

## MHPE Thesis Guidelines

### OVERVIEW

The MHPE thesis is intended to be a capstone for the program, providing students the opportunity to synthesize, extend, and apply the knowledge and competencies they have developed during the program. All students must complete a thesis, defined as a work of scholarship, following Boyer's (1990) and Glassick's (1997) conceptions of the nature and standards for scholarship. These three types of scholarship, applicable to all disciplines and reflecting the actual work of faculty are: the scholarship of discovery ("original research"), of integration (searching for connections among discoveries obtained by different approaches or disciplines), and of application (application of knowledge to consequential problems). The standards for excellence, applicable to all types of scholarship, are: clear and important goals, adequate preparation in the pertinent literature and scholarship methodologies, appropriate methods used appropriately, significant results, effective presentation, and reflective critique.

### PROCESS SEQUENCE

#### Brainstorming

- Students should keep the thesis in mind, from the beginning of their MHPE work and as they progress through the program, and in the beginning, keep an open mind about possibilities.
- Students may have preliminary discussions about possible thesis topics and potential advisors with the Director of Graduate Studies at any point during their MHPE work.
- Students may talk with any faculty member as they formulate ideas about the thesis.
- As students complete their final core course, or preferably earlier, they should focus their proposed inquiry, with the goal of having an approved thesis proposal by the end of the semester following their last core course.

#### Pre-proposal

The student prepares a two- to three-page pre-proposal, which describes the problem, question or topic and method of inquiry and includes a preliminary bibliography

#### Committee Selection

- Upon selecting a thesis topic, students identify potential advisors to serve as the thesis committee chair. The Director of Graduate Studies can help identify appropriate advisors.
- The student contacts the potential advisor, seeking preliminary commitment. The advisor will not commit finally until after reviewing the student's pre-proposal (2-3 pages).
- Following pre-proposal review and advisor commitment, the student and advisor select the other two committee members. The student contacts potential

committee members to seek their involvement and sends them the pre-proposal for review.

### Proposal

The student prepares a full proposal (10-15 pages) and, after committee review and feedback, convenes a meeting of the thesis committee for final review and approval of the plan.

### IRB Approval

The student takes the Investigator 101 course, prepares IRB forms as applicable, and obtains IRB approval before collecting data.

### Thesis Development

The student and committee chair negotiate a process for review of the developing thesis.

### Thesis Defense

When the student and committee chair are satisfied that the thesis meets Program standards, the student coordinates scheduling a public defense. The defense should be scheduled so that all members of the committee have time to review the thesis and provide feedback prior to the public defense.

### Graduation

Upon satisfactory completion of all course requirements and successful defense of the thesis, the student is eligible for graduation.

## **PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

### Proposal Timing

Students are required to have an approved thesis proposal by the end of the semester following completion of the last core course. Students who do not have an approved thesis proposal by the end of the second semester after completion of core courses will be required to petition the Graduate Studies Committee to remain in the program.

### Proposal Elements

Proposal elements are outlined in the Proposal Form (see Appendix).

### Proposal Development

The student submits proposal elements for review and feedback by the committee chair and other committee members during the development process.

### Proposal Hearing

After submitting the full proposal for review by the full committee, the student schedules a proposal hearing. The hearing may be held with all of the committee members in the same meeting place or may be held with all or some members communicating via phone.

## COMMITTEE REQUIREMENTS

### Committee Membership

- All thesis committees must have at least three members.
- Two members must be DME faculty members; the third member can be a faculty member from the student's home institution or an appropriate faculty member from another institution.
- Significant changes in the thesis plan may require changes in committee membership.

### Communications

- Students must initiate and maintain regular contact with the committee chair about their thesis progress and plans. If the student makes insufficient progress, the situation will be assessed by the committee chair and the Director of Graduate Studies and the committee may be disbanded.
- Students must report on progress at least by the end of each January and June. The progress report should be sent to the Committee Chair, the Program Director (ibharris@uic.edu), and the Program Coordinator (jsettle@uic.edu). A Progress Report Form and reminder will be sent to all students working on the thesis.

## IRB REQUIREMENTS

### Training Course

An IRB training course is required of all principal investigators seeking IRB approval. The course can be taken either on-campus or online. Complete information about initial and subsequent training requirements may be found on the Web at <http://www.research.uic.edu/protocolreview/irb/education/index.shtml>. On-campus training dates can be found at <http://www.research.uic.edu/protocolreview/irb/education/initial.shtml#calendar>. Online training courses can be accessed at <http://www.research.uic.edu/protocolreview/irb/education/citi.shtml>.

### IRB Approval

- After the thesis committee approves the proposal, the student must apply for IRB approval, if applicable.
- The forms are available on the Web at [http://tigger.uic.edu/depts/ovcr/research/protocolreview/irb/getting\\_started.shtml](http://tigger.uic.edu/depts/ovcr/research/protocolreview/irb/getting_started.shtml). Students should consult with the advisor about which forms to complete. This will depend upon the work outlined in the proposal.
- Both the student and the faculty advisor will need to sign the forms.
- Students send draft IRB forms to the advisor electronically or by fax for review. These forms will be reviewed first by the thesis chair and then by the departmental Human Subjects Committee chair.
- After revisions and final approval, the student signs the signature page and mails the entire packet to the Program Coordinator. The forms must be accompanied by

the approved proposal and the IRB approval letter from any other institutions where data will be collected.

### IRB Review Process

- IRB forms will be reviewed first by the departmental Human Subjects committee chair, then by the university IRB. Students may be asked to clarify or change parts of the proposal or application.
- The process may take anywhere from two weeks to two months, so time must be budgeted accordingly. Students may begin data collection **ONLY AFTER** receiving IRB approval, if applicable.

### Maintaining IRB Approval

- Students involved in human subjects research must complete a minimum of two hours of continuing education in human subjects protection every two years. Information about obtaining approved continuing education credits can be found at <http://tigger.uic.edu/depts/ovcr/research/protocolreview/irb/education/continuing.shtml>
- All changes in IRB-approved research require submission of an amendment form (<http://tigger.uic.edu/depts/ovcr/research/protocolreview/irb/forms/index.shtml>). The amendment form should not only list all proposed changes, but should provide the reason or justification for the changes.
- If thesis research will continue beyond the expiration date assigned by the IRB, the student must submit a Continuing Review form (<http://tigger.uic.edu/depts/ovcr/research/protocolreview/irb/forms/index.shtml>).
- Students must submit a Final Research Report form (<http://tigger.uic.edu/depts/ovcr/research/protocolreview/irb/forms/index.shtml>) within 30 days after the thesis defense.

## **THESIS FORMAT**

### Format Options

- Monograph. The monograph is the traditional thesis format.
- Publishable paper. Students may elect to produce a thesis in the form of a publishable paper. The paper need not actually be accepted for publication to meet thesis completion requirements, but it must be evaluated by the committee as of the quality to merit publication.

### Format Requirements

- With either the monograph or publishable paper format, the student follows the same process – writing a pre-proposal, forming a committee, preparing a thesis proposal, completing the thesis work, and holding a defense hearing. In both cases, students must prepare an appropriate literature review. Students preparing a publishable paper may be required to provide a more extensive literature review and more in-depth data analysis discussion and tables than ultimately appear in the publishable paper.

- The monograph's form must conform to the formatting conventions detailed in the Graduate College Thesis Manual. The link to this document is at <http://grad.uic.edu/cms/?pid=1000027>.
- For the publishable paper option, the manuscript must be approved by all thesis committee members as ready for submission to a high quality refereed journal. Students must specify the journal targeted for submission. The manuscript should be formatted as required by the targeted journal. However, for submission to the Graduate College, students must prepare the prefatory material (e.g., title page, table of contents, etc.) and CV as outlined in the Graduate College Thesis Manual.

## **THESIS DEFENSE**

### Defense Scheduling

- Scheduling is coordinated by the student.
- Students should ensure that all committee members have adequate time to review the thesis, provide feedback, and receive copies of all revisions.

### Defense Format

- All thesis defenses will be public. A public defense is itself an educational experience. When students and/or committee members cannot be present in DME, the defense can be done by speaker phone.
- The following defense sequence is recommended: 1) presentation by the student; 2) committee questions; 3) audience questions; 4) committee deliberation (with student and audience out of the room)

## **GRADUATE COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS**

### Time Requirements

The Graduate College requires that students complete all program requirements within five years of matriculation.

### Approvals

Several signed forms must accompany the thesis copies submitted to the Graduate College. The forms are: 1) Certificate of Approval; 2) Examination Report; and 3) Format Approval.

### Thesis Copies

Two complete copies of the thesis, plus two extra title pages, all printed on bond paper, must be submitted to the Graduate College with the signed approval forms. In addition, students must supply additional copies, preferably bound, for each committee member and the DME Library, plus one unbound copy on any paper for the student file.

## Appendix

### MHPE Thesis Proposal Form

Each graduate student must submit this form immediately after his/her committee's approval of the project or thesis. See guidelines for Thesis Proposal on back side. Approval should be granted prior to beginning project or thesis work; avoid completing this form halfway through or at the end of the work. Note that if your thesis involves human subjects, you also need to submit a UIC Institutional Review Board form to DME's Human Subjects Committee.

**Student Name:**

	Name	Department
<b>Committee</b>	Chair (1): _____	
	Members (2): _____	
	_____	
	_____	

*(P.S. Give full address if member is from outside UIC.)*

**Title** (maximum is 105 characters including spaces):

**Date of committee's approval** of project or thesis:

Does your project or thesis involve **human subjects**?

No

Yes Include UIC Institutional Review Board forms

Expected semester of **defense**:

Please attach a copy of your project or thesis proposal using the guidelines on the back of this page.

*(MHPE, DME, UIC 1/00)*

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE MHPE THESIS PROPOSAL**

Title of Thesis

I. The Study Problem

- A. Introduction to the problem that briefly describes the problem and why it is worthy of investigation.
- B. Statement of the problem
- C. Specific questions to be addressed
- D. Brief statement of need and significance
- E. Definition of terms, if necessary
- F. Expected outcome or results

II. Review of Relevant Literature

Discussion of literature to be reviewed, how it is related to the problem and specification of the relationship between the proposed study and other work on the topic

III. Methodology

- A. Design, including hypotheses if applicable, and rationale
- B. Description of study setting
- C. Specification of subjects or population, sample, and sampling procedures, if applicable
- D. Data collection, as applicable
  - 1. Instruments to be used or developed, including an assessment of their quality
  - 2. Descriptions of data collection procedures, including ethical considerations

IV. Data Analysis

V. Limitations (e.g., specification of the study boundaries)

VI. Timetable

VII. Appendices

- A. Instruments
- B. IRB forms including human subjects consent form for both UIC and home institution
- C. Letters requesting institutional permission for data collection, if applicable

A maximum of 15 pages should provide an adequate description of the proposed thesis or project. The candidate may rearrange items in each broad category of this Guideline as best benefits a clear, concise description of the proposed study.