

Department of Health and Human Performance
Best Practices Compendium: 1.02
Developed: Spring, 2012
Revised:
Review Cycle: **May 1, every 3 years**
Review Date:
Reviewer: The HHP Voting Faculty

Mentorship of Thesis &
Culminating Project
(30 paragraphs)

Mentorship of Thesis and Culminating Project

Table of Contents

Preface

Principles

Principle 1	Mentorship of Thesis
Principle 2	Petitioning and Qualifying to Write a Thesis
Principle 3	Approval to Write a Thesis
Principle 4	Supervising an Honors Thesis
Principle 5	Thesis Progress and Discontinuation
Principle 6	Publication Originating from a Thesis
Principle 7	Joint Publication Originating from a Thesis: Establishing an Agreement or a Contract
Principle 8	Thesis Completion Requirement Separate from Publication
Principle 9	Fallow Student Data

References

Appendices

Appendix 1	Maxims: Faculty
Appendix 2	Maxims: Student
Appendix 3	Thesis Process Checklist
Appendix 4	Thesis and Research Agreement
Appendix 5	Authorship Determination Rating Guide

Preface

0.01 Graduate students in the Department of Health and Human Performance are encouraged to write a thesis both as a path towards academic and professional self-development and also as an instigation to cultivate practices and attitudes of active engagement in the collective act of building and rebuilding the body of knowledge.

0.02 Writing a thesis requires that a student work under the guidance of a faculty supervisor. Supervision is a multi-faceted task that involves the faculty member engaging

simultaneously in multiple roles: as instructor, academic advisor, counselor, research consultant, professional liaison, and so on. It is a demanding and extended undertaking.

0.03 In an effort to foster or maintain an environment of effective mentoring, the Department of Health and Human Performance presents the following insights to aid, motivate and guide its faculty, students and staff towards best practices.

Principles

Principle 1: Mentorship of Thesis

1.01 A student usually comes under independent supervision of a faculty member through registration in courses such as directed study, independent study, thesis or dissertation. Usually, a student approaches the faculty member in order to establish an agreement about supervision for the respective course.

1.02 Supervision of a thesis is coupled with the idea of mentorship. Requirements and demands of the role of thesis supervisor often transcend those expected in managing standard course work. Thesis supervision involves invested leadership by the mentor and also involves a greater degree of dependence on the leadership of the mentor by the mentee.

1.03 The exclusive demands of thesis supervision thus require a unique level of commitment by the faculty member and acceptance to mentor represents a significant investment of self. In preparation to supervise, an intending thesis mentor should reflect on this.

1.04 Faculty mentors of theses generally enter the relationship in a *supportive* capacity. The primary intent is and should be leading the student to a successful accomplishment of that student's manifest goal of completing the thesis. There are attendant needs, however, that will have to be met along the way. This goal-oriented, but supportive function should be reflected upon consistently throughout the project.

Principle 2: Petitioning and Qualifying to Write a Thesis

2.01 While graduate students are encouraged to write a graduate thesis, it should not always be assumed that a student who approaches a faculty member to request thesis supervision will arrive fully prepared to undertake the project of thesis development and writing.

2.02 Requirements in the following paragraphs should be addressed to determine if a graduate student should be considered eligible to go forward in writing the graduate thesis.

2.02.1 The graduate student should be in good academic standing with the Graduate College and the Division of interest. Good academic standing is a condition that is determined by the Graduate College on the one hand and by the faculty and Coordinator of the individual division on the other.

2.02.2 The graduate student should, preferably, have received formal instruction in a research methodology course in order to proceed to proposing and writing the graduate thesis.

2.02.3 If there is concern about writing ability, it should be required that the graduate student complete the department's 1-hour technical writing workshop.¹

[This paragraph to be kept if approved; to be deleted if not.]

Principle 3: Approval to Write a Thesis

3.01 As has been suggested above, a graduate student typically must identify a thesis supervisor/chair who would be willing to oversee the thesis. Under direction of that supervisor/chair, it is suggested that an initial written and oral research proposal be conducted. The initial proposal should outline the purpose of the study, its problem statement, research questions, proposed strategies for data collection and analysis, and sources of data needed for the study and development of the thesis.

3.02 Following initial development of the thesis as described in 3.01 above, it should be determined by the graduate student's supervisor whether the student can be recommended to proceed with a graduate thesis and constitute a thesis committee (i.e. constituted in consultation with the supervisor). A form should be signed by the supervisor/chair and the program Coordinator and then placed in the student's file.

3.03 If the student is not recommended to proceed with a thesis, at least two options are possible:

1) The student could register to take classes that will make her/him eligible (e.g. as described above, research methodology, technical writing classes) and reapply to be granted thesis eligibility upon completion of those courses.

2) She/he could opt to complete the degree under the non-thesis option.

Principle 4: Supervising an Honors Thesis

4.01 Supervision of an honors thesis to be completed by an undergraduate student who is registered in Honors College should proceed in accordance with agreements between the supervisor and Honors College.

¹ It is suggested that a department-wide 1 credit hour technical writing class or writing workshop be established.

4.02 In addition and if not in contradiction to agreements set up between the faculty member and Honors College, it is suggested that applicable actions in Principles 2 and 3 above be taken into consideration.

Principle 5: Thesis Progress and Discontinuation

5.01 A thesis graduate student who has not demonstrated adequate progress in *Thesis A* (the first of two required thesis courses) should not be allowed to register for *Thesis B*.

Principle 6: Publication Originating from a Thesis

6.01 Sometimes a publication is part of the arrangement set up for completion of a thesis. At other times, a publication is an extra outcome which emerges later in the project.

6.02 Publication of thesis work--as are publications originating from other research work--is generally considered important and desirable for its author(s). A publication is also important for the institution where the work was conducted.²

Principle 7: Joint Publication Originating from a Thesis: Establishing an Agreement or a Contract

7.01 Depending on the degree of contribution of a supervisor to the development of the thesis and proposed publication, the faculty supervisor might earn legitimate eligibility for joint authorship. Whenever joint authorship is a possibility, it is encouraged that a contract or agreement regarding roles and author order be developed.

7.02 A thesis is an academic project and it is thus usually carried out under the expectation architecture of a coursework. Consequently a contractual structure is already inherent in completion of a thesis and expectations are generally well spelled out that will lead to completion and fulfillment of academic requirements of the course. If a publication is designed as part of the set of expectations, but it is a one-student-only (primary researcher) publication, the course contract might be sufficient for managing the case. When the following conditions exist, however, it is suggested that an agreement or a contract be developed:

- A manuscript for publication, where both a student and her or his faculty supervisor will be co-authors, is to be prepared³
- A manuscript for publication where more than one author (which may or may not include the faculty supervisor) is to be prepared

² University of Alberta (1996).

³ While this condition has been highlighted, it can be subsumed under the second condition below it.

7.03 It is encouraged that co-authorship under any student-faculty collaboration be carried out with a sense of beneficence (the supervisor is mindful of ways to help the student further her or his academic or professional development and acts to effect those) and a sense of justice (the supervisor is mindful of fairness towards the student and acts accordingly, giving the student what is due her or him).⁴

7.04 An agreement or contract as described above should be created as early in the process as possible, once it is known that a publication is a possibility.

7.05 The contract should be jointly reviewed often and consistently throughout the project and appropriate modifications should be agreed upon along the way.

7.06 More detail about joint authorship (including faculty-student collaboration) can be found in the *Department of Health and Human Performance: Best Practices Compendium 1.01: Authorship of Published Work*.

Principle 8: Thesis Completion Requirement Separate from Publication

8.01 Unless it is part of the agreement/contract that a publication or conference presentation must be attempted or completed, these should be seen as separate and distinct from the project of completion of the master's (or bachelor's) degree associated with the thesis. In that case of separate and distinct goals, non-completion of a publication or conference presentation should not prevent recommendation of the student for the associated degree.

Principle 9: Fallow Student Data

9.01 If a student who has agreed to submit a manuscript for publication based on data gathered during a thesis or research study under supervision of a faculty member does not make adequate progress towards completing the manuscript after a given time frame (see Paragraph 8.02 below), the faculty supervisor may take charge of developing and submitting the manuscript for publication. Based on the amount of contribution the student has made to development of the modified or rewritten manuscript (including involvement in original research conceptualization, research design, data collection, data analysis and writing) the faculty member should include the student as first or secondary author.

9.02 The time frame for the faculty member to assume responsibility is recommended to be 6 months.

9.03 Details about fallow student data should be examined in the *Department of Health and Human Performance: Best Practices Compendium 1.01: Authorship of Published Work*.

⁴ Fine & Kurdek (1993).

References

- American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- Fine, M. A., & Kurdek, L. A. (1993). Reflections on determining authorship credit and authorship order on faculty-student collaborations. *American Psychologist*, *48*, 1141-1147.
- Fouche, F. J., & Louw, K. D. (1999). Authorship credit in supervisor-student collaboration: Assessing the dilemma in psychology. *South African Journal of Psychology*, *29*, 145-149.
- International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (2009). *Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals: Ethical considerations in the conduct and reporting of research: Authorship and contributorship*. Retrieved from http://icmje.org/ethical_1author.html
- Mentor. (n.d.). *Dictionary.com*. Retrieved from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mentor>
- Mentor. (n.d.). *Merriam-Webster: Dictionary*. Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>
- Roig, M. (2007). *A student-faculty research agreement*. Retrieved from <http://teachpsych.org/otrp/resources/index.php?category=Research%20and%20Teaching>
- University of Alberta (1996). Guidelines for authorship. In University of Alberta, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, *Graduate program manual*. Retrieved from <http://www.gradstudies.ualberta.ca/gradmanual/10.2.html>

Appendices

Appendix 1	Maxims: Faculty
Appendix 2	Maxims: Student
Appendix 3	Thesis Process Checklist
Appendix 4	Thesis, Culminating Project and Research Contract
Appendix 5	Authorship Determination Rating Guide

Appendix 1: Maxims: Faculty

Maxims: Faculty

1. The faculty member is and acts as a *mentor*:
 - (a) a trusted counselor or guide (Mentor, Webster's Dictionary)
 - (b) a wise and trusted counselor or teacher (Mentor, Dictionary.com)
 - (c) an influential senior sponsor or supporter (Mentor, Dictionary.com)
2. A mentor purposes (intends and seeks) success for the mentee.
3. An academic mentor is mindful of own superior creative and productive experience and considers the student's capabilities within that light.
4. An academic mentor is aware of own stance of power in relationship to the student.
5. A mentor facilitates establishment and continuation of an atmosphere of honest dialogue with a mentee.
6. A mentor reflects prior to entering a commitment or collaboration with a student that ability level varies among students and, based on insight about the ability level of the current student, determines degree of commitment she or he (i.e. mentor) is able or willing to devote.
7. A mentor is responsible for looking after own professional self and success, and ought to commit to the right actions to protect these. Compromise of own professional success is a loss to university, professional community, students and self.
8. A research mentor is a prudent steward of resources associated with (connected to) current research (e.g. equipment, data, values traditional to research practice).

Appendix 2: Maxims: Student

Maxims: Student

1. A student mentee should recognize own operational role as not superior to the mentor's.
2. A mentee ought to demonstrate respect for a mentor/supervisor's professional guidance and direction.
3. A mentee ought to recognize and reflect from time-to-time on the value of the devoted commitment of the mentor.
4. A student working in a professional collaboration with a faculty member ought to devote a significant and an adequate amount of effort to tasks sourcing from the collaboration.
5. While it is the prerogative of a student mentee to consult a third party in regard to the student's own project, the mentee ought not allow third-party interventions or infringements to interfere with professionally-directed processes of the research or project collaboration.

Appendix 3: Thesis Process Checklist

The following checklist was developed by Dr. Bob Pankey and Dr. John Walker of the Department of Health and Human Performance at Texas State University-San Marcos.

Thesis Process Checklist

Stage I: Initial Stage of Development and Registration for XX5399A

- ___ 1. Begin developing an original research question. This may involve consultation with numerous faculty members, as well as a preliminary review of the research literature on the prospective topic. The scientific merit of the study, as well as the reliability and validity of the data collection methods should be of primary concern. Prepare a 2-3 page summary of the project(s) you have in mind.
- ___ 2. Submit this summary to one or more graduate faculty members who might be interested in serving as your thesis advisor and Committee Chair. Extensive revisions and even rejection of proposed projects are likely. One graduate faculty member must agree to serve as the Committee Chair. Co-Chairs are allowable.
- ___ 3. Establish a thesis committee: at least two additional graduate faculty members who agree to serve on the thesis committee.
- ___ 4. Obtain approval and register for XX 5399A (ESS, AT, REC, or HED).
- ___ 5. The student should be familiar with all of the Graduate College guidelines for theses. Refer to www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/Thes-Diss_Info.html and download "Graduate College Guide to Preparing and Submitting a Thesis or Dissertation."

Stage II: Completion of Thesis Proposal

- ___ 6. During this first semester of the thesis project, prepare a complete thesis proposal in consultation with the thesis committee, particularly the Committee Chair. This usually includes three chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, and Methods. The Literature Review should be a minimum of ___ pages.
- ___ 7. If the proposed study involves human subjects, the student will also create a consent form appropriate for Institutional Review Board (IRB) submission. Refer to the checklist for the proper format for Texas State consent forms at: www.txstate.edu/research/orc/humans-in-research/checklist.html.
- ___ 8. When the complete thesis proposal and consent form is finished, submit paper copies of both to the Committee Chair. The Committee Chair will review the proposal and consent form for required revisions before submission to the thesis committee.
- ___ 9. Following any necessary revisions required by the Committee Chair, submit a paper copy of the complete thesis proposal and consent form to each committee member. The committee members will complete a review for required or requested revisions.

Stage III: Thesis Proposal Presentation

- ___ 10. Schedule a thesis committee meeting at least one week after the date that each committee member receives a paper copy of the thesis proposal. Post an announcement and invitation to faculty and graduate students to attend the proposal presentation meeting.
- ___ 11. Prepare a proposal presentation of approximately 45-50 minutes.
- ___ 12. Present the proposal to the thesis committee on the scheduled date. The committee members will submit their required or requested revisions at this time.
- ___ 13. Make the required and requested revisions to the proposal and consent form to the satisfaction of the thesis committee. Once all revisions are complete, the thesis

committee members, including the Committee Chair, will sign the Thesis Proposal Form.

Stage IV: Obtaining IRB Approval For Conducting Research

- ___ 14. Complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) online course. Refer to: www.txstate.edu/research/orc/humans-in-research.html for the requirements for Institutional Review Board (IRB) application.
- ___ 15. Submit an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application. For information, refer to: www.txstate.edu/research/orc/humans-in-research.html. Once the application process has started, the student will be given an IRB reference number. This reference number must be recorded on the Thesis Proposal Form.
- ___ 16. After all committee members have signed the Thesis Proposal Form and the IRB reference number has been recorded on the form, the Committee Chair will obtain the signature of the Department Chair on the form, then submit the Thesis Proposal Form to the Dean of the Graduate College for approval. This completes all requirements for the student to receive credit for XX 5399A.
- ___ 17. Complete the IRB application and make any revisions or changes to the IRB application or consent form that may be required from the IRB review committee. IRB approval must be received before the data collection stage can begin.
- ___ 18. Obtain approval and register for XX 5399B (ESS, AT, REC, or HED).

Stage V: Data Collection Proceedings and Registration for XX5399B

- ___ 19. Once IRB approval is received, data collection can proceed. The data must be collected according to the exact procedures in the Methods chapter of the thesis proposal, with guidance from the thesis committee. If IRB approval is received before the student registers for XX 5399B, this step can precede step # 18.
- ___ 20. File for a fee reduction if you are enrolled only in 5399B during your last semester. (See fee reduction information).

Stage VI: Examining The Data and Completing Chapters 4 & 5

- ___ 21. Once data collection is complete, the data should be recorded in an appropriate spreadsheet program for analysis. In consultation with the thesis committee, the data should be analyzed appropriately and the results, including text, tables, and figures, reported in Chapter 4/Manuscript as agreed upon by thesis committee.
- ___ 22. Once the results have been reported in Chapter 4, the fifth chapter (Discussion) or additional manuscript can be written.

Stage VII: Submission Of Thesis to Committee

- ___ 23. Submit a paper copy of the thesis to the Committee Chair one week prior to sending it to other committee members. The Committee Chair will review the results and discussion for required revisions before submission to the thesis committee.
- ___ 24. Following any necessary revisions required by the Committee Chair, submit a paper copy of the complete thesis to each committee member. The committee members will review the results and discussion for required or requested revisions.

Stage VIII: Scheduling The Thesis Defense

- ___ 25. Schedule a thesis committee meeting at least two weeks after the date that each committee member receives a paper copy of the thesis proposal, and at least two weeks before the deadline for submission to the Graduate College. Post an announcement and invitation to faculty and graduate students to attend the final defense committee meeting.
- ___ 26. Prepare a final defense presentation of approximately 45-50 minutes.
- ___ 27. Make the defense presentation to the thesis committee on the scheduled date. The committee members will submit their required or requested revisions and sign the Comprehensive Examination Report at this time.

Stage IX: Finalizing and Submitting The Thesis to Graduate College

- ___ 28. The Committee Chair will obtain the signature of the Department Chair and submit the Comprehensive Examination Report to the Graduate College.
- ___ 29. Make the required and requested revisions to the thesis to the satisfaction of the thesis committee. Once all revisions are complete, the thesis committee members, including the Committee Chair, will sign the required Signature Pages of the thesis.
- ___ 30. Format the final document according to the requirements of the Graduate College. Refer to www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/Thes-Diss_Info.html and download "Graduate College Guide to Preparing and Submitting a Thesis or Dissertation." When complete, submit the final copy of the thesis to the Graduate College before the semester deadline.
- ___ 31. Make all revisions to the final thesis as required by the Graduate College.
- ___ 32. Submit the revised and final copy of the complete thesis to the Alkek Library before the semester deadline.
- ___ 33. The Committee Chair will submit the student's grade for XX 5399B.

Appendix 4: Thesis, Culminating Project and Research Agreement

Thesis and Research Agreement

The contract below has been adapted from the following sources, listed in order of amount of material adapted from each original document:

Roig, M. (2007). *A student-faculty research agreement*. Retrieved from <http://teachpsych.org/otrp/resources/index.php?category=Research%20and%20Teaching>

Housman, J. (2011). *HED 4347-5347 - Independent Study in Health and Wellness Promotion Contract*. Unpublished document.

The purpose of this document is to formalize the terms of research collaborations between students and their mentor for the project described below. The **Thesis and Research Agreement** addresses some of the specific tasks, responsibilities, and other relevant issues associated with the conduct of scientific research (e.g., research ethics, data ownership, authorship, etc.). Please read and complete this form.

Title of Proposed Study: _____

Student Identification

Student Name: _____ Student Phone: _____ Student Major: _____	Student ID#: _____ Student e-mail: _____ Student Minor: _____
---	---

Course Identification

Course Number:
Course Name:
Course Description (e.g. from catalog):

Names of other students involved in project (each student should complete a separate Student-Faculty Agreement):

Name of Faculty Member or Project Supervisor: _____

Adequate description of research project (to be completed by the student):

To be completed by the supervising faculty member.

Independent study objectives:

Required textbooks, readings, or other materials:

Method of evaluation:

Agreement Statement

I, _____ recognize that scientific research is a labor-intensive enterprise that demands a high level of personal commitment, time, and effort. This is particularly true when the research project is being undertaken for academic credit or a professional goal (e.g. publication) and the project must be completed within a set time limit. By signing this document, I promise to dedicate the necessary time and effort to complete this project in accordance to a time and/or schedule agreed upon. I have reviewed our institution's academic integrity policies and I am fully aware of the seriousness of the issues and of the consequences of violating the policies. I will also uphold the principles of scientific integrity as laid out by the university and/or an identified relevant professional body (e.g. the APA). I recognize that any form of data falsification, data fabrication, or plagiarism in the conduct of research is an academically and professionally dishonest act. If this research project involves the recruitment and testing of human subjects, I agree to complete the university's approved course on protection of human subjects before commencing work on the project. Similarly, if the project involves using animals as subjects, I agree to take a tutorial on the use of animals as research subjects.

I shall also abide by the stipulation that all research data (e.g., questionnaires, data files, records, observations) from this project become the property of the institution (i.e. university) and will be retained by the faculty member, who will determine who and under what circumstances others may have access to such data. I also understand that authorship of any resulting conference presentation or journal article will depend on the extent of my contributions to this project as agreed upon with my faculty supervisor.

Student's signature _____ Date _____

Faculty member's or supervising
investigator's signature _____ Date _____

Appendix 5: Authorship Determination Rating Guide

The document below has been retrieved (and partially reformatted) from the following source:

Roig, M. (2007). *A student-faculty research agreement*. Retrieved from <http://teachpsych.org/otrp/resources/index.php?category=Research%20and%20Teaching>

Authorship Determination Rating Guide

Extent of Student Contribution to the Project (to be completed by faculty mentor)

Please circle the item that best describes the extent to which each of the following statements describes the student's performance in the project. Leave blank if not applicable.

Introduction

1	•	Conceptualized the study/origin of idea/hypothesis/variables	2	3	4	5
Not at all		To a little extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	

1	•	Carried out the literature search (identified relevant literature, retrieved articles, summarized articles)	2	3	4	5
Not at all		To a little extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	

Method

1	•	Made contributions to the research design	2	3	4	5
Not at all		To a little extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	

1	•	Constructed stimulus materials/Set up-calibrated study equipment/Carried out ratings	2	3	4	5
Not at all		To a little extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	

Data collection

1	•	Recruited and consented subjects	2	3	4	5
Not at all		To a little extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	

1	•	Ran subjects/Recorded observations	2	3	4	5
Not at all		To a little extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	

1	•	Debriefed subjects	2	3	4	5
Not at all		To a little extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	

Data analyses

1
Not at all

- Entered data in database

2 To a little extent 3 To a moderate extent 4 To a great extent 5 To a very great extent

1
Not at all

- Checked data for accuracy

2 To a little extent 3 To a moderate extent 4 To a great extent 5 To a very great extent

1
Not at all

- Contributed to data analysis decisions

2 To a little extent 3 To a moderate extent 4 To a great extent 5 To a very great extent

1
Not at all

- Carried out data analyses

2 To a little extent 3 To a moderate extent 4 To a great extent 5 To a very great extent

Writing

1
Not at all

- Wrote Introduction and literature review

2 To a little extent 3 To a moderate extent 4 To a great extent 5 To a very great extent

1
Not at all

- Wrote Methods section

2 To a little extent 3 To a moderate extent 4 To a great extent 5 To a very great extent

1
Not at all

- Wrote Results section

2 To a little extent 3 To a moderate extent 4 To a great extent 5 To a very great extent

1
Not at all

- Wrote Discussion section

2 To a little extent 3 To a moderate extent 4 To a great extent 5 To a very great extent

Presentation

1
Not at all

- Constructed Poster

2 To a little extent 3 To a moderate extent 4 To a great extent 5 To a very great extent

1
Not at all

- Made presentation

2 To a little extent 3 To a moderate extent 4 To a great extent 5 To a very great extent

Other contributions:

• Identified potential confounds

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	To a little extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent

• Identified possible directions for future research

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	To a little extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent

• Organizational Skills

1	2	3	4	5
Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good

• Dedication to the project

1	2	3	4	5
Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good

• Other 1: _____

1	2	3	4	5
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

• Other 2: _____

1	2	3	4	5
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Additional Notes: _____

