

Department of Health and Human Performance
Fall Semester, 2011

Guidelines and Dates for **Senior Thesis Proposal** and **Senior Thesis** * in Fall Semester, 2011

The generic checklist provided below should serve as a minimal rather than exhaustive guideline for students to use in completing their project. While the checklist below is not a sequenced set of steps that every student will follow, the timing of dates for various steps is highly recommended.

- ___ Meet with their advisor, then with other faculty who will be serving as committee members.
- ___ Determine the research question and frame it in way that is answerable, testable, and replicable.
- ___ Establish sufficient background in related, primary research literature to support the thesis project.
- ___ Develop a viable research design, including operational definitions of independent and dependent variables, identification of relevant extraneous variables, consideration of plausible controls, minimal size of sample needed for specific design, clear statement of hypotheses.
- ___ Submit a **3-4 page proposal** to advisor **at least 60 days before your intended defense date. In this short presentation you clearly explain the rationale for your study and integrate an initial literature review with the specific design and statistical analyses you plan to use.**
- ___ The proposal is to outline the project in sufficient detail and with sufficient clarity that the advisor and committee can determine if the project can proceed as planned or needs revision prior to implementation. The proposal should use the same style and format as will be used in the final manuscript and also should include a review of literature sufficient to establish that a relevant research literature exists. Students should **expect revisions** based on interaction with their advisor, committee members, and HHP faculty.
- ___ Establish a viable timeline for completion of component tasks up to and including the oral presentations/defense.
- ___ If necessary, determined in collaboration with your advisor, obtain IRB approval from the MSU-Billings IRB.
- ___ Obtain cooperation from participants, arrange for implementation of the study, and conduct the study consistent with the methods and procedures approved by your advisor, committee, and IRB.
- ___ Decide upon and follow the author guidelines of a professional journal to which your thesis might be submitted.
- ___ Write and submit drafts of each chapter to advisor, then committee members, in timely manner leading up to the oral defense
- ___ Develop the plan and follow the procedures for managing the data, including collection, analysis, and storage of raw data
- ___ Present advisor and committee with *defense copy* of the thesis **by the date noted above** prior to oral defense (understanding that minor editorial adjustments should be expected in turning the defense copy into the final copy)
- ___ Practice the oral defense, including any technology and the backup audiovisual supports that will be available in the case of technological glitches

For Fall, 2011 the faculty have decided that the schedule for Senior Proposal and/or Thesis Defense Dates will be as follows:

Proposal/Thesis Presentation Dates

- **October 11: 2-4pm**
- **November 15: 2-4 pm**
- **December 6: 2-4 pm**

NB In addition to attendance by departmental faculty and students, an invitation will be extended to the entire campus and local health professions community.