

Educational Psychology: Cognition & Instruction Master's Program Thesis Option

The Cognition & Instruction program accepts a wide variety of Masters' thesis formats and orientations. For example, the Master's thesis may be a literature review, a critical analysis paper, an experiment, a design experiment or a case study. Quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods studies are all valued. The following is an outline of the thesis process.

- I. Written proposal
 - a. Twelve pages maximum, double spaced, 11pt. font or greater
 - b. Include tables and figures, references and appendices – these do NOT count toward the 12-page limit
 - c. Conform to current APA format/style
 - d. Proposal must be approved prior to data collection
 - e. Components (these will not apply to all formats)
 - i. Statement of the problem
 - ii. Brief literature review
 1. Theoretical basis
 - iii. Research question(s)
 - iv. Methodology/Procedure
 1. Participants – sampling
 2. Instrumentation – reliability/ validity
 3. Procedures
 4. Data collected
 - a. Quantitative
 - i. Dependent and independent variables
 - b. Qualitative
 - i. Types and formats of data collected
 - c. Literature reviews/Meta analyses
 - d. Information sources
 - v. Proposed analysis
 1. Qualitative and/or quantitative to address research questions
 - vi. Limitations
 1. Internal/ external validity
 - f. Approved in writing by entire advisory committee (minimum composition: one major advisor and two associate advisors)
- II. Oral defense of Proposal
 - a. Candidate makes a public defense of proposal
 - b. All advisory committee (3) are present; other department faculty and students are invited
 - c. Twenty-minute presentation plus Q & A – to defend proposal and improve proposal
- III. Approval process after oral and written proposal by committee
 - a. Proposal placed on C & I website

- b. IRB approval and documented before data collection
- IV. Final Masters Thesis Submission Process
 - a. *Note the final thesis must be submitted to the entire advisory committee and is not considered completed until all members of the Masters candidate's advisory committee have signed the graduate school forms and has been submitted to the graduate school and educational psychology department.*
 - b. Written components – no page limit
 - c. Components (these will not apply to all formats)
 - i. Statement of problem
 - ii. Research questions
 - iii. Literature Review
 - iv. Methodology
 - 1. Sampling/ participants
 - 2. Procedures
 - 3. Instrumentation
 - v. Analysis
 - vi. Discussion/ conclusion
 - 1. Linking data to theory
 - vii. Tables and figures
 - viii. References
 - ix. Appendixes
- V. Suggested Timeline for proposal and final thesis.
 - a. Identification of research questions and development of research design during the spring semester of the first year.
 - b. Proposal defense and approval by September 15th of the second year of graduate study
 - c. Final thesis submitted for approval by April 1st of the second year of graduate study