project?	5
The Importance of "APA Style"	6
Two Aspects of the Project: Process and Product	7
Section 1: Research Project Content Guidelines	10
Project and Proposal Organization	10
Chapter One - Nature of the study	10
Introduction	10
Statement of research problem	11
Purpose of the research	12
Research questions	13
Hypotheses	14
Assumptions	15
Limitations	15
Definitions	15
Chapter Two - Review of the literature	15
Citation of sources	16
Chapter Three – Methodology	16
Participants and setting	16
Human subjects protection	17
Procedures	17
Analysis of Data	18

Chapter Four - Findings of the study	18
Chapter Five - Summary, discussion and recommendations	18
Summary	19
Discussion	19
Recommendations	20
Thesis end of document sections	20
References	20
Appendices	20
Section Two: The Thesis Committee	22
Committee Make-up	22
Your Major Professor– The Committee Chair	22
Second Committee Member	22
Third Committee Member	23
Working with your Thesis Committee	23
Section Three: Transitioning to Thesis Completion	24
Section Four: The Final Thesis Document Formatting	25
APA Format in the Final Thesis Document	25
Margins	25
Typeface	26
Page Numbers	26
Spacing	26
Headings for Sections	27
Partial Pages	27

Figures and Tables	28
Manuscript Arrangement and Content	29
Title Page	29
Committee Signature Page	29
Table of Contents	29
List of Figures	30
Acknowledgements	30
Section 5: The Final Steps in Completing your Research Project	31
The Oral Presentation of the Thesis	31
Final Submission of the Thesis	31
Submission Procedures	32
Thesis Printed Copies	32
References	33
Appendix A: Human Subjects Research Permission Procedures	34
Appendix B: Sample Title Page	37
Appendix C: Committee Signature Page	38
Appendix D: Nonexclusive Right to Publish Blanket Agreement	39
Appendix E: Thesis Electronic Submission form	40
Handbook Revision Dates	41

Introduction

Welcome! You are about to embark on an exciting and rewarding journey. Conducting a master's research study and writing the project are worthwhile and gratifying experiences. You will have the opportunity to ask your own questions and to design and conduct a study through which you will pursue your own area of interest. The research can be intriguing, the writing can be fulfilling, and the completion of your research project can be professionally satisfying. If you choose your research topic carefully and stay focused on your situation, your interests, and your burning questions, your study will become a labor of love. Enjoy the experience! The Master of Science (MS) program faculty is here to offer any assistance you may need.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide the guidelines for developing and conducting your study, and writing the master's project. Following a consistent format allows others to follow the logic and organization of your research project. It also provides consistency within the education profession. We hope this handbook will prove useful by providing the most commonly used format and content requirements.

Why a Master's Project?

One of the core outcomes of the MS program at Eastern Oregon University is the development of thoughtful and knowledgeable teacher researchers. Successfully conducting a school- or classroom-based research project enhances the individual's ability in identifying important issues, formulating questions to be investigated, and making data-driven decisions based on thoughtful analysis. It is the desire of the College of Education faculty that our MS graduates not only demonstrate the above abilities, but do so by selecting a research questions

that are both meaningful to the individual and that have relevance and application in the individual's professional context.

The Importance of “APA Style”

In the field of education, the standard for professional writing is the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition, published in 2010. This is often informally referred to by the shorthand phrase “APA style” or sometimes simply “APA.” The manual is available for purchase directly from the APA at www.apastyle.org, as well as from many independent and college bookstores. Furthermore, most college libraries have copies available in their reference sections.

When instructors ask you to write in "APA style," they do not mean writing style. They are referring to the editorial style that many of the social and behavioral sciences have adopted to present written material in the field. Editorial style consists of rules or guidelines that are observed in order to ensure clear and consistent presentation of written material. Editorial style concerns uniform use of such elements as: (a) punctuation and abbreviations, (b) construction of tables, (c) selection of headings, (d) citation of references, (e) presentation of statistics, (f) elements that are a common to most manuscripts.

APA format requirements apply to all MS research projects conducted at EOU. The APA Publication Manual is clear and comprehensive, and addresses nearly every situation that the student may encounter. This handbook does not intend to duplicate the basic APA information that is already contained in the APA Publication Manual. Rather, the APA items provided in this handbook are ones where APA format has been modified to meet specific EOU requirements.

In the rare instances where APA does not clearly address a specific situation, your major professor can assist you in resolving the issue. However, it is not the responsibility of your major professor to edit your project for conformity to APA style. That responsibility rests with you.

One word of caution: It is common to find various online references for APA format and style. The website for the American Psychological Association (www.apastyle.org) is one such resource. However, the APA webpage gives only limited information. Furthermore, many online APA resource websites are hosted by colleges and universities, and as such the style and format requirements they suggest may have been specifically modified for use in their particular programs. You should be cautious in the use of any non-APA sites. The only definitive source for proper APA format is the actual APA Publication Manual!

Two Aspects of the Project: Process and Product

Research, at its core, is simply the purposeful, structured, and organized method by which a problem or question may be investigated. Furthermore, the findings of such investigations need to be communicated to others. This is, fundamentally, the purpose and nature of the master's research project.

A research process consists of two complementary elements. It is, first of all, a process. As such, it involves (1) the identification of an appropriate and meaningful issue to research; (2) the narrowing of that issue into a set of specific and researchable questions; (3) the development of an appropriate methodology by which data may be collected; (4) the organized and systematic examination of the data collected; and (5) the interpretation, analysis, and/or application of the

findings from the examination of the data. This, then, is the process of conducting research. It is something that you do.

The first two courses in the MS Professional Core, Quantitative Research in Education (ED 515) and Qualitative Research in Education (ED 516), are designed to provide you background knowledge on how education research is conducted. This knowledge helps prepare you to conduct research and to critically read and synthesize primary research articles conducted by others in your area of interest. You review such research articles in the Literature Reviews in Educational Research class (ED 517). Upon successful completion of these three classes, you are eligible to enroll in ED 518 (Research Proposal) and begin your actual project.

The primary work of the ED 518 course is developing the Masters Project Proposal. This proposal is essentially a good draft of the first three chapters of your Masters Project. It is critical in this course that students demonstrate diligence in working closely with the course instructor, as such diligence is the key to success in finishing your proposal and your project.

During ED 518 you will also be matched with a major professor. This match will be made based on your research interests, the expertise and availability of the faculty, and, in part, your choice of faculty members. As stated above, you will complete a good draft of your Project Proposal under the direction of the ED 518 instructor. This draft then goes to your major professor for approval. Your major professor will use her or his research expertise and expert knowledge of your research area to review your research proposal and to help you refine it if necessary. When you complete ED 518, you may sign up for ED 519, the research completion class. However, you may not start your research until your major professor approves your Project Proposal.

In addition to being a process, the Master's Research Project is also a product. It is a formal academic document that details the process by which your investigation was conducted, and communicates your findings to others. As a formal academic document, it follows a very specific style of writing and has precise requirements for items such as margins, fonts, spacing, and references. The final writing, submission, and approval of the project document takes place in the ED 519 course. Details about the format of the final project document are explained in later sections of this handbook.

Section 1: Research Project Content Guidelines

An old proverb says: “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” It may often seem that completing this research project is a “journey of a thousand miles,” but when taken step-by-step, the goal can indeed be accomplished. This handbook outlines the steps you need to take to complete your project.

Project and Proposal Organization.

This handbook provides content and formatting guidelines for preparing your Research Project Thesis. Your thesis will contain five chapters: Nature of the Study, Review of the Literature, Methodology, Findings, and Summary, Discussion and Recommendations. The first three chapters are prepared before you conduct your research. These chapters are the rationale and plan for your research study and also serve as your Project Proposal. In ED 518, you will develop your research plan and write a good draft for the first three chapters of your thesis. In this section of the handbook are content guidelines for the five chapters of your thesis. Specific formatting instructions are found in the Section four.

Chapter One - Nature of the Study

In this chapter, you start with the issue in education that you are interested in researching and narrow it down to the research question (or questions) that you will address in your research project.

Introduction. Here you introduce the reader to the issue in education your research is addressing. Issues are large topics that impact society. Culture, diversity, and immigration are all issues in our society that affect education. You can't research an issue, but issues often are

part of education problems that you can research. In this introduction, you write enough to orient the reader to the issue in education you are addressing.

Statement of research problem: In this section, you take the broad research issue that you identified in the introduction section and narrow it to the specific research problem your project will address. Organize your writing under the following questions/topics:

What is the large issue that needs to be examined? Give a complete presentation of the research issue, how it is connected to society, culture and current affairs, and how it impacts schools and educating children.

How does this issue create a state of affairs that is problematic at your school and/or nationally? Here, you narrow your discussion to how the larger issue creates problems for local and regional schools. You may discuss how this issue impacts schools nationally as long as you clearly connect the issue to the local schools (i.e., where you will be conducting your research). This gives the reader a rationale for your work and narrows your research focus to a topic researchable at the local level.

Research problem paragraph. In this section, you connect your research issue and its local/regional (or national) impacts to a specific research problem statement. This is a one paragraph summary that ends with an explicit statement of your research problem. Here is an example of such a paragraph:

The stated goal for most lower track middle school mathematics programs is to improve student skills and knowledge of arithmetic in order to prepare them for future success in school mathematics (Gamoran, 1993; Loveless, 1999). The outcome of tracking, however, is that the majority of students placed in lower level classes remain in the lower tracks throughout their school careers and do not gain access to college preparatory

mathematics classes in high school (Gamoran & Berends, 1987; Oakes, 2005; Paul, 2005; Slavin, 1990). *This mismatch between the goals and outcomes of middle school tracking programs is problematic and points to how school tracking programs do not serve the goals of school programs and the needs of the students placed in them.* (italics inserted)

This paragraph connects a goal of education (all students succeeding in school mathematics) with a common school program (tracking) which does not serve that goal. Prior to this paragraph, both of these topics were discussed more completely. At the end of this paragraph, these topics are brought together in a single sentence that states the research problem. That is what you are working to do in this section – to narrow your research issue to a specific research problem statement.

Purpose of the Research. In the prior section, you started with a larger issue and narrowed it to a specific problem in education. In this section, you further narrow and specify your research focus by:

- stating the specific research purpose your project will address,
- making connections between your research problem and your study site, and
- discussing how your study may inform the practice of other educators.

Below is the purpose statement for the research problem statement given as an example above. This study also developed an issue and research problem around how culture impacts student engagement in schools. Here, both student culture and the problems with tracking are brought together in one purpose statement for the study.

This research investigates how the sociocultural backgrounds of Latino/a students placed in lower track middle school mathematics classes impact their motivation and engagement in school. This research focuses on a school where Latinos are a distinct

minority. The U. S. population is becoming more diverse and diversity is becoming more widespread. Latino/as are the fastest growing ethnic group in the country and their percentage in the population is increasing fastest in the Midwest, South and Northwest (American Psychological Association, 2002). Schools in these areas, and in other regions, are now grappling with how to address this new diversity. The results of this research will help the faculties and leadership of middle schools understand how the sociocultural backgrounds and minority status of Latino/a students impact their performance and engagement in mathematics classes. This research will also give schools information that will help them develop mathematics programs that more equitably serve all students.

This statement outlines the purpose and potential importance of the study. It narrows the scope of the research to a specific population and relates the research to the needs of other schools both locally and nationally.

Research questions. When you get to this section of your research project, you have narrowed your focus to a specific research problem and purpose. What is now left to do is translate the research problem and purpose into one (or a few) researchable question(s). These questions need to be carefully and thoughtfully stated. Your research will attempt to answer these specific questions and how the questions are worded will determine how you carry out your research. Below is the research question for the culture and tracking study:

How do the sociohistorical and cultural backgrounds of Latino/a middle school students mediate their motivation to engage in lower track mathematics classes?

To answer this question, the researcher interviewed Latino/a students, and asked them how they made sense of engaging in school math. This was a qualitative study that investigated the beliefs

and behaviors of these students. If this study had used a different research question, a different methodology may have been used. Consider the following question:

In lower track math classes, do Latino/a students achieve at a different level than students from other ethnic groups?

To address this question, the study would have likely used a quantitative methodology and measured the achievement of students in lower track classes.

As you write your research questions, be mindful of the impact they have on your research. These questions (because you have to answer them!) will dictate how you carry out your research. Carefully consider the implications of your questions on your research practice.

Hypotheses. Formal hypotheses (null and alternative hypotheses) are used in quantitative studies and in this section of the thesis are stated in general terms. Below is a pair of hypotheses that could be used for the quantitative research question stated above:

Null Hypothesis: In lower track math classes, there is no difference in math achievement between Latino/a students and students from other ethnic groups.

Alternative Hypothesis: In lower track math classes, there is a difference in math achievement between Latino/a students and students from other ethnic groups.

These are the hypotheses that would be tested using the statistical test specified in the methodology section. In that section, the hypotheses would be restated in terms of the measurable values assessed in the study.

Assumptions. Both quantitative and qualitative studies use assumptions. Assumptions in quantitative studies are the specific requirements that need to be satisfied in order to use a particular statistical test (e.g., minimum sample size, normally distributed population). These assumptions should be stated in the methodology section. In qualitative studies, the researcher makes choices based on his or her assumptions about the nature of the question being researched and the likely responses of the subjects. Assumptions are by their nature subjective and may introduce bias into the research. If you are conducting qualitative research, in this section you discuss the assumptions you carry into your study and how they may impact the outcomes of your research.

Limitations. No study is perfect, and here you let your reader know you recognize certain limitations you faced as you conducted your study. For example, this could include the size of the group with whom you were working, time constraints, location, or availability of materials.

Definitions. Here you define the terms you will be using that would not be clear to the lay reader. Assume your readers know very little about your field or special area. You are familiar with the particular words you will be using, so clearly define them for your reader.

Chapter Two - Review of the Literature

The purpose of Chapter two is to examine in depth the current knowledge base in the field of education on the topic of your study. The literature review conducted as part of your thesis proposal provides a starting point, but the literature review of the actual thesis requires more extensive research and writing than was done for the thesis proposal. This review of current research on the topic of the thesis allows you to show where there are gaps in our

understandings of the topic, and how your study will contribute new or different knowledge to the topic. It is a satisfying chapter to write, because the result is a clear demonstration of why your study is important and needed.

The knowledge and skills related to conducting and writing a literature review that you gained in the ED 517 course have direct applicability to the writing of this chapter of your thesis. If you need a refresher, your major professor or the instructor of your ED 517 course will be happy to suggest supplemental readings and materials that will assist you in this task.

Citing Sources: Facts, Summaries, Paraphrases, and Quotations

Citation of sources. Although facts, summaries, paraphrases, and quotations will be used throughout your thesis, they typically are more extensively used in chapter two than in other chapters. Legal and ethical concerns regarding plagiarism are of paramount concern here. It is beyond the scope of this handbook to address the various forms for appropriate and proper citation of sources, as the APA manual already provides extensive and detailed discussion of this topic. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the proper format for quotations, as well as the format for citations and references.

Chapter Three - Methodology

This chapter describes the setting and procedures used in your study. After a brief introduction and overview of the chapter, the following sections are typically included:

Participants and setting. Introduce the reader to the participants with whom you worked in your research. Questions such as the following may serve as a guideline for structuring this chapter: What was the population, or large group, from which your participants were selected (e.g. senior students attending an urban high school in the northwest)? How did

you select the group you worked with? How many participants were there? What ages and/or grade levels were they? What unique characteristics, if any, existed? Where did the study take place (e.g. classroom setting, playground, after school)? How did you gain access to this setting? If done in a school setting, were you a member of the faculty at that school?

Human subjects protection. Permissions necessary to conduct your study, and review for protection of human subjects, must have been obtained and conducted prior to conducting research. In this section of the chapter, describe for your reader the procedures you went through to obtain permission, and the procedures you employed to protect the confidentiality and rights of the subjects; e.g. use of pseudonyms, coding of the data, and handling and storage of data. In Appendix A, a detailed description is provided of procedures for seeking and obtaining permissions to conduct research.

Procedures. Describe in detail the specific steps in implementing the study. This is the heart of the chapter. The description of your steps and methods should be so clear, detailed and sequential that anyone could pick up your thesis and replicate your study. Some studies are reported in terms of Phases, Steps, or Stages. Choose a format that is comfortable for you and appropriate to your work.

The following questions may helpful in thinking through the structure for this section: What did you do at each step of the process? Who was involved? Where was the study conducted? Do not name the school, but instead use general terms such as “A rural elementary school in a town of 3000 in the northwest.” What were the participants doing? What data was collected? How was the data collected? From whom was the data collected? What assessments or instruments were used to collect data? How and when were assessments administered? What were the timelines or timeframes for the study? Remember, this is basically a recipe that other

professionals could follow. Provide information in sufficient detail so that someone would be able retrace your steps.

Analysis of Data. At the conclusion of the chapter, let your reader know how the data was analyzed. Connect the analysis of your research data to your research questions. How does the evidence gathered address the question and inform the reader? How will the data be reported and discussed in the following chapters?

Chapter Four - Findings of the Study

The main purpose of Chapter Four is to present your results and findings. Open with a short restatement of the purposes of the study and your research questions. The rest of the chapter can be organized around your findings relative to each question. This chapter is intended to simply report findings, not to analyze them, make inferences, or draw conclusions. You will do that in Chapter Five.

If you have used tables or figures in the data presentation, make certain that they are formatted according to APA requirements. End the chapter with a section that, for each of your research questions, gives a clear and brief summary of the findings that you have just presented. This is a “courtesy section” for the reader, who may want to “cut to the chase” and get right to your findings.

Chapter Five - Summary, Discussion and Recommendations

Open by briefly re-stating your purposes and research questions. Following this brief introduction, the chapter will then contain the following sections:

Summary. In this section, you give the reader a brief overview of the entire study. Remember, someone may pick up your thesis and read only this chapter, or perhaps only Chapters Four and Five. Give enough context to allow the reader to know what your study was about. In this section you will draw inferences and conclusions about what your data tell you. Using your research questions as an organizer is helpful. For each of your main findings, discuss: (a) the nature of the particular finding, (b) how the finding is best or appropriately interpreted, and (c) your conclusion about that particular finding.

Discussion. This is the next major section of the chapter. This is your chance to talk about any aspect of your study you found intriguing, troublesome, surprising, astonishing, perplexing or delightful. Talk about your instruments; were they appropriate? Talk about your participants; were they cooperative? Talk about your setting; was it conducive to the required tasks?

A major task of this section is to relate your results back to the main points revealed in the review of the literature. Did others find similar results? Did your findings refute or support the work of others?

This is also where you talk again about the implications of your work for classroom teachers. The purpose of research is to add to the knowledge base in our field. What have you learned that will move us forward as educators? What do we know now that we didn't know before that will help our learners? How will your findings lead us to better practice in the classroom?

You should also discuss in this chapter any limitations or external influences that may have affected your study. If any such factors were present, were they reasonably foreseen or not? Was the influence, if any, major or relatively minor?

Recommendations. This is the final section of the chapter. Give your recommendations to other researchers interested in a similar study. What would you suggest to them? What “next question” was revealed in the findings of your study that needs to be explored in a future study? What was most successful in your study? What would you do differently if you had it to do over again? Would you analyze your data differently? Help others learn from your experience.

Thesis End of Document Sections

References. Facts, quotations, and paraphrases included in the text all require appropriate in-text citations. Likewise, your summary of someone else’s idea also requires appropriate in-text citations. APA provides helpful information and specific format requirements for use of in-text citations. It is the student’s responsibility to cite sources using correct APA style.

Furthermore, every in-text citation must have a corresponding entry in the References section, listed at the end of the thesis. Again, it is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with APA reference requirements, and to use correct APA style.

If you would like to include other resources that would be helpful to your reader, but were not specifically cited in the text, you can add a “Bibliography” section following the References. If you do have a Bibliography, you must also make the appropriate entry in the Table of Contents.

Appendices. It is sometimes helpful to your reader to see copies of documents, such as permission letters or questionnaires, that would be cumbersome to include within the body of the text. Include these items of interest as separate appendices following the References. Each

individual document comprises a separate appendix and each appendix has a separate title page that is numbered.

Section Two: The Thesis Committee

Each master's research project requires the selection of a thesis committee. The committee works with the student in the writing of the thesis document. Furthermore, the committee has responsibility for the final approval of the completed thesis.

Committee Make-up

Your major professor– The committee chair. Your major professor has overall responsibility and authority in supervising your thesis and coordinating with the other committee members, beginning with the research proposal approval and concluding with the presentation and approval final thesis document.

Second committee member. This person may be any appropriate EOU faculty member from the College of Education, the College of Arts and Sciences, or the College of Business, or an appropriate public school individual. Examples of public school individuals would be building principals, curriculum directors, media specialists, or superintendents. A public school individual must hold a thesis-based master's degree (or higher) in order to serve on a student's committee (Your major professor can provide guidance related to this possibility). MS students are encouraged to consider the inclusion of an appropriate public school individual as a committee member, as such individuals bring valuable and helpful "outside perspectives" to the research project. The second committee member provides a supporting role in approving the research proposal, providing feedback as the project develops, and approving the final thesis document.

Third committee member. Inclusion of a third committee member is optional, but is sometimes helpful. Your major professor can provide guidance relative to this possibility. The third committee member has the same role as does the second committee member noted above.

Working with your Thesis Committee

A thesis is not a solo endeavor, but rather is a collaborative effort between the student and the major professor. The role of the major professor is to provide guidance and constructive feedback as the student progresses through the process of writing the thesis. Ultimately, the major professor has final responsibility for approval of the thesis.

Each major professor has his or her preference regarding submission of drafts for feedback and revision. Most major professors prefer to have students submit drafts of individual chapters as they are written. This is something you should discuss early with your major professor.

The second (and perhaps third) committee member serves in a supportive role. You should discuss with your major professor how he or she would like you to work with submitting chapter drafts to the supporting committee member(s) for feedback and revision. In all cases, the major professor has final responsibility for approving the final draft of the thesis.

Section Three: Transitioning to Thesis Completion

Once you have completed ED 518 and after your major professor and approved your thesis proposal, the thesis project moves to completion in the ED 519 course. You should give serious and focused attention to the decision regarding ED 519 registration and the best term for you to work on your research project. Completion of the thesis takes significant amounts of time beyond the individual's normal day-to-day professional responsibilities. You should not plan on enrolling for ED 519 unless you have ample time to devote to the task. While it is possible to complete your thesis in one academic term, many students find that more than one term is necessary. Extensions (an "Incomplete" grade) will be granted for a second term. However, if a third term is needed, students must re-register for ED 519 and pay additional fees. You should discuss with your major professor your research plans and decide together when you will conduct your research and when you will register for ED 519. ED 519 is a "course by arrangement" and your major professor registers you for this course.

Section Four: The Final Thesis Document Formatting

This section of the handbook provides general guidelines for formatting your Thesis document and completing the work of the ED 519 course. It supplements the ED 519 syllabus.

The final thesis document—written during enrollment in ED 519—represents the formal presentation of both the process and the findings of the research project. Typically it is referred to simply as “the thesis.”

The style and format of the thesis document follows a traditional and commonly-accepted format. This traditional format facilitates communication of research findings in a manner that is easily understood across the profession. This section of the handbook presents the details of that format.

APA Format in the Final Thesis Document

Just as the thesis proposal is written according to APA format, so also is the final thesis document. As noted in Section One of this handbook, EOU makes modification to selected elements of APA format. Other APA elements that are not modified for EOU purposes are applied in accordance with general APA requirements, but nevertheless still require particular attention. The following sections highlight particular APA elements to which students need to attend related to format expectations for the MS thesis.

Margins. EOU modifies APA guidelines related to margins. The left margin is set at 1.5 inches (to allow for binding) with all other margins—top, right, and bottom—set at 1 inch. Do not justify the right margin—except for certain preliminary pages of the thesis—and do not hyphenate words at the ends of lines.

Typeface. The entire text of the thesis, including page numbers, must be produced with the same font or typeface. The font size should 12 point. Bold font should not be used. No handwritten symbols are allowed in equations, figures, tables, or text. Examples of 12 point fonts appropriate for thesis copy include: (a) Bookman Old Style, (b) Courier, and (c) Times New Roman. Other fonts may also be acceptable, provided they are simple and professional. Your major professor can provide guidance if this is necessary.

Page Numbers. APA format indicates that lower-case Roman numerals—e.g. i, ii, iii, iv—are to be used for preliminary pages, such as the title page and the table of contents, and that Arabic numerals—e.g. 1, 2, 3—are to be used for all subsequent pages. EOU, however, modifies this format and requires that standard Arabic numerals be used for all pages of the document. This is because standard word processing programs do not easily allow mixing Roman and Arabic numbering when using automatic page numbering. Furthermore, by using Arabic numbering throughout the entire thesis, it allows each section/chapter to be written as a separate document, which can then easily be merged into one document for the final copy. Having the final copy of the thesis as only one document facilitates both ease of printing the final copy and submission of an electronic copy.

Use the “header” feature of your word processing program to automatically insert the page number on top right of each page, starting with the title page. Do not use the abbreviation “p” before the page number. Although the title page is page number one, the page number itself does not appear on the title page. When setting automatic page numbering, adjust the automatic page numbering option so that the page number does not appear on the title page.

Spacing. The entire text of the thesis must be double-spaced, except for tables, and figures. This includes the title page, table of contents, and reference pages. This is not a

modification of APA format, but nonetheless is one that is often misapplied and thus deserves attention.

Headings for Sections. The document should display a clear difference in appearance between each section division, and headings must follow a consistent style for each division. Sections 3.02 and 3.03 of the APA manual explain the different levels of headings used to indicate section divisions within the document. Just as was noted in the section above about spacing, EOU does not modify APA format in this regard. However, document divisions can be confusing, and thus need detailed attention.

Most theses papers require the use of only two levels of division: (a) the chapter title, and (b) subdivisions within each chapter. However, three (or four) levels of division may be appropriate in some circumstances. Explanation and examples regarding the proper use of levels of division and headings are detailed in the APA manual. It is the student's responsibility to insure that the paper is divided properly according to APA format.

Partial pages. Partial pages generally are not allowed, except at the end of a chapter. However, page breaks sometimes occur in a manner that leaves a section heading at the bottom of a page, with the text continuing on the following page. This can create an awkward visual appearance. In such cases it is appropriate to insert a page break so that the heading is moved to the following page. (The page preceding this section is one such example.)

Do not leave a gap in the text when inserting a figure or table that will not fit on the same page as the text. Fill in the page with the text that would normally come after the figure or table. A table or figure that is as large as one-half a page may be placed on a page with no text. Text should be placed on the same page with smaller figures and tables as long as there is room for at least four lines of text above or below the table or figure.

Figures and tables. A table generally refers to tabulated numerical data or textual information presented in a columnar format while a figure is often non-textual in nature (e.g., graphs, charts, line drawings, maps, and photographs). A table may be included within the text or may appear on a separate page. In either case, it should appear as soon as possible after it is first mentioned in the text. If text appears on the same page as a figure or table, there should be a consistent amount of space between text and figure (or table) throughout the document. Additionally, any page where text appears above, below, or between figures and tables must contain at least four full lines of text. The information in the tables and figures should be explained briefly in narrative form.

Manuscript Arrangement and Content

The list below indicates the placement order for the parts of the thesis. Details about the nature and content of each section follows the list.

1. Title page
2. Committee Signature Page
3. Table of Contents
4. List of Figures (if necessary)
5. List of Tables (if necessary)
6. Acknowledgements (optional)
7. Chapter One – Introduction to the Study
8. Chapter Two - Review of the Literature
9. Chapter Three - Methodology
10. Chapter Four - Findings of the Study/Data Analysis

11. Chapter Five - Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations
12. References
13. Appendices
14. Library Permissions Page

Title page. Each thesis requires a title page, and follows a prescribed format. The information on each line should be centered between the left and right margins, should be evenly centered between the top and bottom margins. A sample title page may be found at the end of this handbook as Appendix B. Remember to follow the requirements noted above about page numbering.

Committee signature page. This page follows immediately after the title page. Once the final copy of your thesis has been submitted and approved by your committee, the committee members will sign the Committee Signature Page. This page has a specific wording and format. A sample is provided at the end of this document as Appendix C. The page will actually be signed at the time of the presentation of the final thesis document. See page 34 for additional details.

Table of contents. The Table of Contents should inform the reader quickly and clearly how the thesis is organized. It is numbered as page two. The main heading (TABLE OF CONTENTS) must be all capital letters. The headings listed should match those in the text word-for-word and in capitalization. Chapter subheadings need not be listed in the Table of Contents, but if subheadings are listed, they must be listed for all chapters. All lines are double spaced. Page numbers should be right justified. Dot leaders are optional. The Table of Contents

is both left- and right-justified. The Table of Contents for this handbook is an acceptable example.

List of figures / List of tables. If the thesis contains figures, then a List of Figures should be included following the Table of Contents. Likewise, if the thesis contains tables, a List of Tables should be included, also following the Table of Contents. The List of Figures and List of Tables appear on separate pages; do not combine them on one page. The main heading of any such pages must match the style of the Table of Contents. Each caption listed in the List of Figures or List of Tables should match word-for-word what appears in the text with the word “Figure” or “Table” preceding the figure or table number. The List of Figures and List of Tables are also left- and right-justified, and follow the same style and format as the Table of Contents.

Acknowledgements. An acknowledgements page is optional. If an acknowledgements page is included, the heading should match the style and format of the Table of Contents. The acknowledgements page is placed as the last preliminary page before the main body (Chapter One) of the thesis.

Section 5: The Final Steps in Completing and Submitting your Research Project

The Oral Presentation of the Thesis

When the writing is complete, and all revisions have met with the approval of the thesis committee members, the thesis is ready for its oral presentation. Your committee will work with you to determine a mutually acceptable time and place at which you will meet as a group to discuss your study. At the time of the Oral Presentation, you should provide a clean, unbound copy of the complete thesis for each member of the committee, as well as your own copy.

Your major professor presides over the oral presentation. At the oral presentation, questions such as the following form the basis for the conversation: What have you gained as a result of having conducted your study that will influence you as a teacher? What would you do differently if you conducted the study again? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this study? What are you most proud of? How will the results of your study inform the profession and improve classroom practice?

The oral presentation is a time for you to shine as a researcher. You are now the expert in your area and can share your wealth of knowledge and experience with your interested colleagues.

Final Submission of the Thesis

Upon conclusion of the Oral Presentation, the members of the thesis committee make the final decision as to the acceptability of the thesis. Occasionally, the committee may request specific final revisions necessary for the thesis to be acceptable. In this event, you will need to make those revisions for the thesis to be approved.

The thesis committee members will indicate their acceptance of your thesis by signing in the appropriate places on the Committee Signature Page. Once all appropriate signatures have been secured, your thesis may be submitted.

Submission procedure. The final copies of your approved thesis are submitted on CDs to your major professor along with the following documents. Here is what you need to submit:

1. Two CDs: each containing a file with the approved copy of your thesis.
2. One signed copy of the Pierce Library Nonexclusive Right to Publish Blanket Agreement. The agreement grants and assigns to Eastern Oregon University a nonexclusive, revocable, royalty-free license to bind, archive, display and distribute your thesis electronically. A copy of this agreement is included at the end of this handbook as Appendix D.
3. One copy of the Pierce Library Electronic Submissions Form. This form gives Pierce Library information for cataloging your thesis. A copy of this form is included at the end of this handbook as Appendix E.
4. Two copies of your thesis title page (Appendix B).
5. Two copies of your thesis committee signature page (Appendix C)

Thesis printed copies. No print copies of your thesis need to be submitted to EOU. However, you may wish to have a printed, bound copy of this document as a record of your Master's research. Often major professors, and sometimes committee members, keep printed copies of their students' research. Providing these copies to your committee is optional.

References

- American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. (6th ed.). Washington, D.C.: Author.
- Rosencrans, G. (1998). *The Spelling Book: Teaching children how to spell, not what to spell*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Appendix A

Human Subjects Research Permission Procedures

Below are the guidelines for obtaining permission to conduct research from participating schools, research subjects, and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) – the EOU organization that oversees human subjects research conducted by EOU faculty, staff and students.

School permission. If your research will take place in a school setting you must provide written documentation that your project has been approved by the appropriate school administrator, and that you have permission to conduct the research in the school setting. Furthermore, if you will be using data that has been collected by the school—e.g. student test scores—you also will need the school’s permission to access that data. A letter written on official school stationery, signed by the appropriate school administrator, is usually sufficient to meet this requirement. A brief statement indicating that permission has been obtained should be included in the project document, and the original permission letter needs to be attached to the proposal (the first three chapters of your research document) as documentation.

Parent and student permission. The nature of your study may involve the direct collection of data from your participants. If this is the case, you will need to obtain the written consent and permission of your participants. In the event that your participants are under the age of 18, permission must be obtained from the parents or guardians of the participants. In the event that your participants are 18 years or older, permission must be obtained directly from the participants. A brief statement indicating how participants’ permission were obtained must be included in the project document. In addition, a copy of any permission letters and consent forms must be included as part of the proposal document. *You are required to obtain permissions from all subjects and guardians before implementing the study and collecting your*

data. Once obtained, original copies of the participants' permission letters must be retained for documentation during the course of the study.

EOU/IRB approval. In order for your proposal to be forwarded for IRB review, you need to complete, sign, and attach a copy of the Human Subject Research Application form to your thesis proposal. This form is available from the EOU Research and Grants (RAG) website (www.eou.edu/rag/forms.htm) or from the IRB major professor. On that form, in the space titled "Research Protocol," you may write "See attached proposal."

Upon submission to the Institutional Review Board, one of two reviews will be conducted:

Expedited institutional review. This level of review is conducted by the IRB major professor and normally only takes a few days. This level of review is appropriate when the degree of "risk" or "harm" is deemed to be relatively low, the nature of the research is related to normal or routine school practices, and all the above elements have been satisfactorily addressed.

Full IRB review. In the event that the nature of the proposed research involves potential for "harm," or involves an intervention or manipulation that is not normally within typical school practices, a full IRB review may be necessary. This normally takes one-to-two weeks, as it involves the convening of the full IRB committee. In the process of a full IRB review, the members of the IRB will examine your proposal, and will determine the appropriate permission. Regardless of whether an expedited or full IRB review is to be conducted, you need to have your research proposal (the first three chapters of your research document) completed, approved, and ready for submission to the IRB chair with sufficient lead time before you plan on beginning your data collection. *Data collection involving human subjects may not begin before IRB approval is received.*

You and your major professor will receive written communication from the IRB either indicating approval of your proposal, or setting conditions which must be met before the proposal will be approved. After receiving IRB approval, it will be necessary to notify the IRB of any changes to your original research proposal. If the duration of your study is longer than a year, you will be required to submit a brief interim progress report.

Appendix B

Sample Title Page

THIS IS THE TITLE
OF THE THESIS

A Thesis

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty and the College of Education

Eastern Oregon University

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Education

by

Name

Date

Appendix C

Committee Signature Page

The Graduate Faculty
and
The College of Education
Eastern Oregon University

The members of the Committee appointed to examine the thesis of /name/ find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

Major professor

Member

Member

Date

Appendix D

Pierce Library

Eastern Oregon University

Nonexclusive Right to Publish Blanket Agreement

THIS AGREEMENT between the author and Eastern Oregon University (EOU) concerns all theses, reports and projects, written by the author, for inclusion in the Pierce Library Theses & Senior Papers collection.

The author grants and assigns to Eastern Oregon University a nonexclusive, revocable, royalty-free license to bind, archive, display and distribute the works electronically.

Eastern Oregon University further agrees to archive the electronic and original pieces until those works no longer fit the institution's curriculum.

Author _____ Date _____

Library Representative _____ Date _____

Appendix E



Thesis Electronic Submission
CD Label Information

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NEATLY!

Department: _____

Date: _____

Author: _____

Thesis Title: _____

Text Format: _____

Handbook originally compiled by M. Ruth Davenport and Ralph F Woodward, 1996

Revised by Danny R. Mielke, 1997, 1999, and 2004

Revised by Allen Evans, 2008

Revised by John Knudson-Martin, 2010