

OVERVIEW

This manual describes guidelines and requirements for the Thesis (CSD 770). The purpose of this manual is to assure consistency in the quality and components of theses within the Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders. The manual will also help the student comply with standards set by the Graduate School for the approval, conduct, and publication of research.

The manual is divided into two sections. Section 1 describes guidelines and procedures for registration, preparation, submission, and acceptance of the thesis. Section 2 provides an overview of the structure and content of the thesis and minimal formatting requirements for preparation of the manuscript. The student is referred to the latest edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for more detailed information about producing a well-formatted document. The student is also encouraged to review "Manuscript Preparation and Sample Paper" in the APA manual before writing the report.

SECTION 1

Thesis Guidelines

The student preparing a master's thesis should adhere to the following policies and guidelines with exactitude. In addition to the guidelines herein, the student must adhere to the deadlines and regulations stated in the University catalogue.

A student is eligible to begin thesis preparation once regular admission to the graduate Communication Sciences & Disorders (CSD) program has been granted and the core research course (CSD 687) has been satisfactorily completed. The thesis is an independent project and should demonstrate the student's capacity for research, ability to organize and interpret data, and facility in scholarly writing.

The Master's of Science degree in CSD at Southeastern Louisiana University requires either successful completion of a Master's Thesis or successful completion of six (6) credit hours of CSD electives and a comprehensive examination. Thus, the thesis is an option that replaces 6 hours of electives and the comprehensive examination.

Getting Started

— A student who is interested in pursuing completion of a Master's thesis should inform his/her graduate advisor of this interest as soon as possible. This will help the faculty provide early support and guidance to facilitate the process. Expressing an interest and exploring potential topics do not obligate the student to the thesis option.

For most students the CSD thesis process will be introduced in CSD 687, Research in Communication Sciences & Disorders. This core class is a requirement for completion of the Master's degree at SLU in CSD and must be completed prior to registration for CSD 770 (Thesis). One assignment in CSD 687 requires the completion of a research proposal; it is recommended that students interested in a thesis project use this assignment to develop a preliminary proposal for the thesis.

For students who are interested in thesis research, but do not have a particular topic, the following strategies for identifying a topic are suggested:

1. Talk to your instructor in CSD 687
2. Talk to your graduate advisor about potential topics
3. If you have a particular area of interest, but do not know of a research question,
 - a. Make an appointment with the CSD faculty member with expertise most closely related to your interests to ask for help in choosing a topic.
 - b. Review the literature in the area of interest; many articles will include "directions for future research" in the discussion section of the article.
4. Go to the library and look through journals in the field of communication disorders such as *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, *Journal of Speech, Language, Hearing Research*, *Journal of Communication Disorders*, etc.

The selected topic area should be one that is within the scope of expertise and interest of the CSD faculty, and also within the scope of the CSD curriculum. Once a potential topic is identified the student should identify a potential thesis Chairperson, and obtain this faculty member's agreement to work with the student to explore the feasibility of pursuing the thesis option. Once the potential thesis Chairperson agrees, the student can take the first formal step as follows:

Expression of Interest to Pursue the Thesis Option

— The first formal step in pursuing the thesis option is to declare an interest by completing Form CSD-1 entitled “ **Expression of Interest to Pursue Thesis.**” Completion of this form does not obligate either the student or the faculty advisor. This form is merely a formalization of an “exploratory” phase in which the student and faculty determine if the thesis option and potential topic are viable. This step allows the student to learn more about the thesis process. It also allows the potential Thesis Chairperson to consider the suitability for pursuing the thesis option based on considerations such as the following:

- Proposed topic (e.g. Is the topic within the expertise and interest of the proposed thesis chair & faculty? Is the topic within the scope of the CSD department?)
- Student's scholarly potential (e.g. Is the student's academic achievement indicative of probable success in completing the thesis option?)
- Student's writing ability (e.g. Is the student's writing skill compatible with independent pursuit of the thesis?)

In order to complete the form “Expression of Interest to Pursue a Thesis” the **student must:**

Provide samples of scholarly writing (e.g. research proposal from CSD 687; research paper or other writing sample from graduate or undergraduate school).

Provide a “pre-proposal” outlining the research topic, problem statement,

purpose/objectives of the project, significance of the project and methodology. This brief narrative should be approximately 2 to 5 pages long.

Obtain the signatures of the potential Thesis Chairperson and a Secondary Reader (such as the Graduate Advisor or Graduate Coordinator) on the form.

The approved form and attachments are then submitted to the Department Head for his/her approval, and filed in the student's record. Once this step has been completed and the student is approved to pursue the thesis option, then the student should select the Thesis Committee.

Selection of Major Professor and Thesis Advisory Committee

— The student should schedule a meeting with the graduate faculty member who has agreed to serve as the chairperson of the thesis committee. The remaining members of the thesis committee should be selected by the student in consultation with the chairperson. Members who possess expertise and interests supportive of the student's research topic should be selected. Graduate faculty should chair no more than two research projects per semester. In addition, graduate faculty should participate on no more than two thesis committees per semester.

The thesis committee shall consist of the chairperson and a minimum of two other faculty members. At least two members must have graduate faculty status, one of whom must be from the university granting the major. The chairperson must be a member of the SLU CSD faculty. All members must have a minimum of a master's degree in an area supportive of the thesis. The chairperson will chair all thesis committee meetings and assure that the committee approves the thesis topic and monitors the student's progress. The student is responsible for scheduling meetings and for disseminating information and written manuscripts to each committee member prior to deadlines.

Approval and Registration of Thesis Topic

Once the “**Expression of Interest to Pursue a Thesis**” is approved and the chairperson is selected, the student must register for CSD 770 (Thesis) at the beginning of the semester thesis work is to begin. A grade of “IP” (in progress) is assigned for each semester the thesis is in progress. Students must continually register for the thesis each semester the thesis is in progress and for each summer term in which a student receives faculty assistance and/or utilizes university resources. Once the committee approves the thesis, the chairperson must submit a grade change form to Enrollment Services to enter a final grade of “P” (pass) for the “IP” grade on the student's transcript.

The thesis topic is selected by the student and approved by the chairperson and the thesis committee. The research topic must be registered with the Graduate School and approved by the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. The form for “**Registration of the Thesis Topic**” (see Form A) should give the title of the thesis and the names of the thesis committee members. The signature of the thesis committee on the registration form represents their agreement to serve on the thesis committee. Once approved and registered, the topic cannot be changed without written approval by the thesis committee. Forms will be filed in permanent student files.

The Formal Research Proposal

Once the topic is registered, the student should develop a formal proposal for the thesis. The thesis chairperson will work closely with the student during this formative phase of the project. The student should also request input from other committee members, especially in regard to their areas of expertise related to the thesis topic. Generally the proposal consists of Chapters 1, 2, and 3 of the thesis and includes the justification for conducting the study, statement of purpose, research question(s) and/or hypotheses, definitions, assumptions, limitations, review of literature, and methodology.

It is the responsibility of the student to insure that manuscripts submitted for review are original complete, and grammatically accurate. The Chairperson and thesis committee will provide feedback and guidance on substantive elements of the project and manuscript; the committee should not be expected to provide significant editing or rewriting due to poor quality of writing or organization.

Oral Defense of the Proposal

Following the chairperson's consent, the student will schedule a meeting with the thesis committee for the defense of the thesis proposal. A copy of the proposal must be provided to the thesis committee members **at least 2 weeks prior to the thesis proposal defense**. The student will present a summary of the proposal and answer questions as needed. The student will be asked to leave the room after the oral defense for the committee to discuss and vote on the proposal. The student may be readmitted after the discussion if further information or clarification is required. If changes are required, then the proposal will not be approved at this time. After the defense of the proposal, the student shall submit a revised proposal, if requested, to the committee. The chairperson will notify the student of acceptance/approval of the proposal. Upon acceptance, the thesis committee will sign the **Approval of Proposal for Thesis” (see Form B)**.

IRB Approval

All research requires **prior approval** of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Southeastern Louisiana University prior to the collection of data. Information regarding IRB requirements is available in the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs (OSRP) or on OSRP web page (<http://www.selu.edu/Academics/OSRP/>). The student should consult with thesis committee members regarding additional review board clearances required by the study. All institutional clearance requirements are the responsibility of the student.

During the process of thesis implementation and final writing, the student is responsible for keeping the thesis chairperson informed of progress, or lack thereof, and for maintaining a schedule consistent with the Southeastern Louisiana University General Catalogue thesis submission deadline. The student must assure that the thesis committee members are allowed sufficient time to review and properly judge all matters referred to

the committee. The student should coordinate with the thesis committee members the scheduling of appointments, periodic progress reports, reviews, and approval of drafts.

Completion of Research and Thesis Manuscript

____ The student shall complete the thesis research and write the remaining chapters of the thesis. Ethical research conduct and adherence to all IRB guidelines are required. Ongoing consultation with the thesis chairperson is recommended. It is recommended that drafts of Chapters 4 and 5 be submitted to the thesis chair and possibly to thesis committee members for input prior to the final defense. It is expected that the final draft submitted for review and oral defense will be a completed and well written manuscript of high quality.

Oral Defense and Acceptance of the Thesis

____ At least two weeks prior to the date of the oral defense, the chairperson must submit to the Department Head the “**Request for Oral Defense of Thesis**” (see Form C) requesting the oral examination. At least two weeks prior to this examination, the student should submit a typed draft of the completed thesis to each member of the thesis committee.

The oral defense is attended by the chairperson and committee members. The student and/or chair might also wish to invite the Department Head, the Dean and other individuals to attend the defense. The oral defense of the thesis should be a well-organized presentation that summarizes the project. If the student intends to discuss tables, figures or graphs, these should be presented on overheads, slides or PowerPoint. The student should be prepared to address questions as needed. After the thesis defense the committee will meet to discuss the thesis, and approve or request changes.

The acceptance of the thesis lies with the student's thesis committee, the Department Head and the Dean of Nursing and Health Sciences. The completed and defended thesis must be presented to the chairperson no later than two weeks before the date of graduation.

The final, approved form of the thesis must be reviewed and officially endorsed by signatures on Form D, “**Approval of Thesis**”. Signatures are required by the thesis committee, the Department Head, and the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Multiple signed copies of this form are required (at least 4 copies). Grievances concerning the completion or approval of the thesis follow the routine grievance procedures of the University.

Submission and Disposition of Thesis

____ At least one week before graduation, the original and three copies of the final, approved form of the thesis, with the signed **Approval of Thesis**, must be submitted to the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School. The Office of the Dean of the Graduate School will deliver the manuscripts to the Sims Memorial Library for binding. The Library will accept thesis manuscripts from employees of the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School only. The original thesis manuscript will be catalogued for permanent storage in the Library. One copy will be forwarded to the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School, one retained in the Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders Office and one retained by the student. The student may request up to a maximum of seven copies for binding. The remaining three copies may be distributed to the chairperson, committee members, or other persons of the student's choosing.

Thesis Binding

____ The University charges for binding for each copy of the thesis. Binding fees must be paid to the Controller's Office prior to submission of the thesis to the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School.

Required Documentation and Binding Form

The original receipt from the Controller's Office of the binding fee must be provided at the time of submission of the thesis to the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School. Each thesis copy must include a signed **Approval of Thesis** Form.

Also when submitting the thesis to the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School, the student will be required to sign a Thesis Binding Form indicating the exact spelling of the author's name and thesis title to be imprinted on the spine of each bound copy.

Type of Paper

-
___The original manuscript to be bound by the Library must be on 20 pound weight paper of at least 50% cotton fiber content. The copies may be on regular photocopy-quality paper.

Physical Layout

-
___Each thesis copy must be intact, with the pages numbered in correct order according to the required thesis style. Copies of the thesis must be separated from each other by colored paper, or placed in manila envelopes.

Picking Up Bound Copies

-
___The Office of the Dean of the Graduate School will notify the CSD Office when the bound copies are ready.

Publication Etiquette

-
___The student should be aware that the Thesis Chair and committee members mentor thesis projects as a service to the University and the student, and they do not accrue credit toward their workload hours for this time. If the student intends to present or publish the thesis project before or after graduation (e.g. journal publication, ASHA presentation), it is customary (although not mandatory) to include the Thesis Chairperson as a second author. The Thesis Chair expends considerable time and effort in insuring a quality product and mentoring the student; therefore, this should be reflected in authorship of subsequent products. If a member(s) of the committee is deeply involved in the writing or mentoring of the thesis project, the student might also wish to consider extending authorship to such members.

Guidelines Procedure Summary

Preliminary Approval (prior to registration for CSD 770)

- Satisfactorily complete CSD 687 (Research) (note: a preliminary project proposal can be completed as an assignment in CSD 687)
- Identify a thesis project or topic area of interest
- Identify a graduate faculty member who has expertise or interest in the area of the proposed research
- Meet with the faculty member to determine his/her interest in serving as faculty advisor/thesis chair for the project
- Prepare **Form CSD-1, Expression of Interest to Pursue the Thesis Option**
 - Typed form
 - Writing sample(s)
 - Description of the project including the problem statement, purpose/ objectives of the project, significance of the project and methodology.

- Invite another faculty member to serve as secondary reader for the preliminary proposal
- Submit Form CSD-1, the writing samples and preliminary project proposal to the prospective thesis chair and secondary reader.
- Distribute the signed Form CSD-1 as follows: original to Department Head, copies to prospective thesis advisor and student.

(Note: The preceding steps need not be completed in chronological order. That is, a student might choose to identify a project and faculty advisor prior to taking CSD 687, etc)

Pursuing the Thesis Option

- Adhere to all deadlines of the University to insure graduation at the expected time
- Register for CSD 770 (Show a copy of Form CSD-1, **Expression of Interest to Pursue the Thesis Option**, to your advisor at time of registration in order to register for CSD 770).
- Select thesis committee in collaboration with the thesis chair.
- Complete **Form A, Registration for Thesis Topic** and submit to the Graduate School with copies to the Chairperson, Department head and Dean.
- Continue to register for CSD 770 each semester that you are working on the thesis
- Write formal research proposal (Chapters 1, 2,3)
- Submit working drafts to the thesis chair during the writing process
- Schedule a **defense of the thesis proposal** meeting.
- Submit a copy of the formal thesis proposal to the committee **at least two weeks prior to** the scheduled defense
- Prepare a presentation for the oral defense of the proposal
- Defend the thesis proposal
- Make changes in the proposal if requested
- Obtain Signatures on **Form B, Approval of Proposal for Thesis** and circulate copies
- Obtain IRB approval for the research project
- Conduct the research project
- Complete the thesis manuscript
- Schedule an oral defense of the thesis with the Chairperson and committee members

- Submit *Form C, Request for Oral Defense of Thesis* at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense meeting.
- Submit a typed final draft of the completed thesis to each member of the thesis committee at least two weeks prior to the oral defense meeting.
- Prepare for the oral defense of the thesis
- After the oral defense, if changes are recommended, prepare the final form of the thesis and submit to the thesis chair (and committee members if so requested)
- Complete *Form D, Approval of Thesis* (obtain at least 4 signed originals)
- Pay binding fees at the Controller's office
- Submit a perfect original and 3 copies of thesis to Dean of Graduate School (more copies if desired)
 - Include the Binding Fee receipt
 - Include signed *Approval of Thesis* form for each copy requested
- Sign Thesis Binding Form at the Graduate School

Responsibilities of Thesis Committee Members

- Sign *Form A, Registration for Thesis Topic* indicating agreement to serve on the thesis advisory committee
- Review drafts of the thesis proposal and subsequent chapters and provide **prompt** feedback.
- Make available conference times as requested by the student and thesis chair.
- Make sure that suggestions and recommendations are consistent with the guidance being offered by the chairperson and/or other committee members. That is, do not put the student in the position of getting conflicting information from several sources. If in doubt, consult with the chairperson.
- Disagreements between a student and committee member should be mediated and resolved through the Chairperson prior to defense meetings.
- Authorize in conjunction with the chairperson and other committee members any changes from specified requirements (e.g. style, organization of the manuscript).
- Attend oral defenses of the proposal and the thesis after carefully reviewing manuscripts.
- Sign *Form B, Approval of Proposal for Thesis* indicating acceptance of the thesis proposal. If a majority of the committee abstains from signing, then the proposal will not be accepted.
- Sign *Form D, Approval of Thesis* indicating acceptance of the thesis. If a majority of the committee abstains from signing, then the thesis will not be accepted.
- Committee members should not wait until the final defense of the thesis to suggest substantive changes in the project or the manuscript. Such issues should be addressed in advance.

- If a committee member is unable to continue serving on the committee, then the Chairperson and student (in consultation with the Department Head) will select a replacement.

Responsibilities of the Thesis Chairperson

- Determine if s/he has the expertise and interest to supervise the thesis project
- Sign *Form A, Registration for Thesis Topic* indicating agreement to serve on the thesis advisory committee
- Chair all committee meetings and defense examinations.
- Guide and mentor the student during the design and execution of the thesis research and writing.
- Review drafts of the thesis proposal and subsequent chapters, and provide **prompt** feedback.
- Make available conference times as needed for the progress of the thesis.
- Consult with other committee members to inform them of progress and solicit input.
- Disagreements between a student and committee member should be mediated and resolved through the Chairperson prior to defense meetings. If the disagreement is not resolved through discussion, then a vote of the committee will be used to resolve the issue.
- Attend oral defenses of the proposal and the thesis after carefully reviewing manuscripts.
- Submit *Form C, Request for Oral Defense of Thesis* at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense meeting (the student schedules the meeting).
- Invite, in collaboration with the student, additional attendees to the oral defense as desired.
- Notify the student of approval/acceptance of the proposal and subsequently notify the student of the approval/acceptance of the thesis.
- Committee members should not wait until the final defense of the thesis to suggest substantive changes in the project or the manuscript. Such issues should be addressed in advance.
- If a committee member is unable to continue serving on the committee, then the Chairperson and student (in consultation with the Department Head) will select a replacement.

The following are not the responsibility of the Chairperson:

- It is not the responsibility of the chair to remind the student of deadlines
- It is not the responsibility of the chair to execute any portion of the research
- It is not the responsibility of the chair to write or rewrite any portion of the manuscript

Responsibilities of the Student

- Prepare *Form CSD-1, Expression of Interest to Pursue the Thesis Option*

- Typed form
 - Writing sample(s)
 - Description of the project including the problem statement, purpose/ objectives of the project, significance of the project and methodology.
- Invite a prospective thesis advisor and another faculty member to review the preliminary proposal
 - Distribute the signed Form CSD-1, *Expression of Interest to Pursue the Thesis Option*
 - Register for CSD 770 (thesis)
 - Select thesis committee in collaboration with the thesis chairperson
 - Obtain signatures on *Form A, Registration for Thesis Topic* and submit to the Graduate School with copies to the Chairperson, Department head and Dean.
 - Schedule meetings as needed with the chairperson, committee members or others as needed
 - Allow sufficient time for committee members to review and evaluate all matters or draft documents referred to them.
 - Meet all deadlines as specified in the current Southeastern Louisiana University catalogue.
 - Continue to register for CSD 770 each semester that you are working on the thesis
 - Write formal research proposal (Chapters 1, 2,3) after registration of topic
 - Submit working drafts to the thesis chair (and committee members as appropriate) during the writing process
 - Schedule a meeting for an oral **defense of the thesis proposal** with the chair and committee members.
 - Submit a copy of the formal thesis proposal to the committee **at least two weeks prior to** the scheduled defense
 - Prepare a presentation for the oral defense of the proposal and defend the thesis proposal
 - Make changes in the proposal, if requested
 - Obtain signatures on *Form B, Approval of Proposal for Thesis* indicating acceptance of the thesis proposal and circulate copies. If a majority of the committee abstains from signing, then the proposal will not be accepted.
 - Obtain IRB approval for the research project
 - Conduct the research project after IRB approval is obtained
 - Complete the thesis manuscript - the student should expect to complete several rough drafts of the manuscript and/or individual chapters.

- Typically a first draft is submitted to the thesis chair for review
- Subsequent drafts should be circulated to the entire committee

- Check with the Graduate School to obtain final instructions on manuscript preparation; it is the responsibility of the student to obtain the most recent requirements from the Graduate School (Graduate School requirements take precedence over the style guidelines in the CSD thesis guidelines).

- The student is responsible for making all arrangements for preparation of the manuscript and meeting all CSD, University and Graduate School requirements as to type, paper, margins, quality, style, etc.

- The student is solely responsible for the accuracy and correctness of the findings of the thesis.

- The student is solely responsible for any infringements of copyright, patent or other civil or criminal suits which may arise from the thesis.

- Schedule an oral defense of the thesis with the Chairperson and committee members (check for availability of a suitable room for the defense).

- Submit a typed final draft of the completed thesis to each member of the thesis committee at least two weeks prior to the oral defense meeting.

- Prepare for the oral defense of the thesis

- After the oral defense, if changes are recommended, prepare the final form of the thesis and submit to the thesis chair (and committee members if so requested)

- Obtain signatures on **Form D, Approval of Thesis** indicating acceptance of the thesis. If a majority of the committee abstains from signing, then the thesis will not be accepted.

- Pay binding fees at the Controller's office

- Submit a perfect original and 3 copies of thesis to the Dean of Graduate School (more copies up to 7 if desired)
 - Include the Binding Fee receipt
 - Include signed **Approval of Thesis** form for each copy requested

- Sign **Thesis Binding Form** at the Graduate School

Form CSD-1

Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders

Expression of Interest to Pursue a Thesis

Name _____ of _____ Student

Major _____ Degree

Proposed Thesis Topic _____

Proposed _____ Thesis _____ Chairperson

Proposed _____ Reader _____ Secondary

Proposed Thesis Advisor _____

Graduate Student _____

Secondary Reader _____ Department Head, CSD

Date _____

Attachments: Sample of scholarly writing
Pre-proposal

Form A

Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders

Registration of Thesis Topic

Name _____ of _____ Student

Major _____ Degree

Title of Thesis

Expected Date of Completion _____

Thesis Committee:

Signature Date Signature Date

Signature Date Signature Date

Signature Date Signature Date

Signature Date Signature Date

Form B

Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders

Approval of Proposal for Thesis

Name of Student _____

Proposed Topic _____

The above thesis proposal has been reviewed and approved by the following members of the thesis advisory committee

Thesis Chairperson

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Date

Approved by:

Department Head

(Original to Department Head; Copies to Chair, Student, Dean of the College of Nursing & Health Sciences; Dean, Graduate School)

Form C

Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders

Request for Oral Defense of Thesis

Date

The _____ thesis committee chairperson _____ for

candidate for the degree of _____

with a major in _____, requests approval of

_____ as the date for the oral defense of the thesis.

The defense will be held in

_____ Room _____ at _____ o'clock ____ m.

Title of Thesis:

Approved:

Student Date

Thesis Chairperson Date

Department Head Date

(Submit one copy for each signatory and committee member.)

Attachment: IRB exemption or approval

Form D

Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders

Approval of Thesis

The thesis entitled _____ - _____

by _____

complies with University regulations and meets the accepted standards of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences with respect to originality and quality.

For the degree of _____

Signed and approved by the thesis advisory committee:

Thesis Chairperson

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Date

Approved by:

Department Head, CSD Date
Sciences, Date

Dean, College Nursing & Health

SECTION 2

Overview of Thesis Structure and Content

The following section provides a general guide to the structure and content of the typical thesis text. Questions regarding the unique features and style of the thesis should be directed to the chairperson and committee members. Variations to these guidelines should be approved by the thesis committee.

The major sections of a thesis manuscript are regarded as chapters and consist of the introduction (Chapter 1), review of literature (Chapter 2), methodology (Chapter 3), results (Chapter 4), and discussion (Chapter 5). The suggested organization and content for each section follows. Note that the final thesis manuscript reports completed research and should be written in past tense. Variations in the organization of the thesis manuscript must be approved **in advance** by the thesis committee.

CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

The purpose of the introductory chapter is to set the stage for the study by addressing the **rationale** for the topic under investigation, identifying the study **purpose**, and stating its **significance** to the field of communication sciences and disorders and to the public. Specifically, the introduction includes the background and scope of the problem, purpose of the study, theoretical or conceptual framework, problem statement or research questions, hypotheses, definitions, assumptions, limitations, and significance of the study. The suggested content of Chapter 1 is described in more detail below.

Introduction

This section describes the background and scope of the study to make clear the reasons the topic is worth pursuing. It also provides the context in which the topic was viewed and delimits the area under investigation.

The introduction usually includes a highlight of relevant literature and research that substantiates the relevance and scope of the problem. Use current statistics and literature in documenting the present state of the problem or need. Conclude this section with the purpose of the study.

Problem Statement

This section may be referred to either as the "problem statement" or "research questions". Quantitative studies usually use problem statements with supporting hypotheses; qualitative studies usually use research questions and do not include hypotheses. It is useful to number hypotheses or research questions, where there are several, so that they can be easily referenced in reporting results.

Definitions

Provide theoretical and/or operational definitions of relevant terms to the study. Each major term in the problem statement or research question should be defined. Major concepts within the theoretical or conceptual framework should also be defined. Identify each term with an appropriate level subheading so definitions can be easily accessed. If a large glossary of terms is required, then this section might be included as an appendix at the end of the manuscript.

Assumptions

Identify relevant theory, statements or principles that were taken for granted as being true but that were not verified by the current study. In research, assumptions generally underlie beliefs, theories, practices, and study designs.

Limitations

Identify restrictions in the study that may decrease the ability to generalize findings to the target population. There are two types of limitations: conceptual and methodological. Conceptual limitations restrict the abstract generalization of findings; methodological limitations restrict generalization on the basis of design decisions (i.e., small sample size or lack of randomization).

Significance of Study

Conclude with the practical and theoretical significance of the study for communication sciences and disorders and the general public. The practical significance should be specific in stating the potential contributions of the findings. If appropriate, the theoretical or conceptual significance should specifically address how the findings can contribute to confirming or building the underlying framework.

CHAPTER 2 - Literature Review

The major purpose of the literature review chapter is to present a thorough review of prior research related to the topic of interest that provides a foundation on which to base new knowledge. Other functions of the literature review may be to present informed opinions and clinical anecdotes that contribute to the understanding of an area of interest, especially for controversial or emerging issues. The literature review must be comprehensive, up-to-date and relevant.

The review should also include theoretical and methodological information from previous studies that guided design decisions for the present study. For major studies cited, address not only *what* was found but the adequacy of *how* they were found.

The use of an introductory paragraph to the chapter and subheadings will assist the reader in understanding the organization of the chapter.

Summary

Close the chapter with a summary of the major findings cited in the literature review and specify how the present study will extend previous findings.

CHAPTER 3 - Methods

Chapter 3 constitutes the methods section of the study and generally includes the components of design, sample, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. The introductory paragraph should orient the reader to the type of study (i.e., descriptive, experimental) and the organization of chapter content. The goal of this chapter is to describe what was done to collect and analyze the data in sufficient detail so that another researcher could replicate the study based on information provided.

Design

Specify the type of research design employed to test the research question(s) and/or hypothesis(es). Make clear how the problem statement, framework, and literature review justified the design selection. Describe in detail the study variables and interventions to be made by the researcher. Include all controls for extraneous variables to help assure internal validity of the study.

Sample

Describe the setting for the research and specify the accessible population from which the sample was drawn. State eligibility requirements for participation in the study and means taken to protect participants' rights. The method of sample selection, sample size determination, and assignment of participants to groups (where applicable) should be delineated so that the strengths and limitations of the sampling design are made known.

Instrumentation

Describe each instrument used to measure the study variables in terms of its purpose, intended audience, reliability and validity, administration, and scoring. For the scoring procedure, include the range of possible scores attainable and how scores were interpreted. Report specific indexes of reliability and validity for each instrument. Include a copy of the instrument in the appendix, when possible.

If an instrument is developed by the student for the study, the report should describe the construction and initial reliability and validity estimates of the instrument. Include any revisions made to the instrument from pilot testing and how the instrument is to be scored and interpreted.

Data collection

Describe all data collection procedures in a clear, step-wise fashion. Include how data collectors were trained, what instructions were given to participants, time frames used for data collection, steps made to increase response rate, and precautions taken to protect human rights.

Data Analysis

Briefly state which analytic procedures were employed to analyze the data. It is unnecessary to provide computational formulas; however, state the level of significance that was set for inferential statistics (i.e., $p < .05$). Descriptive statistics are generally used to describe the sample demographics. Since the analysis of data in *qualitative* studies depends largely on the researcher's interpretation of the data, analytic procedures are described in more detail than for *quantitative* studies.

CHAPTER 4 - Results

The purpose of Chapter 4 is to describe the results of the data collection process and analysis of data. This section includes any significant events or observations made during the data collection process and findings in relation to each hypothesis and/or research question. This chapter presents findings only and not a discussion of the findings.

The chapter might include an introduction describing how the presentation of results is organized (i.e., by hypotheses, research questions, etc.). Use subheadings to clearly identify each section of the chapter.

The sample characteristics (participants) are usually described with descriptive statistics and may be summarized in a table. Findings related to each hypothesis or research question should be presented separately. Make a specific statement as to whether each hypothesis was supported/unsupported or accepted/rejected; answer each research question separately. Report all results as accurately and completely as possible, whether or not the hypotheses were supported. Use tables and figures (i.e., graphs) to supplement and economize text and dramatize important findings.

Summary

Close the chapter with a summary of the major findings.

CHAPTER 5 - Discussion

Chapter 5 presents an interpretation of the study findings in light of their practical and conceptual meaning. This is often the most challenging chapter to write because it calls into play the student's interpretation of results in light of previous research, theoretical precepts, clinical implications, and design limitations. In applied research, this chapter contains little or no technical jargon, but instead focuses on the practical utility of what has been found for practicing clinicians. Thus, the language should be user-friendly and the implications for practice should be explicit.

Discussion

In discussing your interpretation of the findings, explicitly state where agreement exists with previous findings or opinions in the professional literature. If findings from this study conflict with those from earlier studies, offer tentative explanations as to why differences exist. Point out new information that has been gained and speculate as to its practical and theoretical utility. Specifically note whether the findings support or do not support the theoretical framework and what implications this has for the framework. Include a discussion of the ability to generalize findings from this study to the target population and how this might impact the problem area. (Refer to the introduction and significance sections of Chapter 1 to bring

relevant points forward.) Point out any limitations of the study that impact its external validity; make sure that the impact of these limitations have been considered in interpreting the findings.

Recommendations for Future Study

Conclude with recommendations for future study that would help answer research questions raised by the current study, strengthen design features, and contribute to understanding the area under study. The last sentence of the manuscript should bring closure to the study.

Thesis Format Requirements

Order of the Thesis

-
___ The thesis consists of three general sections: the preliminary pages, the text, and references. The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders requires that these sections be arranged as follows:

Preliminary Pages

- ___ Master's Thesis Approval Form
- Title page
- Copyright page (if applicable)
- Acknowledgments
- Abstract
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables
- List of Figures

Text

- ___ Chapter 1 (Introduction)
- Chapter 2 (Review of Literature)
- Chapter 3 (Methodology)
- Chapter 4 (Results)
- Chapter 5 (Discussion)

References

- ___ References
- Appendices

Vita

Type Quality

-
- The type must be Times New Roman font, 12 pitch, consistently clear, dark, of laser quality, and readable throughout the manuscript.

Margins

-
- All pages must have text margins of 1.5" on the left and 1" on the top, bottom, and right.
- Use left justification only. Leave the right margin unjustified.

Pagination

-

- Number all pages (except the preliminary pages, figure pages, and appendix title pages) consecutively with Arabic numerals in the upper right hand corner beginning with the title page. (The title page is the only preliminary page with an Arabic numeral.)
- The title page is page 1; the first page of CHAPTER 1 is page 2.
- All preliminary pages (except the Master's Thesis Approval and the title page) are numbered with lower case roman numerals and centered at the bottom.

Manuscript Page Headers

- Identify each text page with a page header which includes the first two or three words from the title. Place the page header in the upper right hand corner five spaces to the left of the Arabic page number.
- Use page headers on all pages containing Arabic numerals in the upper right hand corner. Do not use page headers on preliminary pages (except the title page), figure pages, or appendix title pages.

Title Page

- Identify the top of the title page with a manuscript page header. (See page headers above.)
- Type the title in upper and lower case letters, centered and two spaces down from the top margin. Double space between lines if the title is two or more lines.
- Type the name of the author in upper and lower case letters, centered in the line, and place it one double-spaced line below the title.
- The date on the title page should be the month and year that your degree will be awarded. (For the clinical research project report, the date should be the month, day, and year the report is submitted.)

Abstract

- Begin the abstract on a new page with the heading Abstract in upper and lower case letters, centered at the top of the page.
- Type the abstract content as a single paragraph, double spaced, without paragraph indentation.
- The abstract text must be no more than 350 words.
- The abstract page is numbered with lowercase roman numerals, centered and at the bottom of the page.

Copyright Page

- If thesis copyright is planned, include a copyright page with author's name, the word Copyright and/or the copyright symbol, and the year of completion.
- Double space and center the above information on the page.
- Number the copyright page with a lowercase roman numeral, centered and at the

bottom of the page.

Acknowledgments

-
- All acknowledgment text is double-spaced.
- Number with lowercase roman numerals, centered and at the bottom of the page.

Table of Contents

-
- The title Table of Contents must be centered and in uppercase letters.
- List all chapter and section titles exactly as they appear in the text.
- All page numbers given for chapters and sections must be accurate.
- The page(s) of the Table of Contents must be numbered with lowercase roman numerals, centered and at the bottom of the page.

List of Tables

-
- Begin the List of Tables on a new page.
- The section title List of Tables must be centered and in uppercase letters
- Each table must be listed with titles exactly as they appear in the text.
- Numbers for each table in the list should correspond with table numbers in the text.
- The page(s) of the List of Tables must be numbered with lowercase roman numerals, centered and at the bottom of the page.

List of Figures

-
- Begin the List of Figures on a new page.
- The section title List of Figures must be centered and in uppercase letters
- Each figure must be listed with titles exactly as they appear in the text.
- Numbers for each figure should correspond with figure numbers in the text.
- The page(s) of the List of Figures must be numbered with lowercase roman numerals, centered and at the bottom of the page.

Text

-
- Double-space between all lines of the manuscript text.
- Indent the first line of every paragraph five spaces (use tab key). (The only exceptions are for the abstract, block quotations, and table and figure captions.)

- Space once after punctuation marks at the ends of sentences.
- Identify all text pages with the manuscript page header and the Arabic page number in the upper right hand corner.

Headings

- Chapter titles should use a Level 5 heading (uppercase letters) and be centered at the top of the page.
- All subheadings should use appropriate heading Levels (1 through 4), as needed.
Example: Type CHAPTER 1 (Level 5) centered at the top of page 2; double-space, and then type the subheading Introduction (Level 1); double-space, and type the text.
- Start each chapter heading on a new page.
- Do not start a new page with subheadings. Subheadings near bottoms of pages must have at least two lines of text below them; otherwise, move them to next page.

Tables

- Place the manuscript page header and the Arabic page number in the upper right hand corner of every page of a table.
- Each table must have a number and title above it.
- All tables must be numbered consecutively in the order they appear in the text.
- Type the word Table and its Arabic numeral flush left at the top of the table. Double-space and begin the table title flush left, capitalizing the initial letters of principal words and underlining the title. If titles are longer than one line, double-space between lines.
- Separate the table title from the headings, the headings from the body of the table, and the body of the table from the footnotes or manuscript text with horizontal rules (lines). Do not use vertical rules in tables.
- * Use quadruple-spacing before and after tables to separate them from manuscript text on the same page.

Figures

- Do not insert a page header or the Arabic page number on a figure page. The figure and its caption should be centered on the page; no additional text should appear on the page.
- Each figure must have a number and caption below it.
- All figures must be numbered consecutively in the order they appear in the text.
- Type the word Figure and its Arabic numeral flush left at the bottom of the figure and underline it. On the same line type the figure caption, capitalizing only the first word of the caption and end with a period. If captions are longer than one line, double-space between lines.

- Use quadruple-spacing before and after figures to separate them from manuscript text on the same page.

References

- The section title References must be typed in upper and lowercase letters and centered at the top of the page.
- Identify all reference pages with the manuscript page header and the Arabic page number in the upper right hand corner.
- Double-space lines within and between all reference entries.
- Entries must not be divided between pages.
- Follow guidelines of the most current manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)

Appendices

- Each appendix should have a separate title page, with its title centered and in upper and lowercase letters.
- With only one appendix, do not use an identifying letter; the word Appendix is sufficient. With several appendices, label each one with a capital letter (Appendix A, etc.) in the order in which it is mentioned in the text.
- Appendix title pages must be counted, but they have no page number or manuscript page header on them. The remaining pages of each appendix must be numbered in Arabic numbers.
- Any appendix containing copyrighted material (i.e., a measurement instrument), must include a letter from the copyright holder stating permission to include the material in the manuscript.

Vita

- On a single page provide a brief narrative vita of yourself that highlights your educational and professional biography.

Corrections

- The student is solely responsible for the accuracy, authenticity, and correctness of the thesis content.
- No hand-written corrections, notes, or strikeouts are acceptable in the manuscript.
- If you use a word processor, run a spell check immediately before the final printing of the document. Proof reading of the document is essential as the spell-check function does not check for grammar, syntax, or misused words in the text.

- You may also want to use a grammar check function, if available.