DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP,
COUNSELING, AND POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

GUIDELINES FOR:
A RESEARCH PAPER
OR
RESEARCH PROJECT
OR
THESIS

COUNSELING MAJORS
School Counseling
Mental Health Counseling

IMPORTANT DATES
[SAME DAY EACH YEAR]

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<th>Fall Graduation</th>
<th>Spring Graduation</th>
<th>Summer Graduation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Outline Approval</td>
<td>April 20</td>
<td>September 20</td>
<td>January 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Draft to Director</td>
<td>June 8</td>
<td>November 8</td>
<td>February 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Draft to Director</td>
<td>October 10</td>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>June 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Copy to Dept</td>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>March 20</td>
<td>June 20</td>
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*If a date falls on a Saturday/Sunday or break, the paper is due on the following Monday.

11/91; 4/92; 10/93; 8/94;
9/95; 12/96; 4/98; 7/99;
11/00; 8/01; 10/01; 10/02;
7/03; 5/04; 10/05; 5/06
COUNSELING MAJORS

RESEARCH PAPER/RESEARCH PROJECT

All students in the Mental Health and School Counseling programs are required to complete a research paper or a major research project. Students are encouraged to choose a topic or project they are passionate about and will find professionally useful. Your advisor will be your mentor throughout the research paper/project unless otherwise designated. Students are encouraged to work on their project in the second half of their program of study; due date deadlines begin the semester before you expect to graduate.

The research paper or project is intended to be a formative experience, providing an opportunity to (a) investigate systematically and thoroughly a topic addressing a specific issue and (b) prepare a formal written analysis/synthesis of current literature on that topic, or adapt the topic into an interesting and useful project or presentation. (This is not an empirical research study.) The topic selected cannot be something that has been previously researched for a class or for Readings or Research credit.

Before you begin, or during the process of writing your paper, it would be helpful to read papers or view projects submitted by other counseling students to give you an idea about what a final copy should look like. These are in the Instructional Resources and Technology Services (IRTS), 2nd floor of the Schindler Education Center.

It is imperative that you be knowledgeable about plagiarism. Consult the UNI catalog, pp. 62-63 for further information about plagiarism and consequences. Because we will be using a program to detect plagiarism, all drafts of papers and projects must be submitted to your advisor electronically along with a hard copy.

REQUIRED STEPS FOR RESEARCH PAPER/PROJECT COMPLETION:

1. Two semesters PRIOR to the semester you expect to graduate, meet (early in the semester) with your advisor and discuss the topic/project and secure approval.
2. Research your topic/project and prepare a detailed outline (1-2 pages). Due date deadlines will be posted in the Schindler Education Center - outside Schindler Education Center 136 and 508 - and on the front page of this packet. Do not proceed with the paper or project until this step has been approved.

3. Submit a 1-2 page introduction which includes background/general overview and rationale, and a separate paragraph at the end of this section that includes a concise statement of purpose. Submit this to the advisor for approval before working further on the paper.

4. Turn in a completed first draft of your research paper or a mock up of your project by the due date listed. Work closely with your advisor and communicate with him/her on timelines. Since each advisor usually supervises several papers/projects, anticipate a two week turn-around for each revision. Expect that you may need to do 4-5 revisions, so pace yourself accordingly.

It is not your advisor’s responsibility to see that you adhere to timelines. Please take university breaks into consideration, since papers will usually not be read during this time. The deadlines must be respected. No exceptions will be made. Papers/projects turned in after due dates will not be accepted for the current term.

All professional writing must strictly follow APA guidelines as stated in the current edition of the APA Publication Manual.

**SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON THE RESEARCH PAPER**

The research paper must be a scholarly review addressing a specific topic in the major field. The paper should be 15-20 pages and contain a minimum of 20 current resources; internet sources are in addition to the 20 resources. Papers must be written in accordance with the current APA Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.
After the outline and introductory sections are approved, work on the body and conclusion. Prior to turning this first draft in to your advisor, work on revisions so that you are submitting a well-developed draft. A good first draft means that you are using headings and subheadings, correct APA, and have worked with the UNI writing center if writing is difficult for you.

Once your advisor has approved the final draft of the paper, it may be typed in final form. The final draft means that everything is complete except for a few very minor changes such as misspelled words, punctuations, etc., but not changes in intent, headings and so forth. (See topic on manuscript preparation for further information.)

One copy of the paper (on 20 pound, 25% or 100% cotton fiber) is to be submitted to the Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Postsecondary Education, along with a $2.00 binding fee. This bound copy will be placed on file in the IRTS lab.

IMPORTANT: The paper must contain the following and should be publication quality:
   a. Title of the paper on the first page of text - not bold or italicized.
   b. An introductory section (usually 1 ½-2 pages) that gives an overview of the topic, a rationale, vital statistics relevant to the topic, etc. This section is untitled and includes a separate paragraph that describes the purpose of the paper at the end of this section.
   c. The body of the paper (divided by headings and subheadings).
   d. A concise conclusion that has a separate level 1 heading.

MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION:

1. The paper must be 20 pound, 25% or 100% cotton fiber paper.

2. Students who use word processing equipment in preparing their papers must remedy the truncated lines of type which often are produced during the process of manuscript revision.
3. Margins must be 1 ½ inches on the left for binding purposes. The rest of the margins are 1 inch.

4. Title and approval pages must follow the arrangement specified on the attached sample page. [No page number or running head.]

5. Abstract - follow the style outlined in APA manual. [No page number or running head; 120 words or less, block format, title - abstract.]

6. Page numbers must be typed in the upper right hand corner, starting with the first page of text (that will be page 1). They must be arabic numerals and should appear 3/4 inch from the top of the page (5th line) at the right margin. The page header should also start on page 1 of the text in the right hand corner.

7. The first line of every paragraph should be indented 5 spaces. Use 2 spaces after the period or punctuation at the end of each sentence. [APA manual refers to 1 space--only if you plan to submit as an article.]

8. When a heading is placed toward the bottom of a page, it must be followed by at least 2 typewritten lines. A heading placed toward the top of a page should either begin the page or be preceded by at least two typewritten lines.

9. In papers of this length, two or three levels of heading will normally be sufficient. They should follow this sample:

   (Level One Heading -- Example)
   The Counselor’s Role

   (Level Two Heading -- Example)
   Counselor as Consultant

   Or, if you have three levels, follow this sample:
The Counselor’s Role

Counselor as Consultant

Responsibilities of the consultant. The consultant assumes a variety of roles.

10. All parts of the paper, including references, tables, and quotations*, must be double-spaced.

[*Display quotations of 40 or more words in a double-spaced block of typewritten lines with no quotation marks. Do not single-space. Indent five spaces from the left margin without the usual opening paragraph indent. If the quotation is more than one paragraph, indent the first line of second and additional paragraphs five spaces from the new margin.]

11. Do not use a table of contents or chapter designations.

STYLE REQUIREMENTS

You must adhere to APA (5th edition) style. Use non-sexist language.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

1. One of the most troublesome features of papers which rely heavily on reviews of specialized literature is tense consistency. Special attention must be paid to maintaining tense consistency, particularly when referring to the writings of others. Past tense should be used for both current and older citations.

2. As you review the relevant literature, pay particular attention to patterns which run through the literature. Such patterns may suggest organizational devices for the body of the paper, such as categories, components, recurring themes, common areas of agreement or disagreement, chronological developments or other logical divisions. Identifying such patterns is a key to analyzing, summarizing, and
synthesizing the literature effectively.

3. Use periodic statements to highlight the **significance** of what has just been reviewed and use transitions which indicate the relationship of what has gone before to what comes next.

4. Throughout the paper, pay special attention to integrating literature sources/ideas into a logical, flowing pattern. Be careful not to rely principally upon 1 or 2 sources in developing the paper.

5. The paper should adhere generally to the following format:
   a) an introductory section which provides an overview and rationale for the paper
   b) a statement of purpose -- what you intend to do (this should be a separate paragraph at the end of the introductory section)
   c) subsections which deal with specific aspects of the topic are designated with appropriate headings and subheadings
   d) a conclusion.

6. Always avoid long quotations. Be sure to paraphrase authors, rather than quote them directly. Use direct quotes sparingly throughout the paper.

7. Remember - ALL wording must be your own unless you occasionally use a direct quote which you will credit with the source, page number and **quotation marks**. Plagiarism in any form is a very serious offense that will have serious consequences. We use a plagiarism detection program, so it is important for you to use your own words and use appropriative documentations.

8. Vary sentence structure and pattern to make the paper more interesting and readable.
9. The paragraph should contain more than one sentence. If you use one-sentence paragraphs, be sure they serve a specific and legitimate purpose.

10. The reference list at the end of the paper should contain only those references actually cited in the paper. Cross checking the references in the text with the reference list at the end of the paper is essential. Be sure the references you use are current.

**SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

The purpose of a project is the practical application of information related to the topic you have selected. Students are encouraged to be creative as well as professional.

The project will include:

1. A 5 page paper that includes the following:
   (a) 1 page including a short rationale and a description of the project.
   (b) 4 pages of lit review related to the project topic.
   (c) (in addition to the 5 pages) a reference list of resources -- with the literature review.

2. The project. If the project cannot be illustrated on 9x12 paper to include in a binding, then the project needs to be included in another form.

3. You and your advisor will decide how and where your project will be presented. Typically presentations will be a minimum of an hour, but that may vary depending on the type of project. You and your advisor will determine this. Projects will most likely be presented during internship seminar or in a specific class where applicable and feasible.

For the written portion of the project:

   Must also include an abstract and a cover page, and a signature page.

Follow APA guidelines and follow manuscript preparation guidelines given for the research paper.
Possible Topic/s Ideas Include:

Grant Writing (Example: student knows of a need and searches for grants to meet that need, then writes the grant.)

Power Point Presentation (Example: a quality Power Point Presentation of a specific issue in counseling such as anger management or abuse; a specific academic learning in counseling such as an ethical model, etc.)

In-depth Presentation on a Counseling Issue (Example: an ethical issue, licensure issue, diversity issue, etc.) The presentation needs to be a creative, informative, research based, and incorporate various teaching methods.

In-depth Presentation on a Counseling Theory or Unique Techniques (Example: presentation of a theory not included in the main stream theories such as Neural Linguistic Programming, EMDR, or Theraplay or techniques that include some specialization such as art therapy, music therapy, eco-therapy.)

Instructional Video Tape (Example: an instructional video on micro-skills demonstrations skits, a particular theory of play therapy, etc.)

Conference Presentation (Example: presenting at UNI/DOE School Counselors and Administrators Conference on research projects.)

Web Site (Example: a prototype web site for a specific school situation, a specific issue in counseling, or a specific need, etc.)

A specific experience relating to the counseling profession undertaken with results described.

Action Research or Research Project

Other ideas may be presented and considered. If the request is unusual it will be presented to the entire faculty for approval.

A PREFERRED VISION FOR COUNSELING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

A Research Paper

Presented to

The Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Postsecondary Education

University of Northern Iowa

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts OR Master of Arts in Education

by

Toobee R. Nottoobee

December 1996

[ this date should be the month you will graduate ]

[ SAMPLE TITLE PAGE FOR THE RESEARCH PAPER. CENTER BETWEEN MARGINS. ]
This Research Paper by: Toobee R. Nottoobee

Entitled: A PREFERRED VISION FOR COUNSELING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

has been approved as meeting the research paper requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts [or Master of Arts in Education].

________________________________________
Date Approved     Adviser/Director of Research Paper

________________________________________
Date Received     Head, Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Postsecondary Education
COUNSELOR MAJORS

THESIS GUIDELINES

PURPOSE:

An option for students in Master of Arts/Master of Arts in Education degree programs, the thesis is intended to be a formative experience, providing the student an opportunity to (a) formulate a research problem, (b) explore the previously published or recognized work on the problem, (c) decide upon research methodology suited to investigating the problem, (d) conduct the research, (e) report the findings and their relationship to findings from previous research, (f) report conclusions drawn from the research results, and (g) conduct an objective and critical evaluation of the investigation.

STEPS IN COMPLETING THE THESIS:


2. Sometime during the second semester in residence, make a tentative selection of a topic. While it is not necessary for you to commit to the exact topic, when you apply for full status in the program (filing your GF1 after 2nd level screening) you must designate a tentative area of study.

3. At that same time, (in consultation with your advisor) you will need to decide who you would like to chair your thesis committee and ask that person if he or she is willing to serve in this capacity. The thesis chair is usually your advisor, but this is not a requirement.

4. You will also need to ask at least two other members of the Graduate Faculty to be committee members. These faculty members do not have to be from the department if you believe that faculty members from some other departments have expertise in the area of research. In fact, the Graduate College encourages students to choose at least one committee member from outside the department. When you fill out your GF1, you will list the members of your committee.

5. At least 2 semesters before you graduate, meet with your committee chair and begin to refine your idea for your research. Discuss the research problem and the objectives of your study. Submit a description of the problem and a list of objectives to your committee chair, who will help you refine them.
6. During this process, you will be conducting library research, searching the literature for previously published studies and other information on your topic. This will help you to refine your ideas, begin to explore research methodology suited to your study, and start to generate hypotheses and/or research questions.

7. Write a description of the research design that you intend to use in your study. This will include a description of the subjects, data collection process, and your proposed data analysis procedures. It will also include an explanation of any intervention you plan to conduct. Select a research project according to your personal deadlines. Some investigations may take more than one year. You should also provide a list of hypotheses and/or research questions you hope to explore. Submit them to your committee chair, who will help you refine them.

8. After you have revised your description of the research methods, your hypotheses and/or research questions, schedule a preliminary meeting with the members of your committee so that you can get their input on the direction of your research. (Give them a copy of the revised description before this meeting.)

9. If you are conducting research that involves human subjects or animal subjects, you must obtain approval from the Graduate College Office. Consult with the Graduate College Office about UNI regulations and procedures for obtaining permission to conduct research with human subjects or animal subjects.

10. Based on the input you have gotten from your committee members, write a formal proposal for your research. This should include the following areas:
   a. An introduction in which you explain the significance of the problem.
   b. A statement of the problem.
   c. A synthesis of the current literature available on the topic.
   d. A description of the subjects and how you intend to enlist them.
   e. An explanation of your research design and your rationale for choosing this particular design.
   f. A description of both dependent and independent variables.
   g. A description of the proposed data collection procedures.
   h. An explanation of your data analysis methods and your rationale for choosing these particular methods.
   i. A bibliography of references.

11. After consultation with your committee chair, revise the proposal, seek input from other members of your committee, and schedule a formal proposal seminar. During the seminar, you will work with your committee to refine your research design and develop the best possible plan for your study.

12. Based on the discussion from the proposal seminar and your research proposal, conduct your study. During this process, your committee chair and the members of your committee will serve in a consulting role if you need help and support.
13. After you have gathered your data, analyze the data.

14. You may want to meet with the various members of your committee as you try to understand your findings and begin to synthesize your findings with the results of other studies available in the literature.

15. Using your proposal as the basis, write your thesis, following the guidelines set out in the Graduate College Thesis and Dissertation Manual and the APA style manual (5th edition). Your thesis should have all the of the elements included in your proposal, plus a Results and Discussion section that consists of: (a) a description of the data analysis methods used, (b) report of the findings/results of the study, and (c) a discussion/explanation of the significance of the results, integrating the findings of this study with the results of other studies related to this topic found in the literature. You will also need to write an abstract, title pages, and table of contents as specified on page 7 of the Thesis and Dissertation Manual.

16. Submit the first draft of your thesis to your committee chair, who will make suggestions for revisions. After you have made these revisions, you may want to submit the second draft for further suggestions, or you may want to consult the rest of your committee for input and suggestions.

17. When you and your chair are both satisfied with your manuscript, distribute copies of the thesis to the various members of your committee and schedule a formal defense of your thesis. During this defense, you will have an opportunity to present your research study and your findings to the college community and the committee. The members of the committee will ask questions and make suggestions for any final changes at this time. This defense must occur early enough in the semester that you can meet the Graduate College deadline dates for submission of your thesis.

18. When you have the "final draft" of the document, schedule an appointment with the Graduate College Office for a thesis preview to review the style and format. If the previewer suggests any changes, make those changes in the document. The departmental office will have a sheet indicating the preview deadline date for graduation.

19. When you have finished making changes suggested by the committee and the previewer, you will obtain each member’s signature on the four copies of the thesis approval sheets as outlined on page 14 of the Graduate College Thesis and Dissertation Manual.
20. Follow the guidelines for Submission Procedures on pages 13 and 14 of the Graduate College Thesis and Dissertation Manual. You must submit the thesis by the deadline date set by the Graduate College [the department will have a sheet indicating the date for each semester].