

**A GUIDE TO
THESIS PROPOSAL, PREPARATION,
AND DEFENSE**

**MASTER'S PROGRAMS IN INDUSTRIAL-ORGANIZATIONAL
AND GENERAL EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY
XAVIER UNIVERSITY**

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I. From Idea to Data Collection

The thesis project required of candidates for Xavier University's Master of Arts (MA) degree in Psychology serves as one of the culminating or “capstone” educational experiences toward the Master’s degree. The thesis provides Master’s candidates with an opportunity to integrate information and procedures acquired through course work, independent study, and practical experiences. In addition, the thesis process allows the student to function as a “project manager” in that the student is responsible for arranging meetings, collecting data, and making progress towards the completion of the thesis project.

The thesis is a research project that generally involves an empirical investigation of a specific question within the field of psychology. The common theme to all theses is to expand the student’s understanding of the knowledge base of psychology, as well as his or her scholarly competence and knowledge of research design and analysis. The project results from one-on-one collaboration with a Xavier University School of Psychology faculty member, the Thesis Chair.

In general, the thesis process involves seven steps (see Appendix A for an Estimated Timeline of the Thesis):

- (1) the prospectus, a short document (2-3 pages) used as an organizing tool that represents the initial ideas about the study;
- (2) the thesis proposal, a written document that contains an extensive literature review and a research plan;
- (3) the proposal meeting with the Thesis Committee, during which the Thesis Committee evaluates the quality of the thesis proposal (including the written document and the study features);
- (4) the accepted proposal, which is the written document that incorporates all changes required by the Thesis Committee agreed upon in the proposal meeting. The Thesis Chair generally oversees all required changes and signs the cover sheet of the proposal after all changes have

been satisfactorily made. The signed proposal is to be submitted to the School Chair within two weeks after the thesis proposal meeting;

- (5) the thesis that contains all required chapters (I-VI), which is provided to the thesis committee for the defense meeting
- (6) the thesis defense meeting with the Thesis Committee, during which the results of the research project are presented orally and the document is evaluated by the Thesis Committee;
- (7) the final thesis document, which contains the final thesis manuscript (appropriately revised), and all relevant materials (e.g., appendices). Electronic copies are maintained in Canvas and a paper copy is kept in the School library.

Thesis projects vary substantially, so it is difficult to describe procedures that apply to all students. This handbook is designed to give pertinent information regarding the thesis process and should be considered only as a guide.

A. Where to Begin

Upon entering the master's program, every student is assigned a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor can be a resource for research ideas and students are encouraged to discuss research ideas or areas of interest with him or her. The advisor may help the student continue to develop the thesis project, at which point the advisor becomes the Thesis Chair, or the faculty advisor may direct the student to a faculty member who has interest or experience in the student's area of interest. Students typically find the thesis project more rewarding if they choose an advisor whose interests are within the area of their thesis topic (e.g., an area in which the advisor has published or an area in which the advisor practices). *The Thesis Chair must be a full-time faculty member in the School of Psychology at Xavier University.*

B. Prospectus/Deadline to Select Thesis Chair

A prospectus is a short document that is used as an initial organizing tool. It represents the ideas about the study and it should include (but not necessarily be limited to) the following:

- (1) the key constructs in the study;
- (2) the broad relevant domains in the literature;
- (3) a statement of research expectations (similar to hypotheses, but not as formal)

The particular information requested for the prospectus may vary by faculty member. By October 15th of the second year, students must have a prospectus for their thesis accepted by a full-time psychology faculty member who is willing to chair the thesis. The School Chair will officially appoint the Thesis Chair after receiving from the student a copy of the prospectus signed by the faculty member. Such appointment needs to occur by the October date in order for the student to register for classes in the Spring semester. A student who does not have a Thesis Chair by this October date must remain active in the program by registering for *Continuous Major Research PSY 790* (3 credit hours) in the Spring semester, but cannot register for any other courses or further advance toward the final degree (e.g., cannot take the Oral Comprehensive Examination) until the program requirement is met.

C. Role of the Thesis Chair

The Thesis Chair's task is to provide direction for the thesis project. This typically involves meeting with the student to develop the idea for the project and reading drafts of the written proposal. The Chair can be expected to provide feedback on all aspects of the written documents including: grammar and clarity of writing; organization of the literature review; thoroughness of studies presented; quality of the methodology proposed; appropriateness of proposed statistics, and APA formatting.

When the Thesis Chair is satisfied with the quality of the proposal, the student schedules a meeting of the Thesis Committee at which the proposed study is discussed. The proposal is given to committee members at least two weeks before the date of the proposal meeting. Unless otherwise directed by the Thesis Chair, committee members do not review drafts of the proposal.

D. The Thesis Committee

The Thesis Committee is composed of the Thesis Chair and at least two additional members. *The*

Thesis Chair must be a full-time faculty member in the School of Psychology, but Committee members may be other full-time Psychology faculty, adjunct faculty, other psychologists, faculty from other Xavier University Schools, or community professionals with expertise in the thesis domain. When a student would like to invite an individual who is not full-time or adjunct Psychology faculty member to serve on the Committee, he or she should provide a rationale for that person's involvement in writing to the School Chair and should alert the professional to submit his/her vitae for the School Chair's review. The student is responsible to submit the names of the proposed Thesis Committee members in writing to the School administrative assistant. All appointments to Thesis Committees are made by the School Chair, taking the student's requests and preferences into account (along with other considerations). The School Chair is an *ad hoc* member of all Thesis Committees and must be informed of proposal and defense dates (this can be done through the School administrative assistant). The School Chair is also provided with a copy of the proposal at the same time as Thesis Committee members. The School Chair attends proposal and defense meetings at his or her discretion.

The Thesis Committee judges the proposal largely in terms of the adequacy of the research plan, including the adequacy of the proposed measures and the appropriateness of the methodology. However, they will also consider the student's knowledge of the literature and the quality of the written document, and will determine at the proposal meeting whether the student is ready to undertake the proposed study. The Thesis Committee also reviews how the proposed project provides protection of human participants, in preparation for its review by Xavier's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

E. Scheduling Proposal & Defenses Meeting/Distribution of Copies

The student is responsible for scheduling the proposal and defense meetings and room locations. This information should be submitted to the School Administrative assistant in writing, who will post the date, time, and location of the meeting on the Elet first floor School bulletin board. These meetings are public and other students and faculty may attend. At least two weeks before the proposal meeting date, the student is to distribute copies of the proposal document to the Committee members and the School

Chair. For the thesis defense, copies are also distributed to the Committee members at least two weeks before the defense meeting. There is no need to give a copy of the thesis document to the School Chair at that time. After thesis defense meeting, changes are made under the direction of the Thesis Chair. Once changes are completed, a copy of the complete document is reviewed and signed by the Thesis Chair and submitted to the School Chair for review. After the School Chair has approved (and signed) the thesis, copies are made and submitted to the library for binding. The thesis grade is not released until approved copies have been received by the library.

F. The Thesis Proposal

The thesis proposal describes the study the student plans to conduct and forms the basis of the student's thesis "contract" with the Thesis Committee (and, by extension, the School and the University). The proposal must include clearly stated hypotheses or research objectives (in the case of qualitative studies), built upon a careful and thorough review of the existing literature. The thesis proposal also should clearly and explicitly describe procedures and planned analyses. The specific elements of the proposal and the order in which they appear are listed in Section II of this Guide (pgs.8-10).

The proposal document should convince the Committee that the student clearly understands the issues underlying the proposed study, and that the research plan is sufficient for the research area.

G. The Thesis Proposal Meeting

With the approval of the Thesis Chair, the student contacts the Committee members to find an agreed-upon time for the proposal meeting. The student must also notify the School Chair of the time and place of the proposal meeting. The student schedules the room by using the sign out book located outside the rooms in Elet with the exception of Elet 304, which is scheduled through the School administrative assistant. Copies of the thesis proposal must be submitted to all Committee members and to the School Chair at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. Committee members are to be provided with paper copies of the document. Committee members may also be sent a copy via email, but the receipt of the hard copy document constitutes the official submission of the document to the committee members.

The format of the thesis proposal meeting will vary somewhat based upon the direction of the Thesis Chair. Prior to the scheduled meeting, the student should discuss the expectations and format for the meeting with the Thesis Chair. In general, the student should expect to be able to provide a brief overview of the previous research related to the proposed study (5-10 minute), describe the rationale for the project, the study's methodology, the statistical procedures planned to analyze the data, and potential study limitations.

There are three possible outcomes of a thesis proposal meeting: (1) acceptance with revisions; (2) major revisions/remediation required; or (3) not accepted. The outcome is determined by majority vote of the Committee. Explanations of each of the outcomes are provided below.

Acceptance with revisions. The study is accepted, but changes to the study and proposal document are needed. The Thesis Chair oversees these changes. The changes required by the Committee are recorded on the Thesis Proposal form; a copy of this form is given to the student. A revised copy of the thesis proposal (signed by the Thesis Chair) and the School form (completed by the Thesis Chair) are to be submitted to the School Chair within two weeks of the meeting. These are placed in the student's file and serve as a record of the meeting. The accepted proposal serves as a contract between the student and School for successful completion of the thesis. This is the most common outcome of proposal meetings.

Major revisions/remediation required. In this outcome, substantial revisions or additions to the written document are required. A sufficient reason for this outcome would be that the student is not prepared at the time of the proposal presentation or has not considered thoroughly the issues in the literature. The deficiencies of the proposal or presentation are documented on the Thesis Proposal form. A copy is given to the student and another copy is placed in the student's file. The student will be told of the deficiencies and what is needed to remedy them by the Thesis Chair. The student can make the required changes, or he/she can decide to pursue a different thesis topic. If the student opts to revise the initial proposal, a subsequent proposal meeting may be required but it cannot occur sooner than one

month after the initial meeting. At that meeting, the Thesis Committee will evaluate the quality of the new proposal and the student's presentation and decide on an outcome. This outcome could prevent a student from meeting School deadlines.

Proposal is not accepted. The grounds for this decision include, among others, unsuitability of the problem, a poorly prepared proposal document, a poor research plan and procedure, and/or a poor understanding of the area. A Thesis Proposal form is completed by the Thesis Chair, filed with the School Chair and placed in the student's file to document this action. A copy is also given to the student. The student can improve the proposal or begin a new project. This could be done with the same Thesis Chair and Committee, or a different Chair and Committee. However, the student must wait a minimum of three months after the initial proposal meeting before convening another proposal meeting. This outcome could prevent a student from meeting School deadlines. **H. The "Completed" Proposal**

The proposal meeting inevitably produces changes to the written document and/or research plan. Because the proposal constitutes the first three chapters of the final thesis, all revisions that are agreed upon at the proposal meeting must be made to the document and submitted to the Thesis Chair within two weeks of the proposal meeting. When the revised proposal has been approved and signed by the Thesis Chair, a paper copy of the documents is submitted to the School Chair and placed in the student's file.

The revised proposal constitutes a contract between the student and the University, with the Thesis Committee serving as the official representative. The student cannot alter the design or plan of research after the revised proposal has been submitted to the School without obtaining approval from the Thesis Committee (see below). If the student does not follow the approved plan, the Committee may fail the thesis at the defense.

I. Managing Changes to the Research Plan after the Proposal has been Accepted If circumstances arise that require changes to the research plan, the Thesis Chair and the Committee must be advised of the situation and approve those changes before the student moves forward with the study. Any request for changes to the thesis could require another meeting of the Committee.

The changes will generally be made to the (previously accepted) proposal; however, it is possible that a new proposal may need to be written. Accepted changes to the research plan are to be documented on the Thesis Proposal Change Form and signed by all members of the Committee. The new (or altered) proposal and Thesis Proposal Change Form will be placed in the student's School file. *Changes to the study plan might also require that the study be reviewed by the IRB, typically through a Modification form filed with the IRB. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with the IRB to determine if additional review is necessary.*

J. Submitting the Project to the Xavier University IRB

In keeping with University policy, all research projects involving human subjects must be submitted to the University Institutional Review Board (IRB). If data are to be collected at sites other than Xavier University, approval by other IRBs may also be necessary. Information about submitting proposals can be found in *The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Subjects in Research: Policies and Procedures* (at XU website www.xu.edu/irb). Samples of consent forms are provided at this website. Proposals to the IRB are to be submitted within two weeks of the thesis proposal meeting. No data are to be collected until all relevant IRBs approve the project. Students should be aware that the process of the IRB approval can take several weeks, especially if the study involves special populations or involves review by other instructors.

Before it can be approved by the School Chair, all final theses require documentation of IRB approval (or exemption from that requirement) by including a letter from Xavier University's IRB among the appendices.

II. Outline of the Thesis Proposal

A. Basic Elements and Format of the Thesis Proposal Manuscript Below

is a list, in order, of the pages and sections of the proposal.

1. A University approved first page indicating that this is a thesis proposal presented to the faculty of Xavier University with space for approval signatures by the School Chair and the Thesis Chair. (See Appendix B).

2. Title page - - the title of the thesis is presented in full. (See Appendix C).
3. Listing of members of Thesis committee, with appropriate academic rank or credentials indicated. The Thesis Chair is listed first, with the Committee members following in alphabetical order. (See Appendix D)
4. Table of Contents--(See Appendix E).
5. List of Tables. The title of each Table must be presented, along with the page number, in the document (see Appendix F). For both the thesis proposal and defense, tables should be presented within the document and not at the end of the document.
6. List of Figures. The title of each Figure must be presented, along with the page number, in the document (see Appendix G). For both the thesis proposal and defense, figures should be presented within the document and not at the end of the document.
7. List of Appendices. The title of each Appendix, along with the page number in the document (see Appendix H). Appendices may include measures, questionnaires, tests, or other materials referenced in the proposal.
- 8.* Review of the Literature (Chapter I). The relevant literature is reviewed and discussed in order to provide a detailed background for the proposed study. The length of this section varies depending on the amount of relevant literature. Thesis Chairs can help provide guidance regarding length and areas to be covered. This section is written in the past tense.

- 9.* Rationale and Hypotheses (Chapter II). This section begins with a brief summary statement of the relevant literature, followed by a formal statement of the hypotheses. Hypotheses are stated in the present or future tense, and can be presented either in the null or alternate form; the tenses and forms chosen are left to the discretion of the

student in consultation with the Thesis Chair. Whatever the form of the stated hypothesis, it is always the null hypothesis that is tested statistically.

- 10.* Method (Chapter III). This section describes Participants, Design of the investigation, Measures or Instruments, and Procedure. Effect size estimates and the number of participants necessary to insure adequate power should be stated in the proposal. Descriptions of the measures should include psychometric information, including validity and reliability. The Procedure is a narrative account of exactly how each element of the research will be investigated. Except for the report of previous validity and reliability findings, this section of the proposal is usually written in the future tense.
- 11.* Proposed Analyses (Chapter IV). The plan of analysis for each hypothesis is to be clearly indicated. A clear statement should be included indicating the level(s) of significance to be used if that level is different from .05. Some Thesis Chairs may also want students to discuss study limitations in this section.
12. References. This list is to include all literature cited in the proposal and should be presented strictly following APA style (consult the most recent *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*).
13. Appendices. This section presents information about measures, supplementary data, description of participants where relevant, and/or the IRB approval letter and other IRB materials (the latter three may only apply to the final thesis manuscript). In addition to the typical tables and figures included in a manuscript, raw data may be included in the appendices.

<p>* The starred items are to be listed as Chapters I through IV in the Table of Contents and on the top of the first page of the respective Chapters. Pages on which these sections begin are to be indicated in the Table of Contents. The References and Appendices sections, including pages on which they begin, are also listed in the Table of Contents, but are not denoted as Chapters.</p>
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B. Page Layout and Formatting Requirements

The page design for the proposal is as follows:

Margins: Left - - 1.0 inch; Right - - no less than 1/2 inch (no right margin justification); Bottom - - 1 inch; Top - - 1 inch, with the exception of chapter heading pages which should have a 2 inch margin. Use **Times New Roman, 12-point font**. All pages beginning with the Table of Contents and including Chapter heading pages and appendices have a running head (using the format of the current *APA Publication Manual*) and are numbered consecutively with the page number at the top extreme right. The document should be printed from a laser or high quality inkjet printer. All text is double spaced, and tables and figures should conform to APA guidelines.

C. Formatting Figures and Landscaped Tables

Some tables and figures may need to be landscaped to most clearly present their information (see Appendix I). Many students have struggled to find a means to landscape tables and figures and place the running head and page number in the correct portion of the page, especially when using Microsoft Word. Although there does not seem to be an easy way to accomplish this in Word, we offer the following strategy that has worked for most students:

1. Create the landscape table/figure in Word, but not in the thesis document.
2. Copy and paste it into another program, either PowerPoint (not all versions of PowerPoint will work for this) or MS Paint.
3. Save it as a .jpg file.
4. In an image viewing program (e.g., Photoshop), rotate the image 90 degrees counter clockwise so the top margin is on the left side of the page. Save again.
5. Insert the picture of the table into the thesis on the appropriate page, using Insert-Picture from Word's menus.

D. Copyright Issues

In order to avoid copyright violations, only measures created by the student and/or the Thesis Chair that have not been published elsewhere are to be included in the final document. All measures are to be included in documents given to the Committee for review at the Proposal and Defense meetings as Appendices. Copies of the measures are removed before the document is submitted for in its final version for electronic posting and binding. In the Appendices of the final document, in lieu of the measure itself, specific information that would allow the reader to access or review the measure is listed. This might involve a citation to a journal article in which the measure is reproduced, the author's website address or email contact, and/or the publisher's website. See Appendix J for an example.

According to the American Psychological Association, copyright permission is required for the following:

- A measure, scale, or instrument
- A video
- Full articles or book chapters
- Single text extracts of more than 400 words
- Series of text extracts that total more than 800 words
- More than three figures or tables from any one journal article
- More than three figures or tables from any one book chapter
- Placement of an abstract of a journal article in a database for subsequent redistribution
- Reuse of content from the public APA web site unless there is a copyright notice on that material stating otherwise
- Content essential to the character of the previously published book or article, when reuse could compromise the sale of the APA publication. Examples include complex illustrations, cartoons, maps, works of art, creative photographs.

The list is illustrative rather than exhaustive. In addition, APA will not grant permission for use of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* or any portion of the Manual with the exception of the 'Guidelines to Reduce Bias in Language,' which appears on pages 71-77 in the sixth

edition. Nor will APA grant permission for use of any products derived from the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, the *APA Dictionary of Psychology* and derivative products, or publications from Magination Press.

Finally, according to APA, permission is *not* required for the following:

- a maximum of three figures or tables from a journal article or book chapter, except as noted in 2 above
- single text extracts of less than 400 words, except as noted in 2 above
- series of text extracts that total less than 800 words, except as noted in 2 above

No formal requests to APA or the author are required for the items in this clause.

In order to seek permission, APA has partnered with the Copyright Clearance Center to provide a web-based permission service using Rightslink®. This service offers users the opportunity to obtain permission to reuse APA book and journal copyrighted materials quickly, easily, and legally. To use Rightslink® locate the [journal article](#) or [book title](#) you want to use on the APA web site Then click the **Permissions** link associated with that item. The majority of requests to use APA copyrighted content will be processed through Rightslink®. (Information reprinted with copyright permission from APA).

III. Finishing the Thesis

A. Conducting the Study/Data Collection

If the study involves human participants, no data are collected and/or analyzed until the study has been approved by the Xavier University IRB. Unless otherwise stipulated by the Thesis Chair, the student is solely responsible for the execution of the study, including recruitment of participants and data collection (see Appendix K for School Procedures on Recruitment from the Psychology Participant Pool). Likewise, the student is responsible for all costs incurred in carrying out the thesis study, such as copying materials or purchasing copyrighted questionnaires and measures. The Thesis Chair can provide assistance in solving any problems that might arise as the project proceeds.

B. Analyzing the Data

The student is responsible for all data analyses, unless specifically described in the thesis proposal. Consultation with knowledgeable faculty members or statistical consultants is allowed, but analyses should be completed by the student. The Thesis Chair can be used as a resource in managing difficulties that might arise. It is not uncommon for faculty members to request that the student provide him or her with a copy of the electronic database to verify the accuracy of the data and/or its organization in the data file. Ideally, faculty will discuss this with the student early in the thesis process.

C. Discussing the Results

The Discussion section describes interpretation of the results, including results different from those expected. Moreover, this section should also address future research directions based on the results, as well as limitations within the current study.

D. Summary (Thesis)

The Summary is to serve as a draft of the thesis that might be suitable for submission to a professional conference (such as the annual meeting of the *Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychologists*) or to a professional journal for publication. As such, this section shall follow the APA format for manuscripts described in the most current *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. The exception to this format is that Tables, Figures, Appendices, and References do not need to be reproduced in this section. The specific sections include Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion. This section should not exceed 3000 words (about 11 pages of text). Consistent with the start of previous chapters, the Summary should be listed in the Table of Contents as Chapter VI. “Summary” is centered and placed at the top of the page. Consistent with the current edition of the *Manual*, the title of the thesis should be centered and placed under “Summary” at the top of the page, followed by the introduction section.

E. Basic Elements and Format of Thesis Defense Manuscript

Below is a list, in order, of the pages and sections of the thesis defense document:

1. A University approved first page indicating that this is a thesis defense presented to the faculty of Xavier University with space for approval signatures by the School Chair and Thesis Chair (See Appendix B).
2. Title page: The title of the thesis is presented in full (see Appendix C).
3. Listing of members of Thesis committee, with appropriate academic rank or credentials indicated. The Thesis Chair is listed first, with the Committee members following, in alphabetical order (see Appendix D.)
4. Acknowledgments (if desired).
5. Table of Contents -(see Appendix E).
6. List of Tables. The title of each Table must be presented, along with the page number, in the document (see Appendix F). For both the thesis proposal and defense, tables should be presented within the document and not at the end of the document.
7. List of Figures. The title of each Figure must be presented, along with the page number, in the document (see Appendix G). For both the thesis proposal and defense, figures should be presented within the document and not at the end of the document.
8. List of Appendices. The title of each Appendix, along with the page number in the document (see Appendix H). Appendices may include measures, questionnaires, tests, etc. The List of Appendices should be presented after the References section. (See Appendix H).
9. Abstract. The abstract should be 150 to 250 words in length, and should be numbered with the Roman numeral system used in the preceding sections 4 through 8.
- 10.* Review of the Literature (Chapter I). The relevant literature is reviewed and discussed in order to provide a detailed background for the proposed study. The length of this section varies depending on the amount of relevant literature. Thesis Chairs can help

provide guidance regarding length and areas to be covered. This section is written in the past tense.

- 11.* Rationale and Hypotheses (Chapter II). This section begins with a brief summary statement of the relevant literature, followed by a formal statement of the hypotheses. Hypotheses are stated in the present or future tense, and can be presented either in the null or alternate form; the tenses and forms chosen are left to the discretion of the student in consultation with the Thesis Chair. Whatever the form of the stated hypothesis, it is always the null hypothesis that is tested statistically.
- 12.* Method (Chapter III). This section describes Participants, Design of the investigation, Measures or Instruments, and Procedure. Descriptions of the measures should include psychometric information, including evidence of validity and reliability, obtained in the current study. The Procedure is a narrative account of exactly how each element of the research was investigated. This section of the thesis defense manuscript is written in the past tense.
- 13.* Results (Chapter IV). A detailed description of the findings is presented. (Note that the Proposed Analyses section is omitted in the defense document.) A definite statement is to be made about the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses given the results. This section includes findings that are consistent as well as inconsistent with the hypotheses. Analysis of the results is to be consistent with the proposed analyses previously agreed upon in the thesis proposal. Ordinarily, descriptive statistics are presented early in the Result section. Figures and tables, while optional, are strongly recommended to facilitate communication. Figures and tables must be labeled completely so they can be interpreted without reference to the text of the thesis. In addition, confidence intervals should be included when appropriate. This section is written in the past tense.
- 14.* Discussion (Chapter V). The Discussion describes the state of knowledge contingent upon the findings of the thesis. Thus, this section relates review of the literature,

rationale and hypotheses, method, and results into a unified whole. Moreover, a statement of what problems or issues arise as a result of those findings should be undertaken. Finally, future directions for research, a discussion of the study's limitations, and overall conclusions should be addressed in this section.

- 15.* Summary (Chapter VI). This is to serve as a draft of the thesis which might be suitable for submission to a professional conference. As such, this section shall follow the APA format for manuscripts as described in the most recent *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. The exception to this format is that tables, figures, appendices, and the reference list do not need to be reproduced in this section. The specific sections include: Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion. This section is no more than 3000 words in length.
14. References. This list is to include all literature cited in the document and should be presented strictly following APA style (consult most recent *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*).
15. Appendices. This section presents copies of measures, supplementary data or information, statements of consent, special questionnaires, data outside the purview of the main hypotheses, description of participants where relevant, and the IRB approval letter from Xavier University with any additional IRB materials. In addition to the typical tables and figures included in a manuscript, raw data may be included in the appendices.

<p>* The starred items are to be listed as Chapters I through VI in the Table of Contents and on the top of the first page of the respective Chapters. Pages on which these sections begin are to be indicated in the Table of Contents. The References and Appendices sections, including pages on which they begin, are also listed in the Table of Contents, but are not Chapters.</p>

F. The Thesis Defense Meeting

The student is responsible for scheduling the time and location of the thesis defense and informing the School administrative assistant of such information. As is the case with the thesis proposal,

these arrangements are not made until the Thesis Chair feels that the thesis is in proper shape for the defense. However, the thesis defense must be successfully completed with all necessary revisions made by Friday of the first full week of April in order for a student to participate in the subsequent May Commencement ceremony. Each member of the Thesis Committee is to be given a copy of the entire thesis document, at least two weeks prior to the arranged date. Committee members are to be provided with paper copies of the document; the document may also be sent via email, but the receipt of the paper copy constitutes submission of the document to committee member.

The defense meeting is open to other faculty members and graduate students. If the student wishes to invite anyone outside the academic community, the Thesis Chair must grant permission. During the defense meeting, the student typically presents the study and its results. Committee members are free to ask questions about the purpose, methods, and results presented in the document, along with questions on related areas consistent with the context of the thesis.

The Thesis Committee will come to a judgment about acceptance of the thesis based upon the written document and the oral defense. Three possible judgments can be made:

- 1) *Pass with Revisions*: The candidate has passed the defense, subject to revisions to be overseen by the Thesis Chair or by a designated Committee member.
- 2) *Major Revisions/Remediation Required*: This could arise because of deficiencies in the document or inadequate presentation at the defense meeting that require remediation. The problems with the document or defense are so significant that all committee members will participate in the revisions of the document and/or a subsequent defense meeting. At the conclusion of the defense meeting, the Committee will determine if the student must make significant modifications to the thesis document and/or to defend the thesis at another defense meeting. If a subsequent defense is required, it can occur no sooner than one month after the initial meeting. The student may also be required to register for *Continuous Major Research PSYC 790* (3 credit hours) if the completion of revisions extends beyond a second defense meeting and if such revisions extend into a new

academic year. The student should also be aware that this outcome may jeopardize his or her meeting school deadlines, such as the April deadline to fully participate in the May Commencement ceremony.

- 3) *Fail:* The candidate has failed the defense. This outcome would occur, for example, if the study departs markedly from the study plan described in the proposal, or if there are ethical violations such as plagiarism or fraudulent data collection. Under these circumstances, the student may also face disciplinary measures at the University and/or be recommended for expulsion from the program.

The decision concerning the outcome of the thesis meeting is by majority vote of the Committee. The thesis and its defense are assigned a Pass/Fail grade.

G. Final Thesis Document Submission

After the thesis defense, students are required to make all changes required by the committee within two weeks of the defense meeting. Those changes are submitted to the Chair for review and verification that the changes have been made satisfactorily. Once the Chair has agreed that all necessary changes have been made, students send a completed electronic copy to the Chair and provide him/her with a complete printed copy (single sided printing required). The chair signs these copies and sends them to the School administrative assistant for final processing. The School will bind the paper copy and place in the School library; the electronic copy is submitted to OhioLink for publication.

Detailed information about how to submit the final document is provided in Appendix L.

H. Thesis Grade

The thesis is graded Pass/Fail. The thesis grade will only appear on a student's transcript when the School receives notification from the library that the document has been uploaded in OhioLink. Until the thesis grade is listed on the transcript, along with grades for all other academic/internship requirements, a student has not earned and cannot represent himself or herself as having earned a MA degree in Psychology from Xavier University.

Appendix A

SUMMARY THESIS PROCESS WITH ESTIMATED TIMELINE*

Phase I (Prospectus/idea development)

- Develop idea, read literature, polish idea, develop research expectations and broad ideas about method and materials
- Present prospectus to potential Chair of project
- Prospectus accepted and Thesis Chair appointed by October 15th of student's second year

Phase 2 (proposal writing; approx. 5-8 months)

- Write proposal
- Allow at least two weeks for receiving comments from Thesis Chair for each draft
- Keep in mind that it typically takes a minimum of 4-5 drafts
- Rough estimate for Phase 2: 5 drafts x 2 weeks for feedback x your writing/revision time; very likely 5-8 months (but can be longer)

Phase 3 (proposal meeting; approx. 2 months)

- Schedule proposal meeting (must coordinate with schedule of three faculty Committee members)
- Committee members and School Chair need document at least two weeks prior to proposal meeting
- Upon passing proposal, submit IRB application within 2 weeks. Allow one month for IRB approval
- Two weeks after proposal meeting, all changes need to be made and revised copy approved and signed by Thesis Chair; revised proposal placed in student's file

Phase 4 (data collection; time-varies depending on project)

- Keep in mind "time consumers" such as getting into a system to collect data (e.g., schools, VA, hospitals, etc.)
- Organize materials (photocopying, collating, obtaining informed consents, etc)
- Collect data
- Score data
- Complete data entry
- Complete data analyses

Phase 5 (finishing the thesis; 3-6 months)

- Interpret results of analyses
- Write Summary of the thesis, which is a conference- or publication-style paper
- Complete several drafts and revisions (keep in mind two-week turnaround from Chair for each draft)
- Schedule defense meeting (must coordinate with schedule of three faculty Committee members)
- Committee members need document at least two weeks prior to defense meeting
- Thesis defense must be successfully completed by Friday of the first full week in April in order to fully participate in May Commencement ceremony.
- Make post-defense revisions within two weeks of defense meeting
- Obtain final approval from Thesis Chair and School
- Follow procedures for final processing of the document
- Receive final grade only when above is completed

* Please note that faculty are not always available due to sabbaticals, illnesses, or travel. Most faculty are on 9 month contracts and are not obligated to be available during summers and holidays. Consider these features as you anticipate your thesis plan.

Appendix B

Sample Cover Sheet

A Thesis [Proposal]
Submitted to the Faculty
of
Xavier University in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts by
(Name)

(Date- - Month, day, year of proposal/defense)

Approved:

Kathleen J. Hart, Ph.D., ABPP
Chair, School of Psychology

(Name of faculty member)
Thesis Chair

Appendix C

Sample Title Page

The Interaction of Personality Traits and Situational
Judgment Tests

Appendix D

Sample Thesis Committee Page

Thesis Committee

Chair

Morrie Mullins, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology

Member

Dalia Diab, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Psychology

Member

Mark S. Nagy, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Psychology

Appendix E

Sample of Table of Contents

Table of Contents

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*V. Discussion	39
*VI. Summary	48
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* *Note:* Abstract, Discussion and Summary do not appear in the Table of Contents in the proposal but do appear in the defense document.

** *Note:* Proposed Analyses appear in Table of Contents in the thesis proposal document; Results appear in the Table of Contents in the thesis defense document.

Appendix F
Sample List of Tables

List of Tables

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Sample List of Figures

List of Figures

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List of Appendices

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Appendix I Sample Landscaped Table

Table 6

Intercorrelations and Reliabilities of Key Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Match Percentage	--											
2. Psychosocial Assistance	.23	(.79)										
3. Role Modeling	.03	.71**	--									
4. Acceptance and Confirmation	.19	.87**	.41*	--								
5. Counseling	.32	.83**	.63**	.56**	--							
6. Friendship	.16	.74**	.21	.78**	.36*	--						
7. Career-Related Assistance	.20	.74**	.71**	.55**	.63**	.44**	(.88)					
8. Sponsorship	.21	.63**	.49**	.44**	.57**	.46**	.82**	--				
9. Exposure and Visibility	.12	.56**	.60**	.51**	.34*	.34*	.84**	.64**	--			
10. Coaching	.07	.68**	.73**	.44**	.69**	.26	.86**	.64**	.66**	--		
11. Protection	.23	.67**	.64**	.49**	.53**	.47**	.90**	.65**	.67**	.74**	--	
12. Challenging Work	.20	.48**	.41**	.37*	.43**	.31	.66**	.39*	.40*	.39*	.65**	--

(table continues)

Appendix J

Sample Appendix for Copyrighted Measure

Name of Instruments Used

The [name of instrument] is protected by copyright so it is not reproduced in this document. This measure is available through Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc. at www.parinc.com.

Appendix K

SCHOOL PROCEDURES ON RECRUITMENT FROM THE PSYCHOLOGY PARTICIPANT POOL

Participant Pool

Rationale

A participant pool within the School of Psychology is utilized by both faculty and students for coursework and independent research. Also, for students and faculty working on research, including theses, dissertations, certain course requirements, and independent projects, having an organized participant pool for collecting data from a college population is desirable. It eliminates the difficulty of recruiting participants from individual classes and creates an understanding among the undergraduates of their responsibility to participate in research at Xavier.

Responsibilities of the Researcher Recruitment

At least two months prior to the start of a new semester, researchers should submit to the research liaison (typically Dr. End's GA) the approximate number of participants and hours expected to be utilized for the upcoming semester. This does not apply to students enrolled in courses in which they will be needing participants for various assignments (i.e. *Research Methods and Design II* and *Assessment I: Cognitive*).

Sign-up Process

Researchers will create and post sign-up sheets on the bulletin board on the second floor of Elet Hall (example forms will be emailed to the primary researcher after we receive notification of the researcher's intent to use the participant pool). The sign-up sheets will consist of the investigator's name, title or purpose of project, participant requirements (if any), date/time/location of the project, and approximate length of time to complete. Also, confirmation receipts with contact information should be attached to the sign-up sheets that the participants can take with them as a reminder.

*If a project is not time consuming (e.g. five minutes), it would be a more efficient use of the participant pool to have that project “piggyback” on another study. **Before Data Collection**

Before collecting data, the researcher will remove the sign-up sheet from the bulletin board (although the researcher should still provide information of where, when, etc., data are being collected). Students should sign their name on the sign-up sheet in the margin next to the information provided to sign up. Their professor’s name should be written clearly (If we cannot determine one’s instructor, one will not receive credit). The researcher will **CLEARLY** mark on the sheet if the participant is present or absent (this sheet will be turned into Dr. End’s GA’s mailbox). **After Data Collection**

The researcher will distribute credit slips to the participants. The credit slip will consist of the participant’s name, the professor’s name, course name, the researcher’s name (**make sure you sign**), title or purpose of the project, and date and start/stop times. For students who signed up to participate, but failed to show up or provide a 24 hour cancellation notice, the researcher will fill out a no-show slip for that student. The no-show slip will consist of the student’s name, the professor’s name, course name, researcher’s name, date and time, approximate number of hours lost, and title or purpose of the project. Next, the researcher will be responsible for putting the no-show slips, as well as the sign-up sheet that CLEARLY indicates who was absent/present, in Dr. End’s GA’s mailbox.

Appendix L

Instructions for post-defense processing of theses

Students’ Responsibilities—Part I:

1. The student makes all changes required by the Thesis Committee after the defense.
2. Upon approval of the changes by the chair, the student submits the complete thesis, with all accompanying cover pages (e.g., the signature page, Title Page, List of Committee Members, Acknowledgements, Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, List of Appendices), to the thesis chair in both an electronic and paper version. *The paper version should be printed one-sided.*
3. The student sends the document (as a Word document) to the thesis chair for review/approval.

Thesis Chair’s/School Chair’s Responsibilities:

When the thesis chair has reviewed the electronic and hard copy documents and agrees that all required changes have been made, the following will occur:

Electronic document:

1. The thesis chair will type his/her name onto the cover page, and then.
2. Send the approved document to the School Chair as an email attachment (in Word)
3. If the School Chair approves the document, s/he will type his/her name on the signature page.
4. The School Chair will forward the approved signed document to the School secretary; the administrative assistant will then save the document as a .pdf and send the document back to the student, along with the instructions for how to submit the document to OhioLink.
5. The School administrative assistant will copy Vicki Young (library liaison) on the email to the student.

Hard copy document:

6. The thesis chair will provide the School Chair with the hard copy that she/he has signed as soon as possible after sending the electronic document to the School Chair.
7. The School Chair reviews the hard copy and signs the cover page.
8. The School Chair (or School administrative assistant) notifies the student that his/her hard copy document is ready to be picked up and bound.

Students' Responsibilities—Part II:**Electronic document:**

1. Student follows instructions in the email about accessing and uploading the approved .pdf document to OhioLink.
2. Once Vicki Young/library liaison receives notification that the document has been uploaded to OhioLink and that all necessary information has been provided, she will notify the School administrative assistant that the process is complete.

Once the electronic copy's uploading has been verified, the student will have completed all requirements for the thesis; his/her grade will be released from the School to the registrar. **AT THIS POINT, THE STUDENT HAS COMPLETED ALL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE THESIS.**