**THESIS REQUIREMENTS 2011-12**

**General Requirements:** The *Thesis* option is reserved for those candidates who have demonstrated uncommon research and writing skills. This research exercise is a formal and demanding task in which candidates test one or more hypotheses by manipulating some variables and controlling others or address specific research questions or issues that advance theory and knowledge in the discipline. These exercises may be quantitative or quantitative in form, but each will be an exercise in the scientific method that attempts to solve a tightly focused problem, address a clearly identified issue, or answer pointed research questions. The candidate, in consultation with an assigned *Faculty Research Advisor(s)*, will identify the final research problem, issue, or question and produce a high quality graduate research paper that satisfies the minimum requirements outlined in this section. These research exercises may vary in scope and format; however, each will satisfy the following general requirements:

* It will be an exercise in the scientific method.
* It will involve at least 45 hours of research work outside of the general duties of the graduate candidate.
* It will be presented in an open forum and evaluated by peers and a minimum of two members of the graduate faculty.
* The final written formal document (complete with appropriate *Faculty Research Advisor(s)* signatures) will be submitted to the Graduate Education Office fourteen (14) days prior to graduation. On the same date, an electronic copy will accompany the formal written paper.
* Both *in-text* and *references citations* will be in the APA style (unless otherwise approved by both the *Director of Graduate Education* and the *Faculty Research Advisor(s)*.

**Specific Writing Requirements**: The *Thesis* template includes the order and spacing requirements of the final form of the document. It is designed to promote uniformity among the final papers and facilitate the process. Any deviations from this template must be approved by both the *Director of Graduate Studies in Education* and the *Faculty Research Advisor(s)*. Papers deviating from this approved format without prior approval will not be accepted**.** In consultation with the *Faculty Research Advisor(s),* the candidate will choose a format conforming to the general requirements of the Template outline. This format should be the best fit for the selected research question and satisfy the exacting standards of written scholarship. The electronic Template, contains three (3) separate files: *Cover Page; Preliminary Pages*; and *Chapter One through Appendix*. These divisions are necessary due to the different page numbering conventions in each section (see *Page Numbering* below).

The specific requirements in the Thesis are as follows:

###### Type/Font: The paper will be written in *Times New Roman* 12 point font and the body of the paper will be double spaced.

* **Page Numbering**: The page numbering system has been inserted in the Template and will automatically number the pages in the bottom center of the document. In the *Preliminary Pages*, the numbers will be small case Roman numerals. In *Chapter One through the Appendix*, Arabic numerals will be used. The general page numbering conventions in the three *Template* files are:

**Cover Page**: No page number. This page is neither counted nor numbered

**Preliminary Pages**: This section is numbered in small case Roman numerals; however, the first page (the *Title Page*) is counted but not numbered.

**Chapter One – Appendix**: This section is numbered consecutively through the end of the Appendix in Arabic numerals. Those items inserted and appearing in the *Appendix* may be numbered electronically or not numbered at all.

* **Writing Style:** The entire paper (with the exceptions of direct quotes and items in the *Appendix*) will be written in the third person and adhere to the fundamental standards of a formal paper, i.e., no contractions, abbreviations, colloquialisms, etc. (See *Hints on Writing* for more details).
* **Chapter Titles, Sections, and Layout**: The number and titles of the chapters will be subject to final approval by the *Faculty Research Advisor(s)* and should help present the research in a clear and concise paper. Each chapter title will begin approximately one-third of the way down on a new page. The word “chapter” and the corresponding chapter number will be in ALL CAPS, bolded, and centered. The chapter sections (the next divisions) will be in title case, bolded, centered, and underlined. Subsequent divisions of the chapter sections will be in title case, bolded, on the left margin, and underlined. All such identified divisions of the chapter will appear in the *Table of Contents* (see the *Thesis Template* for examples).
* **Citations**: A modified form of the *American Psychological Association* (APA) style will be used for both in-text and reference citations. The format for charts and graphs presented in the paper will follow accepted APA standards and any deviations must be approved by the *Faculty Research Advisor(s)*.
* **Cover Page**: Each Thesis will be submitted with a *Cover Page* (see the *Thesis Template*) that includes the candidate’s name, title of the paper, degree sought, and signatures of the *Faculty Research Advisor* and the *Second Reader*. These signatures indicate that this document meets the standards set by the Graduate Education Office and is ready for submission.
* **Preliminary Pages:** These pages are numbered in small case Roman numerals (centered at the bottom) and include the following in this order:
  + **Title Page:** This page includes the following three kinds of information: The Title (in all caps); the appropriate degree sought; and the candidate’s name and date. This information is equally divided on the page (see the *Template* for exact spacing and format).
  + **Dedication Page:** This page is optional, but if the candidate chooses to include it, the information will centered vertically and horizontally on the page (see the *Template* for an example).
  + **Table of Contents**: This page is describes the exact order of the information in the paper. It will accurately reflect all of the chapters and their divisions (see the *Template* for exact spacing and format).
* **Chapter One through Appendix**: These pages are all counted and numbered sequentially with Arabic numerals at the bottom center of the page. An *Announcement Page* will introduce each subsequent fundamental change in the paper (*References Cited* and *Appendices*). This page will have only the title of the section appearing on the page in all caps, bolded, and in the vertical and horizontal center of the page (see the *Template* for an example).
* **References Cited**: Following the announcement page of the *References Cited,* will be the title of the section at the top of the page in all caps, bolded, and centered (see the *Template* for an example). The references in this section (a **minimum of 20 sources)** will be consistent with the APA format and limited to only those references cited in the paper. The citations will be single spaced with a space between each entry, alphabetized by author, and formatted with a hanging indent. To use this feature of *Word,* highlight the entries and select *Paragraph*, and under *Indentation—Special*, use the pull down menu to select *Hanging*. Then click “*OK*.”
* **Appendix/Appendices**: Following the announcement page for this section will be the words *APPENDIX A* on one line and the title of the appendix on the second. Both lines will be in all caps, bolded and in the vertical and horizontal center of the paper. The actual items in the *Appendix* will be copied directly from the original and each page will be counted. The following issues are important in the *Appendix:*
  + Each item in the *Appendix* must be referred to in the paper.
  + The order of the *Appendix* (A.B, C…) is the order in which each is mentioned in the paper.
  + Numbering the copied pages of the *Appendix* is optional. However if the copied pages have numbers (not in sequence) they must be expunged (to reduce confusion). Please note that each page is counted, i.e., if *Appendix A* is page 40 and there are 5 pages of it, the next page, *Appendix B*, would be page 46--not page 41.
  + The plural of *Appendix* is *Appendices.*
* **Length**: The body of the paper will be a **minimum of 30 pages excluding the *Preliminary Pages, Works Cited,* and *Appendix.***
* **Submission Guidelines:** The Instructor for the EDUC 595 class may collaborate with the candidate to identify a second reader (*Faculty Research Advisor)* for the research project. Their signatures on the completed document become the evidence that the Thesis has met the minimum requirements of form and substance prescribed by the Director of Graduate Studies in Education and identified in this document. This paper and these signatures (both a hard copy and a PDF electronic copy) are due in the Graduate Office fourteen (14) days prior to graduation. Failure to do so may delay graduation. The electronic copy of the formal paper will be kept in the Graduate Education Office and made available to the world-wide learning community. Hard copies of the document will be bound and kept in the Curriculum Library of the Helen DeVos College of Education. Additional copies of the bound volumes may be purchased at the candidate’s expense ($30.00 per copy).

**Thesis Time Lines 2011-2012**

The following time lines for graduate candidates selecting the *Thesis* option are offered to insure the timely completion of this process. Those graduate candidates electing this option and the faculty members collaborating in this exercise need to mark the following dates:

**Graduate Candidates Meetings and Assignments**

**Graduate Reception:** TheGraduate Reception will be held in the Education Building (Room 114) 5-7 pm on Wednesday, September 28, 2011. Those candidates graduating in December (Winter) 2011, May (Spring) 2012, and July (Summer) 2012 who are (or are anticipating) selecting the Thesis option are required to attend. After general announcements to all graduate candidates, the *Faculty Research Advisors* will be meet their assigned candidates, lay out a general consultation plan to guide the candidate through the intricacies of preparing, conducting, and presenting a research exercise.

**Individual meetings with the Faculty Research Advisor(s):** On an as needed basis, the candidate will meet with the EDUC 595 Instructorand the *Faculty Research Advisor*to determine the form and content of the final paper, review drafts, and sign the final document. At the discretion of the EDUC 595 Instructor and/or the *Faculty Research Advisor* and recommendations by the graduate candidate, the services of an additional *Faculty Research Advisor* may be secured to collaborate on the content of the *Thesis.* In that event, the candidate will schedule meetings with these advisors as needed.

**2011-2012 DUE Dates for Presentations, Portfolios and Papers**

Presentations (times and venues) will be arranged by the Graduate Education Office in the posted week considering the schedule of the candidate and the *Faculty Research Advisor* as much as possible. In the event of conflicts on these dates, the candidate may propose earlier dates and venues on or before the last date for presentations in the appropriate semester with the approval of his/her *Faculty Research Advisor*. Portfolio Evaluations are due in the Graduate Education Office on the same date as the final Thesis paper. Failure to make these deadlines may result in deferring the candidate’s graduation date.

**WINTER/DECEMBER 2011 GRADUATES**

Mon October 3, **Checkpoint I** for Winter Graduates due in the Graduate Education Office

Mon November 7, **Checkpoint II** for Winter Graduates due in the Graduate Education Office

Mon-Thurs Nov 14-17: **Presentations** for Winter Graduates

**Mon November 28: Signed and Completed Thesis Due in the Graduate Education Office**

**SPRING/MAY 2012 GRADUATES**

Mon February 6, **Checkpoint I** for Winter Graduates due in the Graduate Education Office

Mon March 12, **Checkpoint II** for Winter Graduates due in the Graduate Education Office

Tues-Thurs April 10-12: **Presentations** for Spring Graduates

**Mon April 23: Signed and Completed Thesis Paper Due in the Graduate Education Office**

**SUMMER/JULY 2012 GRADUATES**

Mon March 19, **Checkpoint I** for Winter Graduates due in the Graduate Education Office

Mon April 30, **Checkpoint II** for Winter Graduates due in the Graduate Education Office

Mon – Thurs June 18-21: **Presentations** for Summer Graduates

**Mon July 16: Signed and Completed Thesis Paper Due in the Graduate Education Office**