



**Manual for the  
Master's and Specialist's Thesis**

**Council on Graduate Studies**

**March 4, 2008 (revised 12-29-11)**

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## The Graduate School

Eastern Illinois University  
600 Lincoln Avenue  
Charleston, IL 61920

## Manual for the Master's and Specialist's Thesis

### Introduction

Advancing scholarship through original research and creative activity are hallmarks of graduate education at Eastern Illinois University. Research and creative activity are reflected in requirements for graduate theses, research courses, independent study programs, and related research activities with graduate faculty members who mentor graduate candidates through the process of scholarly inquiry and expression in their academic disciplines. The master's and specialist's thesis are designed to promote and support graduate research.

A thesis is a required component of some master's and specialist's degrees or options. The thesis is a scholarly contribution to knowledge in the candidate's selected area of study. Thesis research is conducted by degree candidates in consultation with a thesis committee and under the direct supervision of the thesis director who must be a Regular Member of the Graduate Faculty. The committee oversees and guides the research to ensure that the completed scholarship meets the standards for original research of Eastern Illinois University and the academic discipline.

The purpose of the Manual for the Master's and Specialist's Thesis is to provide graduate candidates with clear and concise guidelines to facilitate student success and to assist students in achieving a high quality thesis. Candidates are advised that graduate programs may establish additional guidelines for completing a thesis and should consult the Coordinator of Graduate Study regarding these requirements. Program contact information is available in the *Graduate Catalog* and on the Graduate School web site at <http://www.eiu.edu/~graduate/>. A checklist of the steps required for completion of the thesis can be found on page 9 of this manual.

### Approvals *Prior to Initiating the Thesis Research*

**Prior to** initiating master's or specialist's thesis research, the following approvals are required:

- **Approval to Maintain and Reproduce the Thesis:** As noted in the Introduction section, the thesis is a requirement for degree completion in some graduate degree programs and completion of the requirements for the degree in a thesis option also requires that you deposit the completed and approved thesis with Booth Library. The Library holds responsibility for maintaining the scholarly works produced by the institution and to distribute those works to others. The Library will make the thesis available to other scholars via print and technology methods. The Thesis Manual serves as your notification prior to completing the thesis, that by choosing a thesis option in a graduate program you are also agreeing to deposit the thesis and to allow distribution of the thesis according to the distribution procedures established by the Library in order to earn the degree. If the thesis option is selected, but the thesis is not deposited with the Library, the degree will not be conferred.
- **Approval of the Thesis Committee.** [http://www.eiu.edu/graduate/facstaff\\_faculty.php](http://www.eiu.edu/graduate/facstaff_faculty.php): This web site provides a current member list of graduate faculty. Thesis committees are typically composed of three members of the graduate faculty including the thesis director who serves as chair. The number of committee members may vary. Degree candidates enrolled in degree programs or options which require a thesis should identify a prospective member of the graduate faculty who will serve as the thesis director. The candidate, in consultation with the director, should identify other qualified members of the graduate faculty who will serve on the candidate's thesis committee. The candidate should identify the thesis topic, question, or area of study to verify that the members of the committee have expertise appropriate to the topic. Regular and Adjunct Members of the Graduate Faculty may serve as committee members. The thesis director and committee are approved by the program's administrative processes **prior to** initiating the thesis research.

- **Approval of the Proposal.** Following consultation and input from the thesis committee, the candidate should develop a research proposal that should include enough information for committee members and other interested members of the University community to carefully examine the merits and quality of the project to insure that it meets the department's standards for rigor. Typically the proposal will include, but not be limited to, an introduction of the problem or question, a literature review which provides a summary of the current status of the problem, a method of study, and a proposed time line for the project. The proposal is typically reviewed in a formal presentation. The proposal should be circulated to committee members at least 2 weeks prior to the presentation or the review deadline; this requirement may be waived by committee members. The proposal should be approved by the committee according to the program's administrative processes *prior to* initiating the thesis research.
- **Approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).** Institutional policies require that all research conducted by faculty, staff, and students that involves human or animal subjects must be approved by the appropriate University compliance committee. Research involving living human subjects or data collected from living human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Research involving the use of living animals must be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). It is the joint responsibility of the faculty sponsor and the candidate conducting thesis research involving human or animal subjects to obtain compliance committee approval *prior to* initiating the research. A letter from the compliance committee documenting the approval should be included in the thesis appendix. Contact the Graduate Coordinator or the Compliance Coordinator in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs for information regarding protocol review forms and the protocol review process. Instructions, forms, and information are also available at the web site for the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at [www.eiu.edu/~grants/](http://www.eiu.edu/~grants/)

### Initiating the Thesis Research

Candidates may initiate the thesis research following approval of the thesis committee, approval of the project by the committee and approval of the required University compliance committees. Candidates are advised to follow these practice guidelines when initiating their thesis research in order to insure the highest standards of scholarship in thesis research.

- **Director Supervision and Mentoring.** Candidates should establish a weekly meeting with the thesis director to review progress, verify that the project continues to meet the academic standards of the program, and to address concerns or other issues that would impede progress.
- **Committee Review and Input.** Candidates are expected to meet regularly with their thesis advisors to discuss the progress of the project. Candidates are encouraged to meet regularly with the committee so that the committee is informed of any changes, concerns, or interruptions in progress. Committee members should receive revised chapters to ensure the committee's continued support and commitment to the project and to incorporate review information from the committee into the project.
- **Accuracy in Execution.** Candidates have an obligation to execute the project as approved by the thesis and compliance committees. Substantial departures from the original project require that candidates review and determine with the advisor and committee members if new review and approval is required.
- **Citation of Literature.** Thesis authors should confirm with programs the preferred form of reference citation. For convenience, a list of preferred styles is included with this Manual. Consistently following the program's selected citation style and ensuring that each text citation is matched within the list of references is an expected standard of thesis scholarship.
- **Use of Materials Protected by Copyright.** Copyright is the legal right of an owner of created material to control copying and ownership of that material. Eastern Illinois University is committed to using copyrighted material in ways that are consistent with the federal Copyright Act (Title 178 of the U.S. Code). <http://www.eiu.edu/~auditing/IGP/policy48.4.html> is the University web site that provides information on compliance with copyright law and fair use of copyrighted material. Additional information is available at <http://www.eiu.edu!/copyright/>. In addition, graduate candidates may contact Booth Library for staff assistance with copyright issues.

- **Permission to Reprint:** Use of artwork, graphs, or photographs from another author requires written permission from the original author and acknowledgment in the thesis.

### Thesis Registration Policies

Candidates register for two types of credit while completing a thesis. These include Thesis and Non-credit Thesis.

- **Thesis [Program Prefix (ART, BIO, CHM, etc.) 5950<sup>1</sup>].** May be repeated so that a maximum of six semester hours of thesis may be applied to a degree and a maximum of nine semester hours of credit in a combination of independent study, research, or thesis may be applied to a degree. Candidates typically register for thesis hours during the semesters or terms in which they pursue the thesis; however, candidates are advised to consult with programs regarding specific procedures for thesis registration.
- **Non-Credit Thesis [Program Prefix (ART, BIO, CHM, etc.) 5951<sup>1</sup>].** A student in a thesis option must remain continuously enrolled during the fall and spring terms until the approved thesis project is completed in order to retain access to library, technology, and related services required to support completion of the thesis. If a student has completed enrollment in the maximum number of hours of credit for thesis [5950], or independent study [5990] allowable, then registration in 0 credit hours of Non-credit Thesis [Program Prefix 5951] as an auditor is required. Enrollment in 5951 after meeting the maximum number of hours for thesis, research, and/or independent study allows a student access to services required to complete the thesis. Students who are registered only for 0 credit hours of 5951 are not eligible to apply for financial aid, will not be able to defer payment on student loans, cannot work on campus under student employment, cannot apply for emergency short term student loans, and will not qualify for student health insurance.

<sup>1</sup>The Master of Science in Communication Disorders and Sciences uses CDS 5890 for Thesis and CDS 5891 for Non-Credit Thesis.

### Deferred Credit

Thesis research requiring work of a continuing nature over several terms before the final project is completed may receive the grade "DC" or "Deferred Credit." Deferred Credit designates that the student remained enrolled for credit throughout the term and that the project is continuing into another term. Upon completion of the final project, the instructor will file a Grade Correction Form with the Records Office no later than four days prior to the official close of the term published in the Class Schedule. If a Grade Correction Form is not submitted then any "DC" grades remaining on the transcript will be changed to "NC" at the time the degree is completed or within the six year time limit or approved time limit extension. Graduate students admitted on or after the Fall of 2003 may not be certified for degree completion if any grades of "DC" remain on the transcript.

### Resources to Support Graduate Research/Creative Activity

[http://www.eiu.edu/graduate/students\\_awards.php](http://www.eiu.edu/graduate/students_awards.php): This web site provides application materials, guidelines, timelines, selection procedures, and award levels. The Graduate School sponsors a broad range of competitive awards programs to promote and support graduate research/creative activity. All candidates selected for any of the Graduate School research awards are required to present their proposal or completed projects during the Annual Graduate Student Exposition.

- **Graduate School Research/Creative Activity Grants Competition.** This program provides financial support for outstanding graduate research and creative activity projects that include opportunities for graduate candidates to partner with external businesses, industries, or educational agencies to foster improvements and development of new creative ideas.
- **Williams Travel Grants Competition.** Named in honor of former Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Larry Williams, Williams Travel Grants provide travel support for graduate candidates who have papers or creative works accepted for presentation at regional, state, or national conferences.
- **EIU Distinguished Master's Thesis Award and Award of Excellence Competition.** The EIU Distinguished Master's Thesis Award Competition provides recognition of the highest

achievement in master's degree research. The selected project becomes the University's nomination for competition in the Midwest Association of Graduate School's Distinguished Thesis Competition. The EIU Master's Thesis Award of Excellence provides recognition of the second highest achievement in master's degree research based on those candidates who are nominated for the EIU Distinguished Master's Thesis Award Competition.

- **Graduate Exposition and Distinguished Graduate Students Awards Ceremony:** Co-hosted by the Graduate Student Advisory Council, the Council on Graduate Studies and the Graduate School, the Graduate Exposition and Distinguished Graduate Students Awards Ceremony provide a forum during the spring term to showcase the research creative activity of graduate students. The Awards Ceremony provides formal recognition of the achievements of graduate students who have distinguished themselves through scholarship, research, or leadership.

### Sections Comprising the Master's or Specialist's Thesis

The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) is the preferred thesis style of many programs. Some programs prefer other thesis styles including the Modern Language Association (MLA), Council of Biological Editors (CBE), or Turabian. Program thesis style preferences are listed at the back of this Manual. Candidates should verify with Coordinators of Graduate Study the preferred thesis style of the degree program. The sections outlined below are based on APA style. While brief definitions of each section are provided, candidates are advised to consult the APA Manual for detailed definitions of each manuscript section.

- **Title Page.** A computer-generated title page is required for all theses completed at Eastern Illinois University. The approved title page format is located at the end of the Thesis Manual. Thesis titles should be succinct and reflect the variables or issues represented by the research. The title page also includes the name of the author, the degree program, and year the thesis was completed. The title page requires the signature of the department head or the department head's designee and the members of the thesis committee.
- **Copyright Page.** All candidates may include a Copyright Page that provides the following information centered both vertically and horizontally on the page: Copyright [Year] by [Author's Name].
- **Abstract.** The abstract is a synopsis of the project that provides a comprehensive summary of the whole project and its findings. Well written abstracts are precise and clearly written with sufficient content to independently represent the most important findings.
- **Dedication Page.** A dedication page is optional but when included recognizes people who have supported or assisted the candidate during the project.
- **Acknowledgments.** An acknowledgments page recognizes individuals who have been instrumental in the completion of the project.
- **Table of Contents.** The Table of Contents is a navigational tool that allows readers to quickly find the pages of the major parts of the manuscript.
- **List of Figures or Tables.** The List of Figures and Tables is a second navigational tool that allows a reader to quickly locate a visual image. All figures and tables should be concise and well-focused to further enhance the quality of the manuscript.
- **Introduction.** The introduction section presents the question or problem to be investigated and links the problem to the research strategy.
- **Literature Review.** The literature review provides a summary of the current status of the problem being studied. There should be a logical relationship between prior investigations and the current research.
- **Methodology.** The methodology section provides details on how the investigation was conducted.
- **Results.** The results section offers a summary of the data collected and its interpretation.
- **Discussion.** The discussion offers an evaluation and explanation of the findings of the study and offers guidance for additional research.
- **Conclusions.** The concluding section of the project provides an opportunity to state the author's confirmation of the original question or failure to confirm the original problem.
- **References.** The References section includes an alphabetical listing of all of the literature citations that were used within the content chapters of the thesis.

- **Appendices.** The use of appendices is indicated when a detailed description or summary of an issue or entity is important to understand or evaluate the project.

### **Production and Formatting Guidelines for Final Deposit**

- **Paper Quality.** Bound original copies of the thesis may be printed or copied; however, each original must be completed on 20-pound, 25% acid free or 100% cotton bond paper.
- **Font.** A minimum font size of 10 points is required. Standard fonts such as Arial, Times New Roman, or Courier are recommended.
- **Margins.** Margins for typed text must be one-and-one-half inches on the left and one inch on the remaining sides. Copies of recorder tracings and spectra in technical fields may exceed the top, bottom, and right margins; however, a one-and-one-half inch left margin must be provided to insure sufficient space for binding of the thesis.
- **Spacing.** Standard double spacing is required for the entire document including the References section. Exceptions include materials appearing in tables, figures, or appendices.
- **Loose-leaf Originals.** Each original must be submitted loose-leaf in separate envelopes. Folded, punched, stapled, inserted, or clamped pages will not be accepted.
- **Photographs.** Quality digital photographs are required.
- **Digital Image Output.** A digital image output must contain all of the information required for the project. A black-and-white or color output is acceptable.
- **Tables and Figures.** Tables and figures must be within the specified page margins. Table headings are normally placed on the top of the table. Figure captions are typically placed at the bottom of the figure. Both tables and figures must be legible.

### **Completing the Thesis—Program Requirements**

Programs have individualized requirements for completing the thesis and candidates should review these requirements with the thesis director.

- **Oral Defense.** The candidate may be required to formally present the completed project to the committee or to members of the program or university community during an oral thesis defense. Guidelines for preparation and completion of the oral defense should be reviewed with the director.
- **Examinations.** The candidate may be required to complete comprehensive examinations or other program requirements in addition to completion of the thesis project. Candidates should verify all final requirements with the director.
- **Completed Thesis.** The candidate typically fulfills the program's requirements for completion of the thesis project upon completion of the final draft with all required changes, the oral defense, and/or the examination. Departments may require signature approval on a specific form prior to submission of the Certificate of Comprehensive Knowledge. Departments may also require signatures on the Title Page as part of the thesis completion process.

### **Completing the Thesis--Graduate School Requirements**

- **Thesis Deposit Packet.** The packet includes the Removal of Deferred Credit Form, Binding Request Form, Thesis Deposit Certificate, and the Thesis Maintenance and Reproduction Certificate. Forms can be accessed by clicking on the name of the form below.
- **Removal of Deferred Credit Form.** Thesis advisors should forward the Removal of Deferred Credit Form for a completed thesis to the Records Office by the Last Class Day published in the *Class Schedule*.
- **Binding Request Form & Binding Payment.** The candidate completes the Binding Request Form and submits payment for the requested number of bound thesis paper copies to the Cashier's Office. Two bound copies to be deposited in Booth Library are required by the Graduate School. Additional bound copies may be requested by the department or committee. A fee will be charged to the candidate for each bound copy. The Binding Request Receipt from the Cashier's Office authorizes the Library to make the requested number of bound copies of the thesis. The student takes the Binding Request Receipt to the Library.
- **Thesis Deposit Certificate.** The candidate provides the completed thesis, its abstract, and the Binding Request Receipt to the Periodicals Department of Booth Library. Upon submission of the

completed project and thesis binding receipt, the Library will sign the Thesis Deposit Certificate. The candidate provides the Graduate School with the signed Thesis Deposit Certificate by the Last Class Day published in the *Class Schedule*.

- **Thesis Maintenance and Reproduction Certificate.** At the time the candidate provides the completed thesis to Booth Library, the candidate also completes the Thesis Maintenance and Reproduction Certificate. The candidate's maintenance approval signature gives the University a royalty-free license to maintain the thesis as part of its Booth Library collection. The candidate's reproduction approval signature gives the University Library permission to lend the thesis to a reputable college or university for the purpose of copying it for inclusion in that institution's library or research holdings.

### Program Thesis Style Preferences

|   |   |                  |
|---|---|------------------|
| Art   | Master of Arts in Art and<br>Option in Art Education                                | APA <sup>1</sup> |
| Biological Sciences                                     | Master of Science in Biological Sciences  | CBE <sup>2</sup> |
|   | Master of Science in Natural Sciences<br>Concentration in Biology                   | CBE              |
| Business  | Master of Business Administration   | APA              |
| Chemistry   | Master of Science in Chemistry  | APA              |
|   | Master of Science in Natural Sciences<br>Concentration in Physical Sciences         | APA              |
| Communication Disorders                                 | Master of Science in Communication<br>& Sciences Disorders & Sciences               | APA              |
| Communication Studies                                   | Master of Arts in Communication Studies and<br>Option in Community College Pedagogy | APA              |
| Counseling and Student<br>Development                   | Master of Science in College Student Affairs  | APA              |
|   | Master of Science in Counseling   |                  |
| Early Childhood, Elementary<br>& Middle Level Education | Master of Science in Education in<br>Elementary Education                           | APA              |
| Economics   | Master of Arts in Economics   | APA              |
| Educational Administration                              | Master of Science in Education in<br>Educational Administration                     | APA/Turabian     |
|   | Specialist's in Educational Administration  | APA/Turabian     |
| English   | Master of Arts in English   | MLA <sup>3</sup> |
| Family & Consumer<br>Sciences                           | Master of Science in<br>Family & Consumer Sciences                                  | APA <sup>4</sup> |
|   | Option in Dietetics   | APA              |
|   | Master of Arts in Gerontology   | APA              |
| History   | Master of Arts in History   | Turabian         |

|                              | Option in Historical Administration                    | Turabian |
|------------------------------|--|----------|
| Kinesiology & Sports Studies | Master of Science in Physical Education                | APA      |
| Mathematics                  | Master of Arts in Mathematics                          | APA      |
|                              | Option Elementary/Middle School Education              | APA      |
|                              | Option Secondary Mathematics Education                 | APA      |
| Music                        | Master of Arts in Music and                            | APA      |
|                              | Option in Music Education                              |          |
| Political Science            | Master of Arts in Political Science                    | APA      |
| Psychology                   | Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology                  | APA      |
|                              | Specialist's in School Psychology                      | APA      |
| Special Education            | Master of Science in Education in<br>Special Education | APA      |
| Technology                   | Master of Science in Technology                        | APA      |

<sup>1</sup>APA: American Psychological Association

<sup>2</sup>CBE: Council of Biological Editors

<sup>3</sup>MLA: Modern Language Association

<sup>4</sup>The School of Family & Consumer Sciences offers an alternative to the standard thesis format described in this Manual. Candidates should contact the Coordinator of Graduate Studies regarding implementation and use of the alternative format.

### **Approval**

The *Manual for the Master's and Specialist's Thesis* was approved by the Council on Graduate Studies March 4, 2008.

## Thesis Checklist

- \_\_\_\_\_ Identification of the Thesis Director
- \_\_\_\_\_ Approval of the Thesis Committee
- \_\_\_\_\_ Approval of the Proposal
- \_\_\_\_\_ Approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Human Subjects)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Approval of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) (Animal Subjects)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Registration for Credit or Non-credit Thesis
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completion of the Required Thesis Sections
- \_\_\_\_\_ Title Page
- \_\_\_\_\_ Signatures
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copyright Page
- \_\_\_\_\_ Abstract
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dedication
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acknowledgments
- \_\_\_\_\_ Table of Contents
- \_\_\_\_\_ List of Figures or Tables
- \_\_\_\_\_ Introduction
- \_\_\_\_\_ Literature Review
- \_\_\_\_\_ Results
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discussion
- \_\_\_\_\_ Conclusions
- \_\_\_\_\_ References
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appendix
- \_\_\_\_\_ Oral Defense
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completion of Examinations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed Thesis Distributed to Committee Members
- \_\_\_\_\_ Thesis Deposit Packet
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submission of Change of Deferred Credit Form
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submission of Thesis Binding Request Form
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submission of Thesis Maintenance and Reproduction Certificate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submission of Thesis Deposit Certificate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submission of IRB and IACUC (as appropriate) to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

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(TITLE)

BY

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**THESIS**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF

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IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

---

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING  
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

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THESIS COMMITTEE CHAIR                      DATE

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DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL CHAIR                      DATE  
OR CHAIR'S DESIGNEE

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THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBER                      DATE

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THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBER                      DATE

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THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBER                      DATE

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THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBER                      DATE