University of Minnesota  
School of Kinesiology  

M.S./M.A. (Plan B) Research Project and Final Examination Guidelines  

The following are general guidelines for the completion of the M.S./M.A. Plan B research project and the conduct of the final oral examination. Please share a copy of these guidelines with your committee members when you provide them with the final examination copy of your written paper.

General guidelines for the completion of the M.S./M.A. Plan B research project  

- After completing the majority of your MS./M.A. coursework, register for 4 credits of KIN 8995: Research Problems in Kinesiology, using your adviser’s section number.  

- Develop your idea for an independent research project with your adviser. This research project should meet the following guidelines:  
  
  1. Involve a minimum of approximately 140 hours of work;  
  2. Demonstrate your familiarity with the tools of research and rigorous scholarship in Kinesiology;  
  3. Demonstrate your ability to work independently;  
  4. Demonstrate your ability to effectively present the results of your investigation;  
  5. Demonstrate originality of content;  
  6. Demonstrate compliance with all of the responsible conduct of research and academic integrity expectations of the University;  
  7. Consist of a project such as designing and conducting an original empirical study, completing analysis of data from an existing data set which you have permission to use, preparing a focused literature review, or developing a theoretical or conceptual paper.  
  8. Result in a written product that conforms to formatting and referencing standards identified by the adviser (e.g., APA, AMA);  
  9. Be completed on a topic/project area mutually agreed to by the student and adviser.  

- Secure Institutional Review Board approval as needed PRIOR to initiating the study.  
  
  1. Conduct the study according to your approved protocol.  
  2. Prepare your written research project and work with your adviser to review drafts and make revisions as needed BEFORE your adviser gives you approval to distribute final copies to your committee members. Be aware that this process typically takes several months and several exchanges of drafts.  

  NOTE: Faculty and programs reserve the right to submit your paper to electronic plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin.com or SafeAssign to verify the originality and ethical compliance of your work.  

- Follow guidelines for the preparation of papers (either original research papers or literature review papers depending on which you are doing) being submitted to journals for review as found in the publication guidelines of the journal or manual recommended by your adviser (typically the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition).  
  
  1. Approximate final length should be 30-45 pages typed double spaced
2. Tables and figures should be prepared following the guidelines of the recommended publication manual or target journal. Provide appendices as needed for any attachments, including the following:
   - Copies of all measures, questionnaires, and survey instruments used
   - Copy of Institutional Review Board approval letter
   - Copy of human subjects consent form (if applicable)

- Upon approval of your adviser, deliver your final written research project and a copy of these guidelines to all members of the examining committee, allowing at least two weeks for them to read it before the Final Oral Examination. **You should plan to hold your final oral defense during the nine-month academic year unless you have received explicit consent from all committee members to hold your exam during summer months.**

- Request a [Graduation Packet](#) from Graduate Student Services and Progress. Complete and submit forms in the Graduation Packet as instructed. You will need to bring the Final Oral Examination Report form to your exam.

General guidelines for the conduct of the Final Oral Examination

- Your Final Oral Examination will be conducted as a closed exam with only your three committee members present. All members of the committee and the student must participate in the final examination. Committee members and/or the student may participate remotely as long as all conditions for remote participation in examination are met (as specified in [University policy](#)).

- When your adviser approves, schedule a 2-hour block of time for your Final Oral Examination with committee members and reserve a room either in Cooke Hall or another University building.

- Make arrangements for a conference room and for technology devices as needed.

- Prepare a 20-30 minute oral presentation on the Plan B research project. Discuss with your adviser the expectations for the content of your presentation.

- Bring the Final Oral Examination form included in your Graduation Packet for your committee members.

- Dress professionally and arrive early to set up on the day of your exam.

- At the start of the examination, briefly describe your academic and professional history, your current academic and professional status, and your future plans.

- Give your oral presentation using technology such as PowerPoint or Prezi.

- Following your oral presentation, committee members will ask you questions about the research project or any other aspect of your program of study, including major and minor or related fields. After the question/answer session, your chair will ask you to leave the room while the committee members vote on whether you have passed or failed the examination. A majority vote of the committee is required to pass the examination. Failure of the final oral exam may result in termination from the graduate program or a retake of the examination on unanimous recommendation of the examining committee. A retake must be conducted by the original examining committee.
• Deliver the signed Final Oral Examination Report form signed by your committee to Graduate Student Services and Progress. It must be submitted by the last business day of the month you intend to graduate.

• Make any changes to the document as recommended and required by your committee and return a final copy of your paper to your adviser for final approval.

Once your adviser has received the final copy of your Plan B paper, be sure that he or she submits a grade or clears the incomplete grade for your KIN 8995: Research Problems in Kinesiology credits.

Follow the instructions provided to you by GSSP regarding your degree clearance.