

GRADUATE MASTER'S PROJECT

Graduate students sometimes choose to complete a graduate project [called an internship prior to 1997] instead of a thesis. This decision must be reached with the advice and approval of the graduate faculty in each area.

A Master's project emphasizes the development, implementation, and evaluation of a community-based supervised project which makes a significant contribution to the field and to the community.

A project might focus on, for example, developing, implementing, and evaluating an original program. It could also take the form of reworking, implementing, and evaluating an existing program.

Project Topic

The master's project topic is suggested by the student and then is approved by the project director and the committee. The topic must be relevant to the student's area of study.

The student prepares a concept paper and then asks a selected faculty member to serve as project director. The concept paper should briefly describe the project, the possible contribution to the proposed agency or community setting, and the proposed procedure.

The student is encouraged to prepare several possible ideas. The director and the student then select the idea with the most potential for success for the student and the community setting.

Selection Of The Project Director

The student should choose a graduate faculty member from the School whose area of specialization or overall interest pertains to the student's topic. The project director does not need to be the student's academic advisor. Appendix A contains a list of the graduate faculty members in the School and their areas of specialization and interest.

Role Of The Project Director

The role of the Project Director is as follows:

1. Assisting the student in deciding on a definite and workable project.
2. Assisting the student in selecting the project committee.
3. Approving the project prospectus or proposal for submission to the project committee.
4. Assisting in the filing of forms for the University's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (if applicable).
5. Directing the project report to completion.
6. Chairing the oral defense committee.
7. Removing the "IP", after a successful defense.

Master's Project Prospectus or Proposal

The project prospectus is to be developed by the student in consultation with his/her project director. The director will determine whether the student should follow the prospectus or proposal routes described under the thesis. These can both be modified to suit the particular project. Guidelines helpful in preparing a project prospectus or proposal are in Appendix C.

The prospectus/proposal must be approved by the student's project committee before the project can be started. If the study involves testing of human subjects, the methods for implementation must also be evaluated and approved by the University's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects.

Selection of the Project Committee

The student and the project director select two additional faculty members to serve on the committee. The faculty members can be from within the School; one member can be a faculty member with a special interest in the project, from outside the School. In addition to the three faculty members on the committee, a community person may also serve on the committee as an ex-officio member with no voting privileges. This might be helpful to a student who is working with a community agency.

It is the student's responsibility to ask the faculty members to serve on the committee. When the committee is established, the student must notify the Director of Graduate Studies in order that the appropriate information may be recorded.

Role Of The Project Committee

The role of Project Committee is as follows:

1. Meeting with the student to accept, revise, or reject the project prospectus/proposal.
2. Reading and making revisions on the project report.
3. Participating as the examining committee for the oral defense.

The role of Student on the Project Committee is as follows:

1. Arranging the time for the prospectus/proposal and oral defense meetings.
2. Delivering a completed prospectus/proposal to each committee member a minimum of two weeks prior to the committee meeting.
3. Delivering the completed project report to each committee member a minimum of two weeks prior to the oral defense.

Writing the Project Report

For reference purposes, a project report outline is included. The report should follow the instructions for thesis writing issued by the Graduate School entitled *Guidelines for Preparing a Thesis or Dissertation* (available at the Graduate Office). The style manual selected by the specific area should also guide the student in writing the report.

Copies of project/internship reports are on file in the School. A student can check them out to become familiar with the form and style required for a report.

Oral Defense

Each student will be required to defend the ideas and statements presented in the project report, following approval of the report by the project director. It is the student's responsibility to arrange a two-hour block of time for the oral defense with the committee.

At the time of defense, the student will be expected to answer questions related to the development of the project, to the methods used in the project, and to the results. The student is not expected to answer questions beyond the scope of the project. The committee members act as critical reviewers of the project and will submit suggestions for substantive and grammatical changes in the report.

Requirements For The Completed Project Report

To meet the requirements for the degree, copies of the project report must be submitted. One signed and bound copy with student's name and the year permanently marked on the spine must be presented to the School for its project/internship file. (Do not use a spiral binding.) In addition, one copy must be presented to the project director and to any of the other committee members who desire one.

The project advisor will examine the finished report for conformity to the guidelines. Any report that violates a standard will be returned as unacceptable. The student will need to correct the problem.

APPENDIX C
GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING THE MASTER'S PROJECT
PROSPECTUS/PROPOSAL AND REPORT

The master's project prospectus/proposal is a concise and well-conceived plan for the design, implementation and evaluation of the student's proposed project. Information from the prospectus/proposal will be reworked and supplemented in the final report. Information included should address each of the following areas:

Overview Of Proposed Project

This introductory section should include information pertaining to the proposed agency or community setting in which the project would take place. The primary objectives outlined for the experience should be clearly stated. Supporting evidence indicating how the experience will fit into the student's total master's degree program and his/her total education experience should be included. A discussion of what the total project experience is intended to contribute to the student's professional expertise should be indicated. It might also include the strengths or experiences the student brings to the project.

Review Of The Literature

The purpose of the review of literature is to enable the student to be well versed on topics important to the selected project. The student should review literature pertaining to similar programs already in existence or projects completed at other sites. Further, it should cover appropriate literature regarding the agency or agencies with which the student will be working. Any other topics central to the project should be reviewed also. The literature review must be documented in the appropriate format agreed upon by the student and the director.

Project Design and Evaluation

The prospectus/proposal should include a detailed step-by-step procedure for carrying out the project. It should also include precise details regarding the focus of the experience; the student's responsibilities in relation to the agency and/or to the families with whom he/she will be working; and the projects or programming to be undertaken. Plans should be included for each stage in the design of any particular programs or material for which the student will be responsible. Details should be given for the evaluation procedures, both for the program

materials developed (if appropriate to the selected project) and the total project experience. This material should be revised and appropriately discussed in the final report.

Timetable For Completion Of Master's Project

Projected dates and amounts of time needed to conduct and evaluate each phase of the project experience and a brief description of work or objectives to be accomplished during each time period should be set forth. Remember to be both realistic and flexible. This should address each phase of the project (i.e., library research, material development, actual work in the agency, work with families or individuals served by the agency, time spent in evaluation of proposed materials, programs, and/or projects). This material may be revised to form part of an appendix in the final report.