



HIGHER EDUCATION
ADMINISTRATION
ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY.

MASTER OF SCIENCE CULMINATING EXPERIENCE



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INTRODUCTION

This guide for the Culminating Experience is designed to provide information and direction for graduate students enrolled in the Master of Science Degree Program in Higher Education Administration.

The purpose of the guide is to direct students toward the smooth and successful completion of their culminating experience, and to assist in students' timely graduation and entrance into their chosen profession. Department and university procedures for the Thesis (Plan A), Written Comprehensive Examination (Plan B), and Project/eFolio (Plan C) are described below.

Culminating Experience

The culminating experience is a generic term referring to the final academic experience in your master's program. In the Higher Education Administration Program, the culminating experience is one of three choices. It can be a thesis (Plan A), Written Comprehensive Exam (Plan B), or a project/eFolio (Plan C).

Thesis (Plan A)

A thesis involves the design and implementation of empirical (qualitative or quantitative) research. Students design an original study, obtain and/or develop data collection tools, organize and implement data collection, input and analyze the data, and write the results and conclusions of the study based on the data. A thesis contributes to the field of study – in your case, higher education administration.



Written Comprehensive Exam (Plan B)

The Written Comprehensive Examination (WCE) is a final exam that students can take at a specific date, pre-determined by the HIED program. This exam evaluates students' basic knowledge about the courses offered in the M. S. in Higher Education Administration program. The exam entails working on two basic questions, and the analysis of a case study which is genuine to the field of higher education. These three items will be provided to the students during the date of the specific examination. The Written Comprehensive Examination is offered twice a year in a computer lab where students can access Microsoft Word software.

Project/eFolio (Plan C)

A graduate project involves the design of a product, such as a curriculum, a workshop, a handbook, a video, a website, etc. The candidate provides a rationale for the product based on a comprehensive review of the research and consultation with experts in the field. The project contributes something new and/or significant to the student's institution, and it must be based on a review of the research and/or a needs assessment.

A graduate eFolio involves the design of an eFolio using the MnSCU support website. Students provide evidence of knowledge acquisition and skill development by using course work or work related artifacts.



Selecting a Topic for Plan A & Plan C

It is never too early to begin thinking about and planning for your culminating experience. Some students seem to know just what they want to do from the very first day of the program, whereas others take a longer, more reflective path to determine exactly what they will do for the culmination of their master's degree. More typically, students get ideas and clues about a specific topic or project through participation in courses and/or experiences at their practicum site. Consider the following:

- Is there a topic that piqued your interest in a class discussion?
- Was there a chapter you read in a text, or perhaps a journal article, that struck a chord for you?
- Perhaps you wrote a paper for a class and the topic turned out to be quite an intriguing one for you.
- Did something change for you after your practicum, and you want to explore the issue more closely?

These are the kind of self-signals for which you should be on the lookout. When you find something that seems particularly interesting, write it down. Maybe that idea will become the springboard for your project/eFolio, or the problem you will investigate for your thesis research.

Registration

For a thesis (Plan A), you may register for the first 3 credits during the semester in which you plan to complete the preliminary oral examination. You may register for the final 3 thesis credits during the semester in which you plan to complete the final oral defense. The preliminary and final oral examinations must occur at least one semester apart. To register for these credits, you must complete and submit the "Individual Independent Study Form" which can be found at <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/forms/default.aspx> or in the Program Forms section of this handbook.

Once the form is approved, you will be sent a course ID number by email, which will allow you to register for the course.

For the Written Comprehensive Examination (Plan B), you may register for HIED 684 on the semester in which

you are planning to take the exam. You will register for three credits in HIED 684. This is a pre-requisite for taking the Written Comprehensive Examination (WCE).

For the project/eFolio (Plan C), you may register for HIED 684 Project/eFolio Design in the semester in which your preliminary or final oral exam is planned. To register for these credits, you must contact your advisor and the M.S. coordinator. If you register for credits during the semester of your preliminary oral exam you will be given an "IP" until your final defense is complete the following semester.

The satisfactory completion of the culminating project is reported as S (satisfactory) or U (unsatisfactory). If all requirements have not been met by the end of the semester in which you were registered, the work is reported as an IP, "In Progress." An IP grade will remain on a student's transcript for one year, and if not completed by the end of that time it will change to a U (unsatisfactory) grade. The culminating project must be completed within the seven-year time limit set for the completion of a master's degree.



YOUR COMMITTEE (PLAN A & PLAN C)

The most important consideration when beginning a thesis or project/eFolio is the selection of three graduate faculty members to serve as committee members.

Committee Chair

The student's advisor will typically serve as the committee chair. The student should make sure that the chair is available throughout the course of the culminating experience.

Selecting Committee Members

Each graduate student, after consulting with her/his advisor, should ask two other graduate faculty members to serve on the committee, based on each member's potential advisory value in the area of research. These committee members must be approved graduate faculty members. A listing of graduate faculty members is available online at: <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/culminating-projects/policies-processes.aspx>

The second committee member should be a full-time faculty member in the Higher Education Administration Program. The third committee member should be from outside the department, in an area that compliments the thesis/project. This third person is called an outside reader.

In case a faculty member is not included in the graduate faculty roster, the student needs to contact the M.S. program coordinator.



Understanding the Purpose of the Committee

Your committee acts in the role of partner and mentor to provide knowledge and support as you begin, execute, and complete your culminating experience.

Working With Your Committee

The student makes all decisions in discussion with the chairperson first, including the composition of the committee, IRB forms, drafts of paper/eFolio sections, etc. In addition, dates for the preliminary and final meetings are scheduled only after the chair has reviewed and approved.

The student should ask the chairperson and committee members about the logistics of the involvement of committee members. Some committee members prefer to see all drafts and be involved throughout the process, whereas other members may give early input in terms of conceptualizing the project or research design and then prefer to see only the final drafts. Students should have committee members clarify their preference at the onset of their work together.

Students are advised to work closely with their chair and faculty members in HIED 674 and HIED 694 from the very beginning and throughout the entire length of the culminating experience. For example, it would be inadvisable for a student to do most of the work of a culminating activity on her/his own and then bring it to her/his chair in hopes that the chair would “sign on.”

The culminating experience is intended to be a process during which the committee and student work closely throughout. Written notes of what is discussed and agreed upon in committee meetings are very helpful in keeping the chair, committee members, and student on track with timely completion of work.

Procedures such as summarizing a committee meeting and then promptly providing copies of the notes to the committee can prove very helpful. Another logistical procedure the student, chair, and committee members should discuss and agree upon is the amount of time that the student must allow for the chair and committee members to read submitted written material. For example, how many days does the chair need in order to review materials for your next meeting?

When the final draft is completed, how much time will committee members need before submitting their suggestions? These important procedural considerations should be clearly delineated at the onset of the culminating experience process and updated as needed. In addition, committee members should be asked if they want hard copies or electronic copies of all drafts.

Developing Timelines

Timelines help both students and faculty members stay focused and purposeful in relation to the timely completion of the culminating experience. Timelines help the student understand the sequence of activities, map out a schedule, and inform committee members when to anticipate incoming drafts of chapters to read. Students should consult with their chair to modify and/or periodically review their timeline.

Writing Successfully

Some committee chairs will provide editing, formatting, spelling correction, and/or grammatical advice for students, whereas other chairs prefer to focus their attention on the content, not the structure or mechanics, of student work. Students are advised to discuss this aspect of their culminating experience with their committee chair.

Sources for editing and formatting are available from St. Cloud State University's Writing Center. Hours and location are available from their website: www.stcloudstate.edu/writeplace/.

It is the student's responsibility to persist with the writing and revision process until the final document is satisfactory to the chair and then each committee member.



STUDENT AND FACULTY THESIS/PROJECT/ eFOLIO RESPONSIBILITIES

Thesis/Project/eFolio Chair: It is the responsibility of the chair to:

1. Sign off on the Independent Study form for HIED 699 for 1-6 credits (Plan A), or HIED 684 for 3 credits (Plan C).
2. Assist the student in the selection of the other committee members.
3. Determine the appropriateness of the thesis/project topic selected by the student.
4. Determine the adequacy of the thesis/project/eFolio design before the student begins work.
5. Provide the student with feedback regarding when it is appropriate to schedule committee meetings. With this approval, the student will schedule the Preliminary Oral Exam and Final Oral Defense meetings, providing the date, time, and location to all members in addition to a draft of the paper. In addition, once approved the student will notify Graduate Studies as well.
6. Work effectively with the student to set realistic timelines for completion of the thesis/project.
7. Ensure that the student has obtained the required clearances from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for research involving human subjects before the research study or project begins.
8. Review the scholarly execution of the study.
9. Assure that all of the committee members have reviewed the thesis/project/eFolio before it is typed in final form and that all the necessary changes have been incorporated.
10. See that a high standard of writing quality is maintained throughout the thesis/project/eFolio using APA writing principles.
11. Chair the preliminary and final defense of the thesis/project/eFolio and submit all required approvals and paperwork to the School of Graduate Studies.

Committee Members: It is the responsibility of the committee members to:

1. Attend and participate in preliminary and final oral exam.
2. Check the adequacy of the thesis/project/eFolio design before the study begins through participation in the Preliminary Oral Exam.
3. Review the scholarly execution of the study.
4. See that a high standard of scholarship and writing quality are maintained throughout the thesis/project/eFolio.
5. Review and comment on the thesis/project/eFolio before it is completed in final form.
6. Complete all paperwork associated with the thesis/project/eFolio.

Student: It is the responsibility of the student to:

1. Constitute a committee of three appropriate graduate faculty members willing to act as supervising faculty on the thesis/project/eFolio – two from the program (including your chair) and one from outside the department.
2. Provide the chair and committee members accurate contact information for all members and update any changes, such as phone numbers and email addresses as necessary.
3. Decide, in consultation with the committee chair, an appropriate and worthy topic for research study or project.
4. Call the committee meetings for the Preliminary Oral Exam and Final Oral Defense, only after approval from the chair, providing the date, time, and location to all members, including the School of Graduate Studies, and submitting all drafts and final documents to the committee and School of Graduate Studies.

DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES

5. Determine, in consultation with the committee, roles of the committee members, needs of the committee in working through the approval process, and the timelines and deadlines for submitting written work for approval.
6. Understand that re-writes will probably be necessary and that the guidance of the committee is to be taken seriously if the work is to be satisfactorily completed.
7. Obtain editorial help if necessary to meet the standards of the University and the HIED program for quality and presentation of the information in the thesis/project/eFolio in APA format.
8. Adhere to the appropriate style manual determined by the program (APA) and to the thesis/project/eFolio guidelines outlined by the School of Graduate Studies Manual.
9. Defend the thesis/project/eFolio; understand that final acceptance of the thesis/project/eFolio is determined by the student's faculty committee, and the School of Graduate Studies.



You must register for HIED 699 credits the semester in which you are working on your thesis and HIED 684 in either the semester of your preliminary or final defense. In the case of the Written Comprehensive Examination (WCE), students need to register for HIED 684 on the semester in which they are taking the exam. If you are interested in taking the WCE, you need to contact the M.S. program coordinator for dates and times.

Summer Enrollment

Students should not begin their culminating experience in the summer. Students may complete a graduate project or thesis in the summer only with the agreement, in advance, of their chair and committee members; most faculty members do not work with students on culminating activities during the summer.

Original Work

Students are required to conduct and complete an individual project, eFolio, thesis, or to take and pass the Written Comprehensive Examination. If two students pursue a similar topic, it must be clear that the "products," or the hypotheses/research questions, are separate and unique, ensuring that each person's work is indeed original.



UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES

The School of Graduate Studies is responsible for implementing university policies regarding graduate student classification, formal programs, culminating experiences, and diplomas. This office publishes information on all graduate programs and assists individual departments in updating information on graduate degree programs. The website for the School of Graduate Studies is: www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies.

It is the student's responsibility to be knowledgeable of, and to meet, the deadlines for submission of your culminating activity. There are no exceptions to university deadlines. Updated deadlines are available at:

<https://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/students/completing-program.aspx>

Guidelines for the Electronic Submission process can be found online at <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/culminating-projects/default.aspx>. Students are required to meet the formatting guidelines of both the university and of the department, which adheres to the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA). APA style rules and guidelines are found in a reference book called, "The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Sixth Edition)." Guidelines are provided to ensure clear and consistent presentation of written material. Editorial style provides uniform use of such elements as grammar, use of tables/graphs, headings, citation of sources, presentation of statistics, fonts, etc.

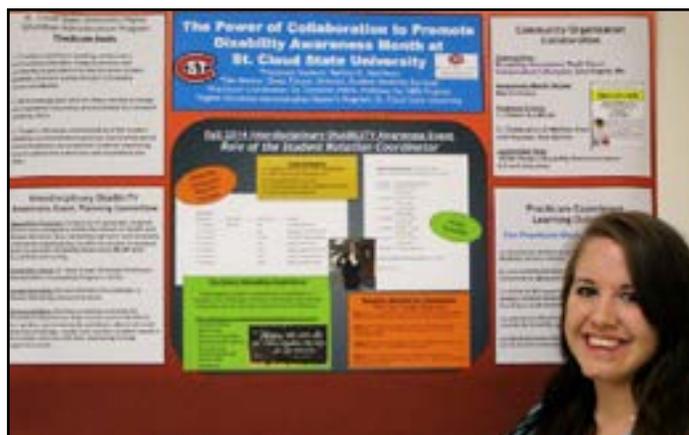
When a conflict exists in standards, format, or style, the manual published by the School of Graduate Studies takes precedence over any other manual approved for department use.

HUMAN SUBJECTS – INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

All planned research involving human subjects must receive approval from St. Cloud State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects prior to commencing the thesis or project. All students and faculty conducting research that involves the participation of humans or animals must complete an application form and submit it to the Office of Sponsored Programs. Students do not submit this form until their project/thesis has been approved by their committee at the preliminary oral exam and only after approval from the chair. An application is available at: <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/irb/protocol.aspx>

Official protocol forms, as well as copies of federal guidelines for both human and animal-related research, are available from: <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/irb/protocol.aspx>

The Human Subjects Committee convenes biweekly. Applications must be submitted at least two (2) weeks before a meeting to be considered for full review. Approvals from participating schools or organizations must be obtained on letterhead prior to submitting a completed proposal. Methodology must be specific and clearly written, so that the Human Subjects Committee can approve the research in a timely fashion. Expedited Review is usually completed within 5 to 10 working days after applications have been submitted. Procedures and templates for Informed Consent are available at: <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/irb/protocol.aspx>



DISTINGUISHED MASTER'S THESIS AWARD



St. Cloud State University Distinguished Master's Thesis Award and Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS) Distinguished Thesis Award Nomination <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/faculty-staff/faculty-handbook.aspx>

Each year the Faculty Association Graduate Committee and the School of Graduate Studies recognize one outstanding thesis completed during the last academic year or summer with the SCSU Distinguished Master's Thesis Award. This thesis is then submitted by St. Cloud State University as its nominee for the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS) Distinguished Thesis Award.

Each master's program with a thesis option is encouraged to select and submit one outstanding thesis. The thesis and letter of support from the department must be submitted by October 1. The School of Graduate Studies forwards the theses and letters of support to the chairperson of the SCSU Distinguished Master's Thesis Award Committee. The committee then selects the SCSU Distinguished Master's Thesis. The individual whose thesis is selected receives a framed certificate and an award of \$200.00 in a joint presentation by faculty representatives, the President, and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

Eligibility

Master's degree-seeking candidates who completed a thesis during the last academic year or summer will be eligible to be nominated. Starred papers and creative works cannot be considered for this award.

Nomination

Each program may submit one nomination with a

supporting letter of not more than two pages from the thesis adviser.

Nomination Letter

The thesis adviser should briefly address the following:

- the originality and importance of the research
- the potential for significant contribution to the field.

Deadline – October 17

Submit nomination materials to:

School of Graduate Studies
121 Administrative Services Building
720 Fourth Avenue South
St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498
Telephone: 320.308.2113
Fax: 320.308.5371

Selection and Announcement of Award

The School of Graduate Studies forwards the theses and letters of support to the chairperson of the St. Cloud State University Distinguished Master's Thesis Award Committee. The committee then selects the SCSU Distinguished Master's Thesis. SCSU's Outstanding Thesis is then submitted to the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools for consideration in their annual competition.

The SCSU award recipient will be announced November 15. The individual whose thesis is selected will receive a nomination for the MAGS Distinguished Thesis Award, a framed certificate, and an award of \$200 in a joint presentation by faculty representatives, the President, and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS) Distinguished Thesis Award

For a number of years the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS) has recognized scholarship and research at the master's level through the MAGS Distinguished Thesis Award.

Each university in the Midwest is allowed to submit one thesis. From these, the MAGS award is selected. If selected by MAGS, the student receives a \$500 honorarium from MAGS and travel expenses to attend the annual MAGS conference.

STUDENT RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM

St. Cloud State University's annual campus-wide Student Research Colloquium (SRC) promotes research, scholarship, and creative work in collaboration with faculty as a vital component of higher education. Faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students from St. Cloud State University and regional universities are encouraged to participate. Industry sponsors are also invited to attend.

The goal of the SRC is to bring together students, faculty, and members of the community involved in scholarly and artistic activities – this event typically occurs every April, and students are able to give paper presentations, poster presentations, or performance or creative works. Students work with a faculty member on all aspects of their presentation for the SRC. For more information and deadlines <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/huskiesshowcase/registration.aspx>.



STATISTICAL CONSULTING AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

If you are looking for help in drawing on the power of statistics to support your research, the Statistical Consulting & Research Support office in St. Cloud State University's Learning Resources & Technology Services may be able to help you. Staff members will help you design a survey to collect the information you need, and will do the computer work for you. You make the research decisions, and they do the computer work.

Here's What to Expect

Visit the Statistical Consulting & Research Support office (MC 204) before you design and write your survey. Staff members will help focus your research and help develop an effective method for finding answers. After completing your survey bring the completed forms and your data to the Statistical Consulting Office. (Please make an appointment first.)

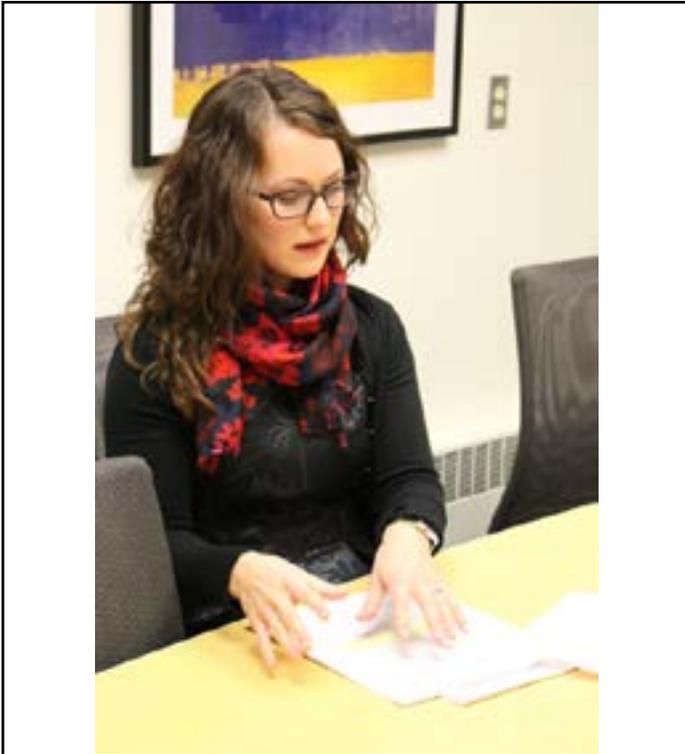
- Based upon your discussion in the survey planning process and on the questions you want answered, the staff will design a series of computer programs to analyze your data. They even do the data entry for you!
- This step can take up to two weeks. The size of your project and the work the staff has scheduled before yours arrives will influence how long you have to wait for results.
- The staff will run your data, analyze, and assemble the results.
- When completed you can return to the office to have the results explained. They will help you to interpret your results.
- You have the opportunity to return to discuss drawing further information from your data. The staff will perform follow-up analysis upon your request.
- Internet

Staff can also help you develop web-based surveys. They have experience in creating web products and will help you draw upon the unique aspects of this growing information gathering process. .

Contact Information

Statistical Consulting & Research Support is located in room Miller Center 204. Office hours are weekdays between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm. The telephone number to call is 308-4709. The e-mail address is statsps@stcloudstate.edu.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION



What are the differences between the Thesis (Plan A), the Written Comprehensive Exam (Plan B), and the Project/eFolio (Plan C)?

Generally speaking, the thesis makes a contribution to your field (Higher Education Administration). The project makes a contribution to your institution. Thus, the project must be related to an expressed institutional need. The project expectation is equivalent to the thesis, in terms of rigor and scholarship. The eFolio is evidence-based. The Written Comprehensive Examination is an exam that can only be taken twice. It does not require any explicit contribution to either the field or an institution of HIED. This exam's purpose is to assess the student's knowledge acquired through the M.S. coursework.

Can my project be a product of my practicum experience?

Students are able to connect their project to their practicum, if approved by their advisor, but it is not a requirement and not always advisable. If there is a major/significant project that you started during your practicum, you may be able to continue working on it for your project.

When should I begin my culminating experience?

As mentioned, it's never too early to begin thinking about and planning your culminating project. Officially, students begin the process by enrolling in HIED 674 (Introduction to Research), in the fall semester, and then HIED 694 (HIED Research Methods and Design) in the spring semester. Students working on Plan A, the thesis, may register for 3 credits of HIED 699 when they are ready to complete the preliminary oral defense of the proposal. At least one semester later, students may register for HIED 699 (3 credits) and complete the final defense.

Students working on Plan C, the project/eFolio, will enroll in HIED 684 Project/eFolio Design for 3 credits either during the semester or their preliminary exam (usually during or after HIED 694) or during the semester of their final oral exam. Students may complete their thesis or project/eFolio in the summer semester only with the agreement of their chair and committee members.

How do I register for my thesis credits (HIED 699)? How do I register for my project/eFolio credits (HIED 684)? How do I register for my Written Comprehensive Examination credits (HIED 684)?

You may register for 3 thesis credits (HIED 699) during the semester that you hold your preliminary oral examination. You may register for the final 3 thesis credits during the semester that you complete your final oral examination.

Your preliminary and final oral examinations must occur at least one semester apart. To register for these credits, you must complete and submit the "Individual Independent Study Form" which can be found at <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/forms/default.aspx> or in the Program Forms section of this handbook. Once the form is approved, you will be

sent a course ID number by email, which will allow you to register for the course.

You may register for your 3 project/eFolio credits (HIED 684) after completing your research courses and during the semester of your preliminary oral examination or final defense. To register for these credits, you must complete and submit the “Individual Independent Study Form” which can be found at <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/forms/default.aspx> or in the Program Forms section of this handbook. Once the form is approved, you will be sent a course ID number by email, which will allow you to register for the course.

You may register for your 3 Written Comprehensive Examination credits (HIED 684) during the last semester of your coursework. You need to request authorization from your advisor and the M.S. coordinator.

RESOURCES

The following are examples of books providing valuable information and guidance for preparing and completing your thesis/project. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, simply a starting point:

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Bui, Y. N. (2009). *How to write a master's thesis*. San Francisco: Sage Publications.

Cone, J. D., & Foster, S. L. (1993). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish: Psychology and related fields*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Irby, B. J., & Lunenburg, F. (2007). *Writing a successful thesis or dissertation: Tips and strategies for students in the social and behavioral sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2001). *Practical research: Planning and design* (7th ed.). New York: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Madsen, D. (1992). *Successful dissertations and theses: A guide to graduate student research from proposal to completion* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Murray, R. (2006). *How to write a thesis*. Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.

Pyrczak, F. (2000). *Completing your thesis or dissertation*. Los Angeles, CA: Pyrczak Publishing.

THESIS (PLAN A)

What is a thesis?

A thesis involves the design and implementation of empirical research by the student. The student designs the study, obtains and/or develops data collection tools, sets up and follows-through on the data collection process, processes and analyzes the data, and writes the results and conclusions of the study based on the data.

How does a thesis differ from a project/eFolio (Plan C) and Written Comprehensive Examination (Plan B)?

A thesis is an empirical study and makes a contribution to the student's field – in this case, higher education administration. A graduate project involves the design of a product, such as a curriculum, workshop, or video and makes a contribution to the student's institution. A graduate eFolio is an evidence-based format for providing evidence of mastery of competencies and dispositions.

For further details, see the Project/eFolio (Plan C) section of this guide. The Written Comprehensive Examination is an exam that can only be taken twice. It does not require any explicit contribution to either the field or an institution of HIED. This exam's purpose is to assess the students' knowledge acquired through the M.S. coursework. For further details, see the Written Comprehensive Examination (Plan B) section of this guide.

Procedures for Thesis (Plan A)

Proposal

The first step in the thesis process is the development of a proposal. A proposal is a comprehensive outline of what the thesis will look like. It should include an introduction and hypotheses or research questions, literature review, and proposed methodology (Chapters 1, 2, and 3). It should also include a proposed timeline. The proposal is required for the thesis preliminary conference with your committee. A student will work with his/her committee chair on the proposal prior to disseminating to other committee members.

Thesis Preliminary Oral Exam Conference

Once the proposal has been prepared and approved by the chair, students must arrange for a preliminary oral exam conference. This preliminary conference may be scheduled after the student has been fully accepted into a graduate program, if the graduate grade point average is at least 3.0, and after the student's program of study has been approved by the graduate dean. The student may need to contact Ann Anderson at aeanderson@stcloudstate.edu to verify preliminary conference eligibility.

It is recommended that the preliminary oral exam take place at the conclusion of HIED 694. The preliminary oral exam conference must occur at least one semester prior to the final defense. These conferences are not typically scheduled during final examination week or during the summer. The student will register for 3 credits of HIED 699 (Thesis) during the semester of the preliminary oral exam.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule committee members for a preliminary conference and to ensure a room is reserved in the Education Building with assistance from the department secretary (Phone: 320-308-3131). At least two weeks prior to the preliminary conference, one copy of the proposal is submitted to Ann Anderson in the School of Graduate Studies along with the date, time, and location of the preliminary conference and a list of the committee chair and members. Once the School of Graduate Studies reviews this information and the thesis proposal, the appropriate paperwork is sent to the thesis committee chair. Each committee member must also receive a copy of the proposal at least one week prior to the preliminary

conference. Students should ask their committee members whether they prefer a paper or electronic copy of the proposal.

The School of Graduate Studies will independently distribute a report of preliminary evaluation to the student's committee chair. A student may continue with Plan A when each committee member approves the proposed project by signing and returning the preliminary evaluation report to Ann Anderson in the School of Graduate Studies.

Thesis Final Defense

When the thesis is complete including Chapters 1 through 5, and the student has the approval of his/her committee chair, the student is ready for a final oral examination. A final oral defense is required of all students whose Plan A programs of study require the completion of a thesis. Students who have earned less than a 3.0 grade point average in the major, over their entire program, and in all graduate credits earned are not permitted to complete the final oral examination.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule the Final Oral Defense with their committee members. The final defense cannot be held in the same semester as the preliminary oral. The final defense generally is not scheduled during final examination week or during the summer. Once scheduled, the student must notify the School of Graduate Studies to allow the paperwork for the conference to be prepared. Send these final conference details via E-mail to Ann Anderson at aeanderson@stcloudstate.edu.

- The final defense is conducted by the thesis committee, consisting of three members. Membership consists of the same committee that served on the preliminary exam conference.
- A majority vote of the final evaluation committee is required to pass the final defense. The committee will vote to approve, approve with revisions, or reject.
- A candidate who fails the final oral defense in the first attempt may, with the approval of the advisor, take the examination a second time, but the candidate may not retake the final oral defense during the same

semester in which the original defense was failed. A third chance to pass the defense is not permitted. The specific requirements vary according to the nature of the project submitted.

- Once you pass your final oral defense, remind your advisor to submit a grade/change of grade for the thesis. A mark of “S” is recorded for an approved thesis.

One complete copy of the work must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies for format review prior to submission for binding. This is not a final copy. It is recommended that the student submit the work to the School of Graduate Studies at least three weeks before the submission of the culminating project deadline to allow time for form and style corrections. For the deadline, go to <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/students/completing-program.aspx>

Binding a Thesis

Once the student has successfully passed the final evaluation conference, made corrections required by her/his committee, and received approval through the School of Graduate Studies, the thesis is ready for binding. Each approval page must be signed by the committee members and the abstracts must be signed by the committee chairperson.

- Three copies of the thesis must be prepared on a minimum of 20-pound, 100 percent cotton paper and submitted to the School of Graduate Studies for binding by the appropriate deadline. For the deadline, go to <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/students/completing-program.aspx>
- The copies will be bound in black buckram covers with gold lettering on the front and spine.
- If a student desires a personal bound copy of the culminating project, one additional copy must be submitted for binding with the abstract for a total of four copies.
- The student is responsible for the binding fee plus a one-time microfilm fee. Payment should be made by personal check to SCSU and submitted in the School of Graduate Studies.
- In addition to the abstracts submitted with each thesis, two additional signed copies of the abstract should be submitted to the School of Graduate

Studies.

- There are several individuals on and off campus who assist with thesis formatting for a nominal fee.
- Theses are approved, bound, and placed on file as described in “A Manual for the Preparation of Field Studies and Theses.”



Thesis Outline (Plan A)

Chapter One – Introduction

1. Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide a context that supports the rationale for the proposed study. The introduction is supposed to lead the reader into understanding or concluding that this is an issue that needs to be formally studied.

2. Statement of the Problem

This section provides a clear statement of the research problem and why it needs to be addressed. It also explains what you intend to do, describing the who, what, when, where, how, and why of the study. The statement of the problem should lead the reader into the next section.

3. Purpose of the Study

This section addresses the importance and significance of the study and how the results may benefit the field. This section also clearly states that the purpose of the thesis is to examine a specific research question(s) and to test certain hypotheses (in the case of a quantitative

study) or to explore certain themes related to the research questions (in the case of a qualitative study).

4. Objectives for the Study

This section is typically a numbered list of short term projects or tasks that need to be done to complete your study. It may include items such as securing participation, seeking permission, developing questionnaires, securing technology, training research assistants, or developing materials.

5. Assumptions of the Study

This section describes the things that you have assumed to be true for the study. It typically consists of items in a numbered list. Assumptions may include things such as honesty in responses, representative sample, or global postulates (claims about your field that most or all would assert to be true, i.e. “High quality teaching leads to improved student learning”).

6. Delimitations

In this section, you will set the parameters for your study and tell the reader what variables you included and what variables you did not include. The delimitations typically are stated in a numbered list. Note: This differs from the limitations section that is included in chapter five of your thesis. Limitations, or problems you encountered as you carried out the study, should not be included in chapter one.

7. Research Questions

This section lists your research questions which are the questions that will drive your study. You will answer these questions at the conclusion of your study. Also remember that the data you collect must provide the answers to these questions. Typically, you will have two to three research questions. Avoid “yes” or “no” response-type questions.

8. Research Hypotheses

This section is not needed in a qualitative study or in a quantitative study using only descriptive statistics (i.e. percents, means, modes, median, ranges, frequencies). Hypotheses are typically written as null hypotheses, stating that there will be no difference or effect. For example, “Females and males will not differ in their desire to advance to a higher administrative position.”

9. Definition of Terms

This section provides definitions of critical terms or concepts specific to your study. These definitions should be based on scholarly research and other scholarly work. The sources should be cited using APA format. When scholars define a term in different ways, include a brief discussion of the different perspectives, indicate which definition will be adopted in the thesis study, and why.

10. Summary

This section summarizes chapter one, provides a paragraph or two indicating how the thesis is organized, and provides a bridging statement to chapter two.

Chapter Two – Literature Review

1. Introduction

The purpose of the review of the literature is to explore research on the issues that are relevant to the proposed project. Begin chapter two with a brief description of your study. Also, describe the sources you used including the databases and search engines. Next, list and preview the critical issues, in the order in which they will be discussed in the review. The subheadings of the subsequent sections of the review should reflect the critical issues identified.

2. Review of the Research on Issues Relevant to the Study

As the student reviews the research on each issue, s/he should:

- Use the most recent version of APA style for formatting prose and citations. The student should obtain the latest edition of the APA style manual.
- In addition to discussing the major findings of the studies, the student should also include pertinent information about how each study was conducted, such as the number of subject/participants, relevant characteristics of the subjects, types of instruments and/or methods used (e.g., not necessarily the specific names of the tests or instruments, but whether they were interviewed, responded to questionnaires, tested, observed, etc.).
- The synopsis should also mention any major weaknesses in the study design.

3. Synthesis of the Review of the Research

This section synthesizes the major findings of the research as it relates to the proposed study. Does the research you have just reviewed:

- support the development of the proposed thesis?
- indicate how your study should be designed and/or implemented?
- identify other studies that are similar to the proposed study? If so, how would the proposed study differ from or improve upon existing similar studies?

4. Summary

This section summarizes chapter two and provides a bridging statement to chapter three.

Chapter Three - Methodology

1. Introduction

Present the research design for the proposed study, restate the hypotheses or research question(s), and briefly delineate the organization of this chapter. This chapter specifically describes how you plan to conduct the study. Remember anyone should be able to read chapter three and replicate your study without ever speaking to you- it should be that detailed and focused.

2. Participants

Describe the population or sample of the study, including a description of how many participated (you may want to talk about the number of surveys sent out versus the response rate, for example), all other relevant descriptors (typically including age, ethnicity, gender, psychological condition, etc.), how participants were selected (random, intact group, etc.), and if they were grouped in any way.

3. Human Subject Approval – Institutional Review Board (IRB)

This section outlines how the rights of human subjects will be protected throughout the study. For more information <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/irb/>

4. Instrument(s)

All instruments, tools, or methods used to gather data must be described here, including the psychometric characteristics of the tests (e.g., validity and reliability

indicators), how the tool was developed, or how the instrument will be designed or piloted. If a qualitative technique is to be used, such as interviews, observations or videotaping, what protocols will be applied? What type of information regarding procedures, ethics, and confidentiality are participants and/or others given?

5. Research Design

Describe the research design. If the study is an experimental or quasi-experimental study, what research design will be used? What are the comparison groups? How does the design address each of the hypotheses? If it is a qualitative study, what research design will be used? What methods will be used to establish reliability and validity (e.g., triangulation)?

6. Procedures

The student should provide an outline of all procedures involved in the proposed research. Describe the logistics and the timeline for this study. How/when the participants will be contacted and/or selected. When and how will the data be collected, processed, and analyzed?

7. Summary

This section summarizes chapter three and provides a bridging statement to chapter four.

Chapter Four – Results

1. Introduction

Reiterate the hypotheses and research question(s). Describe the organization of the chapter, which, in effect, is how the data will be discussed.

2. Results for each Hypothesis or Research Question

Restate each hypothesis. Discuss how each was tested by describing the method of analysis. Discuss whether or not the results support the hypothesis. Do not inject your opinion or explanation of the results. Commentary should be provided in chapter five. Restate each research question. Discuss how you organized the narrative information for interpretation and the outcomes.

3. Synthesis

Quantitative: Discuss your findings as a whole and synthesize the results. What were your major findings?

How many of the hypotheses were validated? Were there any contradictory results, or any unexpected or confusing results? Overall, what conclusion(s) can you draw from the data regarding the research question?

Qualitative: Synthesis discussion of qualitative research should be inductive in nature and interpretive. The purpose is to assist the reader in gaining a fuller understanding of the phenomenon, context, or culture studied. You might examine aspects of the outcomes, categorize your findings with previous studies, and/or identify the aspects of a particular phenomenon that need further investigation.

4. Summary

This section summarizes chapter four and provides a bridging statement to chapter five.

Chapter Five – Discussion

1. Introduction

Summarize the preceding four chapters, starting with the purpose of the thesis. State findings from the data you collected and analyzed. You may use this summary as your abstract, although some students prefer to write an elaborated summary. State the organization of the chapter as a bridge to the discussion.

2. Discussion and Conclusions

Discuss the results in light of the review of the research and your own research findings. In this section you may inject your opinions as supported by the data and/or review of the research. Point out new findings that are supported by your data and findings that contradict or expand upon existing research studies. Overall, what conclusion(s) can you reach from your research? In this section, you have the opportunity to write from your own voice. Reflect on what you have learned.

3. Limitations

List any problems you encountered in your study that you had not anticipated, i.e. low survey return rate. This section may be formatted in a numbered list. Then make recommendations for further research based upon the limitations.

4. Recommendations

Based on your review of literature and study, what recommendations would you make to the field? How

may practitioners use the results of your study to improve their practice?

5. Future Research

Identify future research indicated by your thesis study, and point to new avenues of further research – what subsequent questions arose from your study.

6. Summary

Briefly summarize chapter five.

References

Provide a complete list of all the items cited in the thesis. Do not include items that were reviewed but not cited in the body of the thesis.

Appendix(es)

Each appendix should be listed A, B, C, etc.... Include the original of your approved Human Subjects Protocol, as well as other items, such as survey instrument, raw data, and participants' verbatim comments. Items should be in the order they are presented in the body of your thesis.



GRADUATE WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION (PLAN B)

What is a written comprehensive exam?

The Written Comprehensive Examination (WCE) is a final exam that students can take at a specific date, pre-determined by the HIED program. This exam evaluates student's basic knowledge about the courses offered in the M. S. in Higher Education Administration program. The exam entails working on two basic questions, and the analysis of a case study which is genuine to the field of higher education. These three items will be provided to the students during the date of the specific examination. The Written Comprehensive Examination is offered in a computer lab where students can access Microsoft Word software. Internet access is not allowed during the examination.

How does a Written Comprehensive Examination differ from a thesis/project/eFolio?

The Written Comprehensive Examination does not require any explicit contribution to either the field or an institution of HIED. The exam's purpose is to assess the student's knowledge acquired through the M.S. coursework. A thesis makes a contribution to your field (Higher Education Administration). The project makes a contribution to your institution. Thus, the project must be related to an expressed institutional need. The eFolio is evidence-based.

Procedures for Written Comprehensive Examination (Plan B)

General instructions

- At the beginning of the semester in which the student will be finishing coursework, he/she must communicate his/her choice and decision to take the exam to the program coordinator and academic advisor, and submit a written application.
- The written comprehensive exam is administered each semester. The date of exam is determined by program faculty.
- The written comprehensive exam can be taken twice. Students are allowed to retake the exam once after they failed the first time.
- Students who have special needs should notify the program coordinator at least two weeks before the date of exam.

- The written comprehensive exam will be offered in a computer lab where students can access Microsoft Word software. Internet access will not be allowed during the examination.

On the date of the exam

- The student should arrive at the test site at least ten minutes before the exam to make preparations. The student is responsible for any consequence caused by check-in and unexcused lateness.
- The student has four hours to complete the written comprehensive exam.
- The exam consists of three essay questions and one case study. The student will choose two of the three questions to respond to. The case study is pre-selected by the program faculty. All students respond to the case study.
- The exam is individual work, so the student may not engage in a conversation or any other form of communication with other students during the exam.
- The exam is proctored by program faculty. Students are not allowed to use other materials when working on the essay questions and case study. Answers must adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty.
- The student will work on a computer in the SOE computer lab. She/he is expected to submit a hard copy of the exam upon completion. A printer will be available in the exam room.
- The answers should follow the Sixth Edition of APA Guidelines. The answer to each question and case study should be between three and six pages in length, doubled-spaced, in twelve point font, and in Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman.
- Students should cite studies and literature to support their assertions. However, some imprecision in citation (author names, dates of publication) will not decrease students evaluations. There is also no expectation that written answers will include a reference section.
- Students must be sure to include name, date, and page numbers on each page of the exam.
- After the exam, following successful completion of the comprehensive exam. The signed form will be

GRADUATE PROJECT (PLAN C)

sent to the program coordinator, who will transmit the form to the Office of Graduate Studies.

- Students will be notified of the result within three weeks after the exam.

If you want to switch to Plan B (from Plan A or C)

- Communicate with your program advisor and M.S. coordinator about your decision to change your program of study to Plan B.
- Print out and fill in the form “Petition,” available at: <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/forms/default.aspx>.
- Email form “Petition” to Kelli Schreiner at kjschreiner@stcloudstate.edu. She will attain signature needed and forward to School of Graduate Studies for final approval. They will email you once approved.
- Register for HIED 684 in order to graduate in Plan B. This will occur in the semester in which you are taking the Written Comprehensive Examination (WCE).
- Take two offerings of HIED 664.
- Be sure to schedule to take the WCE when it is being offered. You will receive a message from the M.S. coordinator at least one month before the scheduled date of the WCE.
- Be sure to be included in the list of students taking the WCE.



What is a graduate project?

In a graduate project, the candidate provides a rationale for a specific product that is based on a comprehensive review of the research and consultation with experts in the field. This product takes a wide variety of forms, such as a curriculum, a workshop or program, a guidebook, a video, a website, etc. The project must: 1) relate directly to the candidate’s program; 2) contribute something new and/or significant to the student’s institution, and 3) be based on a review of the research and, if appropriate, a needs assessment.

How does a graduate project differ from a thesis?

A project, although just as rigorous, contributes to the student’s institution and is more locally focused. In a thesis, the candidate designs a research study, collects and analyzes the data, and discusses the results. In other words, the candidate conducts an empirical study of topic. A thesis contributes to the field (Higher Education Administration). For further details, please see the thesis section of this guide.

Procedures for Project (Plan C)

Proposal

The first step in the project process is the development of a proposal. A proposal is an outline of what the project will look like. It should include an introduction, literature review, and proposed methodology (Chapters 1, 2, and 3). It should also include a proposed timeline. The proposal is required for the preliminary conference with your committee.

Project Preliminary Conference

Once the proposal has been prepared and approved by the committee chair, students must arrange for a preliminary oral exam conference. This preliminary conference may be scheduled after the student has been fully accepted into a graduate program, if the graduate grade point average is at least 3.0, and after the student’s program of study has been approved by the graduate dean. The student may need to contact Ann Anderson at aeanderson@stcloudstate.edu to verify preliminary conference eligibility.

It is recommended that the preliminary oral exam take

place at the conclusion of HIED 694. The preliminary oral exam must occur at least one semester prior to the final defense. These conferences are not typically scheduled during final examination week or during the summer.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule committee members for a preliminary conference and to ensure a room is reserved in the Education Building with assistance from the department secretary (Phone: 320-308-3131). At least two weeks prior to the preliminary conference, one copy of the proposal is submitted to Ann Anderson in the School of Graduate Studies along with the date, time, and location of the preliminary conference and a list of the committee chair and members. Once the School of Graduate Studies reviews this information and the proposal, the appropriate paperwork is sent to the project committee chair. Each committee member must also receive a copy of the proposal at least one week prior to the preliminary conference. Students should ask their committee members whether they prefer a paper or electronic copy of the proposal.

The School of Graduate Studies will independently distribute a report of preliminary evaluation to the student's committee chair. A student may continue with Plan C when each committee member approves the proposed project by signing and returning the preliminary evaluation report to the School of Graduate Studies.

Final Oral Defense

When the project is complete and approved by the committee chair, the student is ready for a final oral defense. A final oral defense is required of all students whose Plan C programs of study require the completion of a project. Students who have earned less than a 3.0 grade point average in the major, over their entire program, and in all graduate credits earned are not permitted to complete the final oral examination.

The student must prepare a summary of the materials to be included in the project. If the material is a single comprehensive project, the summary should be in the form of an abstract. The project (chapters 1-5 and the product) must be submitted to the committee chair at least two weeks prior to the date set for the final defense. The department may exercise its option to

retain any or all materials prepared for the professional project. Students will register for HIED 684 Project/eFolio Design in the semester in which the preliminary or final oral exam is planned.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule the final oral defense with their committee members once given approval by the committee chair. The final oral cannot be held in the same semester as the preliminary oral. Final orals generally are not scheduled during the final examination week or during the summer. Once scheduled, the student must notify the School of Graduate Studies to allow the paperwork for the conference to be prepared. Send these final conference details by E-mail to Ann Anderson in Graduate Studies aanderson@stcloudstate.edu.

- The final defense is conducted by the committee, consisting of three members. Membership consists of the same committee that served on the preliminary exam conference.
- A majority vote of the final evaluation committee is required to pass the final defense.
- A candidate who fails the final oral defense in the first attempt may, with the approval of the advisor, take the examination a second time, but the candidate may not retake the final oral defense during the same semester in which the defense was failed. A third chance to pass the defense is not permitted. The specific requirements vary according to the nature of the project submitted.
- Once you pass your final oral defense, remind your advisor to submit a grade/change of grade for the project/eFolio. A mark of "S" is recorded for an approved project/eFolio.
- The School of Graduate Studies does not bind projects (Plan C).



Chapter One - Introduction

1. Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide a context that supports the rationale for the proposed project. The introduction is intended to lead the reader into an understanding that there is a specific need or problem that should be addressed.

2. Statement of Need/Problem

This section states what is needed and why. Be sure to state credible reasons and/or cite literature to support the statement of need.

3. Purpose of Graduate Project

This is the most important section of the project. Everything - the research you review, your creative process in developing the project, the project itself - should be connected to and a result of your identified purpose. This section states succinctly your purpose in creating this graduate project. This section should also include a brief description of the proposed project.

4. Definition of Terms

This section provides definitions of critical terms or concepts specific to your project. These definitions should be based on scholarly research and other scholarly work. The sources should be cited using APA format. If scholars define a term in different ways, include a brief discussion of the different perspectives, and indicate which definition will be adopted in the project and the rationale.

5. Summary

The final section summarizes chapter one, provides a description of how the graduate project is organized, and provides a bridge to the review of the literature and the remainder of the graduate project.

Chapter Two - Literature Review

1. Introduction

The purpose of the literature review is to explore research on issues that are relevant to the proposed project. Briefly list and preview the critical issues in the order in which they will be discussed in the review. The subheadings of the subsequent sections of the review

should reflect the project.

2. Literature Review

Review the research on each issue. In this process, you should:

- Use the most recent version of the APA style manual for formatting the prose and citing sources. Citations must be accurate and must indicate when you paraphrase and when you use a direct quote.
- In addition to discussing the major findings of relevant studies, the student should cite pertinent information about how the study was conducted. Include number of participants in the study, the characteristics of participants, and what types of instruments and methods were used (e.g., not the specific names of tests or other instruments, but whether they were interviewed, responded to questionnaires, tested, observed, etc.). The synopsis should also mention any major weaknesses in the study design.

3. Synthesis of Literature Review

Synthesize major findings of the research related to your proposed project and discuss whether the research:

- supports the development of the proposed project
- indicates how the project should be structured and implemented
- includes evaluations of products that are similar to the proposed project and how the proposed project differs from, or improves upon, existing similar products or projects

4. Summary

The final section of the second chapter summarizes the review of literature and provides a bridge to chapter three.

Chapter Three – Project Audience and Implementation Factors

1. Introduction

Indicate that this graduate project presents a product or project that, according to the research, or institution, is needed. Briefly delineate the organization of the chapter.

2. Development of Project

Describe your process (or method) in developing the project. How was the project developed (e.g., how was

the handbook designed)? What steps did you take from initially deciding you wanted to develop a particular project to its final creation?

3. Intended Audience

Identify the target population for the product or project. Describe the relevant demographics of the intended group (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity or race, language proficiency, etc.). Also describe any relevant conditions (e.g., persons of a specific ethnicity, persons in a specific career or decision-point in their lives, etc.). If relevant, discuss the group or type of person for whom the project would be inappropriate.

4. Personal Qualifications

Describe your qualifications for developing this product. Detail the training and experiences that qualify you to develop such a product or complete this project. Describe other important skills needed, in addition to professional training, licenses, and degrees, such as proficiency in a language other than English. For example, “Employed in the academic affairs office for 10 years, my duties and responsibilities include working with and orienting new adjunct faculty....”

5. Environment and Equipment

Describe the attributes of the physical space in which the product or process is to be used or take place (e.g., a quiet room) or special equipment needed (e.g., PowerPoint projector). For example, “The handbook will be available in the online environment only...the following software and technological requirements to access and utilize the interactive elements of the handbook follow:...”

6. Project Outline

Provide an outline of the content, activities, and procedures that comprise the proposed project. For example, “The handbook will include 12 sections, each reviewing....”

7. Human Subjects Approval – Institutional Review Board (IRB)

If the project needs approval from the Institutional Review Board, supply these documents. This section outlines how the rights of human subjects will be protected, if appropriate. For more information <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/irb/default.aspx>

8. Summary

The final section summarizes chapter three and provides a bridge to chapter four.

Chapter Four – Product

1. Introduction

Reiterate the statement of need and the purpose of the project. Describe the organization of the chapter contents.

2. Product

Chapter four consists of a fully developed product or the product may be placed in the appendix. If the product is placed in the appendix, an executive summary will be placed in this chapter. For example, a fully developed curriculum, handbook, workshop, or video.

3. Summary

This section summarizes chapter four and provides a bridge to chapter five.

Chapter Five – Discussion

1. Introduction

Summarize the preceding four chapters, starting with the purpose of the project. You may use this summary as your abstract, although some students prefer to write an elaborated summary here. State the organization of the chapter as a bridge to the discussion.

2. Evaluation

Some chairs may want you to evaluate your project by sharing it with individuals who may use the product once it is complete. This could be accomplished in a variety of ways. You could assemble a panel of three or more individuals to examine and evaluate the project, or you could conduct an evaluation in which you collect data showing the project’s effectiveness.

In the next two sections, you have the opportunity to write from your own voice and reflect on what you have learned.

3. Discussion and Conclusions

Discuss your project and the results of your evaluation. Did you make changes in your project or product based upon the comments of the individuals you shared the product with? Why or why not? Draw conclusions from

your work. For example, based upon your knowledge of the field, you may conclude that adjuncts need certain types of information presented to them in particular ways depending on their field, whether or not classes to be taught are fully online, blended, or on campus.

4. Future Work/Research

Identify what work needs to be done in the future. How are you going to use your project? For example, you may want to do one of the following:

- Offer a class that incorporates the product
- Design an evaluation instrument for participant feedback
- Conduct a study to determine the effectiveness of the product
- Develop a curriculum and publish it
- Determine if your workshop design could be used in other academic environments
- Identify research questions, through your literature review, that need to be answered and discuss how you would answer these questions

5. Summary

Briefly summarize the contents of chapter five.

References

Provide a complete list of all the items cited in the project. Do not include items that were reviewed but not cited in the body of the project.

Appendix(es)

Each appendix should be listed A, B, C.... Include the original of your approved Human Subjects Protocol if appropriate, as well as other items. Items should be in the order they are presented in the body of your project/eFolio.

What is a graduate eFolio?

In a graduate eFolio, the candidate provides evidence to his/her committee that s/he has mastered the Higher Education Administration competencies and dispositions, in addition to providing other pertinent documents for review and assessment. The eFolio is created and submitted using an electronic platform provided by the MnSCU system <http://www.efoliominnesota.com/>.

How does a graduate eFolio differ from a graduate project?

An eFolio, although just as rigorous, provides specific documentation related to the student's work in and out of the classroom, over the time spent in the Higher Education Administration program – it is evidence-based. The artifacts presented in the eFolio are related to student's graduate coursework and the student's full- or part-time work while enrolled in the program. Service projects are also appropriate for the eFolio.





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Procedures for eFolio (Plan C)

Proposal

The first step in the eFolio process is the development of a proposal. A proposal is an outline of what the eFolio will look like. It should include the design of the eFolio, the major links of the outline, at least two-three completed competencies and proposed artifacts, and other documents ready for the committee to view. The student will work closely with his/her committee chair on the proposal. The proposal is required for the preliminary conference with your committee. All committee members will be send the eFolio website.

eFolio Preliminary Conference

Once the proposal has been prepared and approved by the committee chair, students must arrange for a preliminary oral exam conference. This preliminary conference may be scheduled after the student has been fully accepted into a graduate program, if the graduate grade point average is at least 3.0, and after the student's program of study has been approved by the graduate dean. The student may need to contact Ann Anderson at aeanderson@stcloudstate.edu to verify preliminary conference eligibility.

It is recommended that the preliminary oral exam take place at the conclusion of HIED 694. The preliminary oral exam conference must occur at least one semester prior to the final defense. These conferences are not typically scheduled during final examination week or during the summer.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule committee members for a preliminary conference and to ensure

320-308-3131). At least two weeks prior to the preliminary conference, the student should contact Ann Anderson in the School of Graduate Studies aeanderson@stcloudstate.edu to submit the date, time, and location of the preliminary conference and a list of the committee chair and members. Once the School of Graduate Studies reviews this information and the eFolio outline, the appropriate paperwork is sent to the thesis committee chair. Each committee member must also receive the eFolio proposal at least one week prior to the preliminary conference - students send the eFolio address (hotlink) to the committee members.

The School of Graduate Studies will independently distribute a report of preliminary evaluation to the student's committee chair. A student may continue with Plan C when each committee member approves the proposed project by signing and returning the preliminary evaluation report to Ann Anderson in the School of Graduate Studies.

eFolio Final Oral Defense

When the eFolio is complete and approved by the chair, the student is ready for a final oral defense. A final oral defense is required of all students whose Plan C programs of study require the completion of an eFolio. Students who have earned less than a 3.0 grade point average in the major, over their entire program, and in all graduate credits earned, are not permitted to complete the final oral examination.

The website of the completed eFolio must be submitted to the committee chair at least two weeks prior to the date set for the final defense. The department may exercise its option to retain any or all materials prepared for the professional eFolio. Students will register for HIED 684 Project/ eFolio Design in the semester in which the preliminary or final oral exam is planned. If the student registers for HIED 684 for the preliminary oral exam, an IP will be given that semester, until the completion of the final oral defense, at which time the grade will be changed.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule the final oral defense with their committee members. The final oral cannot be held in the same semester as the preliminary oral. Final orals generally are not scheduled during the final examination week or during the summer. Once scheduled, the student must notify the School of Graduate Studies to allow the paperwork for the conference to be prepared. Send these final conference details via E-mail to Ann Anderson at aeanderson@stcloudstate.edu.

- The final defense is conducted by the committee, consisting of three members. Membership consists of the same committee that served on the preliminary exam conference.
- A majority vote of the final evaluation committee is required to pass the final defense.
- A candidate who fails the final oral defense in the first attempt may, with the approval of the advisor, take the examination a second time, but the candidate may not retake the final oral defense during the same semester in which the defense was failed. A third chance to pass the defense is not permitted. The specific requirements vary according to the nature of the project submitted.
- Once you pass your final oral defense, remind your advisor to submit a grade/change of grade for the eFolio if necessary.

Graduate eFolio Outline (Plan C)

Students will concentrate on the HIED competencies and dispositions as they develop their eFolio. Students completing the eFolio must include all of the following sections in the eFolio. Once the final oral defense is complete, according to MnSCU, students will have access to their eFolio for one year, free of charge, and may alter it they wish during that year. To extend access

to the site a nominal fee is charged by MnSCU. The eFolio is particularly useful as graduates of the Higher Education Administration seek new or first positions in the field.

Section 1: Updated resume – this allows the committee to view the student's past and current educational, professional, and service activities and achievements. An updated resume also allows students to immediately apply for new positions once their graduate degree is conferred.

Section 2: Leadership competencies – the list that contains all fourteen leadership competencies must be uploaded to this section – students will use the list found in this Program Handbook.

Matrix of alignment between competencies and courses – the matrix must be uploaded to this section to provide the committee with an overview of how the courses are aligned with the competencies – students will use the matrix found in this Program Handbook.

Section 3: Leadership Philosophy Paper – The student will write a 7-10 page double-spaced paper, in APA format using references, presenting his/her philosophy/framing of issues of leadership for a 21st century college/university administrator. The student is expected to provide a synopsis of critical readings and analysis of relevant literature.

Section 4: Individual competency overviews and artifacts – Each of the fourteen competencies will be presented on a separate link (webpage). For each competency the student will include:

- A one page overview of the competency including assessment of personal growth in the competency (review your PDP), beginning with a theoretical framework and ending with application to practice. This overview should contain a reference section and should be written using APA format.
- Two - three artifacts that provide evidence that demonstrates progress within/towards the competency. The artifacts should be original work done by the student (if the student co-authored an artifact s/he should explain his/her part in the artifact). Artifacts can be taken from graduate course work, the student's full-time or part-time

work while enrolled in the program, or applicable service conducted from the time the student entered the program.

Section 5: Reflection Paper – The student will write a 3-5 page double-spaced paper, in APA format using references, presenting a critical reflection on his/her engagement in the program and courses, connections to personal growth, reflection on HIED dispositions, and next steps (educational and professional).

Section 6: Practicum: The student will include the information about his/her practicum site, goals, projects worked on, and reflections.

Section 7: Other documents, artifacts, etc. – The student may include in this section anything else s/he would like the committee to review that is related to the educational or professional field of higher education. For example, the student could include a complete list of references cited in the eFolio, or an award that the student received while in the program.

Section 8: eFolio rubric – The student should include the eFolio rubric in this section. The eFolio rubric will be obtained from the committee chair.





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Disclaimer— The most current edition supersedes all previous versions of SCSU's Educational Administration & Leadership Ed.D. Program Handbook. Please check the program website for the most recent version. Every effort was made to ensure that information in this program handbook was accurate at the time of publication. All policies and other information are subject to change without notice and do not constitute an irrevocable contract between any student and St. Cloud State University.

Alternative Formats—Requests for the Program Handbook in alternative formats may be made by contacting the Office of Student Life and Development in Atwood Memorial Center 219, or by calling 320.308.3111.