

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION
AND RECREATION
MASTER OF SCIENCE
HEALTH AND HUMAN PERFORMANCE
THESIS GUIDELINES**

Introduction

Students enrolled in the Master of Science in Health and Human Performance electing to complete a thesis as part of their graduate program of study are encouraged to declare this intention their first semester of graduate studies. Failure to declare this intent early may result in a delay in graduation due to the time frame typically required to complete a thesis. The departmental advisor of graduate students will provide assistance to students with regard to registering for thesis credit and answer questions concerning the thesis process. The student will be required to form a thesis committee consisting of, but not limited to, members of the graduate faculty in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, including selection of a chair. This is achieved by the student's initiative.

Establishing the Thesis Committee

In order to establish a thesis committee, the student makes a request to the faculty member he/she prefers to serve as chair of his/her committee. It is advisable that the faculty member serving as chair have expertise in the area in which the student intends to complete his/her thesis work. Composition of the remainder of the committee must adhere to the following requirements:

- a) The committee must be comprised of a minimum of three current graduate faculty members, the chair plus two additional members, from members of the graduate faculty at the University of North Alabama.
- b) The chair of the student's thesis committee must be a member of the graduate faculty in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation.
- c) The student may elect to include up to five members on the committee if it is determined by the student, in coordination with the committee chair, that additional members are needed to provide specific expertise.
- d) A majority of the thesis committee members must be members of the graduate faculty in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

Sequence and Procedures for Thesis Completion

The following steps represent the sequence and procedures for completing a thesis as part of a Master of Science in Health and Human Performance:

- a) The graduate student makes a request to a current graduate faculty member in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation to serve as chair of their committee.

- b) Working with the committee chair, the student selects the remaining committee members and makes requests to these graduate faculty members to serve on the thesis committee.
- c) The student develops a written thesis proposal which is distributed to all members of the student's thesis committee prior to a scheduled meeting to consider permission to allow the student to move forward with the thesis.
- d) A proposal meeting is scheduled by student with the thesis committee during which the student formally presents his/her thesis proposal, including a proposed timeline for completion of the project, to the committee. The student will be required to bring a completed Thesis Proposal Approval Form (see Thesis Proposal Approval Form attached), minus committee member signatures, to this meeting. At this meeting, the thesis committee will vote regarding permission for the student to proceed with the thesis project. Permission to proceed with the thesis project requires acceptance of the proposal by all members of the thesis committee. If approved, the committee members will sign the Thesis Proposal Approval Form provided by the student. The chair of the student's thesis committee will retain a copy of this document for his/her files and provide a copy of the signed document to the following individuals; the graduate student, other members of the thesis committee as requested, the department advisor of graduate students, and the department chair.
- e) The student will be responsible for completing all components of the thesis project as outlined in the proposal meeting including gaining permission from the University of North Alabama Institutional Review Board (IRB) for studies involving data from human subjects and submitting copies of the final thesis document in required format to the thesis committee.
- f) Upon submission of the final thesis document to all committee members, a defense meeting will be scheduled by the student during which the student will provide a presentation and oral defense of the results of his/her thesis project to the committee. At this defense meeting, the student will be required to provide a completed copy of the Thesis Defense Form (see Thesis Defense Form attached), minus committee members' signatures.
- g) Upon conclusion of the presentation and oral defense of the thesis document, the committee will vote regarding successful completion of the thesis. If accepted, the approving members of the committee will sign the Thesis Approval Form provided by the student. The chair of the student's thesis committee will retain a copy of this document for his/her files, return the original to the student to be included in the bound copy of the thesis to be retained in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation Library, and provide a copy of the signed document to the following individuals; the graduate student, other members of the thesis committee as requested, the department advisor of graduate students, and the department chair. If the student is unsuccessful in the defense, the committee will provide specific instructions to the student regarding necessary changes, additions, etc. The student will set another defense date upon completion of the required revisions. Successful completion of the thesis will require a majority vote by the committee members.

- h) Upon final approval of the student's thesis document by the thesis committee, the student will be responsible for providing to the chair of the thesis committee three bound copies of the approved document; one for the University of North Alabama Library, one for the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation Library, and one for the chair of the student's thesis committee. The chair of the thesis committee will inform the student of the prescribed nature of these bound documents.
- i) Once all requirements have been completed relative to the thesis process, the chair of the student's thesis committee will inform, in writing, the department advisor of graduate students and the department chair that all such requirements have been completed and that the appropriate grade should be recorded on the student's transcript.

Thesis Preparation and Formatting

A "journal-format" thesis is required for students completing a thesis as part of the Master of Science degree in Health and Human Performance through the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at the University of North Alabama. This approach requires the student, in consultation with his/her thesis committee chair, to select a professional peer-reviewed journal (national or international level) in which the final paper would be viewed as a proper fit for that journal considering the scope and mission as stated by the journal. Journal format requires the student to obtain the "information for authors" or author guidelines for the identified journal and format the thesis *exactly as outlined by the journal*. This should be done from the initiation of the thesis project (i.e. from the proposal stage forward) as opposed to following the traditional five chapter approach. Correctly followed, this model will result in a final thesis paper which is properly formatted and ready for immediate submission to a previously-identified journal following successful defense before the thesis committee. The "information for authors" or other author guidelines must be printed from the journal website or photocopied from a printed version of the identified journal and submitted with the thesis proposal when reviewed by the committee. The final bound copy of the thesis should be submitted with the following components in the order listed;

- a) Title page (formatted as per the following example)
- b) Table of contents (formatted as per the following example)
- c) Thesis Proposal Approval Form (with thesis committee member signatures)
- d) Thesis Defense Approval Form (with thesis committee member signatures)
- e) Acknowledgments (if student chooses)
- f) Copy of author guidelines from selected journal
- g) Final thesis paper in precise journal format*

*This may include an additional title page as required by the journal

Title Page Example

The Influence of Interval Training vs. Constant Load Cycling on Markers of Muscle Damage in Collegiate Cross-Country Runners

Author's full name

A THESIS

Completed in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
University of North Alabama

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science Degree

Date: month, day, year (ex: 02/05/2010)

Table of Content Example

Table of Contents

Thesis Proposal Approval Form

Thesis Defense Approval Form

Acknowledgments (if included)

Copy of author guidelines for selected journal

Final thesis paper (journal format)

Thesis Proposal Approval Form

Student _____

Degree Sought/Concentration _____

Date of Thesis Proposal Meeting _____

Department _____

Topic/Title of Thesis _____

Estimated Date of Completion _____
(semester) (year)

Signatures: Signature below reflects agreement of the graduate faculty members to serve on the student's thesis committee and the approval of each committee member that the thesis project be pursued as proposed by the student including any contingencies as outlined in the proposal meeting on the date specified.

Name (typed or printed)

Signature

Committee Chair

Member

Member

Member

Member

Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
College of Education
University of North Alabama
Box 5073, Flowers Hall
Florence, AL 35632-0001

Thesis Defense Approval Form

Student _____

Degree Sought/Concentration _____

Date of Thesis Defense _____

Department _____

Topic/Title of Thesis _____

Signatures: The undersigned confirm that we have reviewed the student's (named above) thesis project including the written document and the oral defense and we agree that this thesis conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation pursuant to the degree sought. In the case of approval pending certain contingencies, each committee member may either sign with expectation that the committee chair ensure appropriate edits prior to submission or provide signature after they are offered the opportunity to review and approve edits as discussed during the oral defense.

Name (typed or printed)

Signature/Date

Committee Chair

Member

Member

Member

Member

Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
College of Education
University of North Alabama
Box 5073, Flowers Hall
Florence, AL 35632-0001