

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke

Graduate Program in Public Administration

**Thesis, Professional Paper, Field Study, Non-Print and Web
Based Project**

GUIDELINES

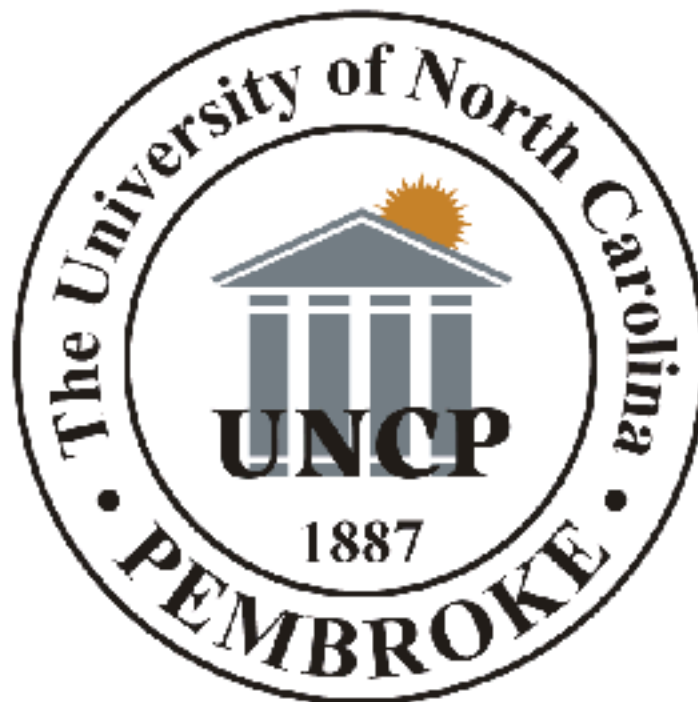


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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Each student must successfully complete a professional project **MPM 562 Professional Paper/Project** guided by MPA professors. Students taking the Criminal Justice, Emergency Management, or Health Administration Concentration will design and complete their papers in the appropriate topic/concentration area.

Overview: The Professional Paper/Project is the capstone of the MPA curriculum. As such, it is viewed as a significant and rigorous work commensurate with the completion of a graduate degree. In its strictest sense, the Professional Paper/Project can be interpreted as a research thesis; and, in this case, the student can follow the guidelines of the School of Graduate Studies and the MPA program for thesis work. However, the Professional Paper has attributes that offer options for students beyond the strict interpretation of thesis research. For example:

- A literature review of a significant topic that generates a hypothesis. The student might then construct a research design to test the hypothesis, with conclusions that could evolve and be applied.
- A feasibility study for an actual workplace project or one that the student feels would benefit an agency or not-for-profit institution.
- A series of articles that could be presented in some web-based format in the discipline or in the workplace.
- A report on the impact of a public policy or an agency function or program.
- The creation of a unified budget for a town, county, or agency.
- An agency history relating the literature and theory in the discipline to agency management and operations.
- A grant proposal.

It is important to note that the above list is not exhaustive of all the options available for the Professional Paper/Project. Nevertheless, it is a good starting point for discussions with your faculty advisor on your proposed paper. All professional project proposals are to be presented in the traditional format for approval by the MPA faculty member who is advising you and the Director of the MPA Program. All students will make an oral presentation of the Professional Paper/Project to faculty and graduate students and present one disk and two paper copies of the Professional Paper to the MPA Director. The Capstone, Professional Paper/Project is complete when the faculty advisor has approved the paper and any revisions. Following the Director's approval, a grade is submitted.

The faculty of UNCP's Graduate Program in Public Administration is here to work with you to provide you with a quality master's degree experience. This reference is designed to give you some basic information concerning the planning of your thesis, field study, or

professional paper. This document should be considered as a supplement to the official University of North Carolina at Pembroke catalog. Each student should also visit his/her assigned advisor on a regular basis. Completing a final thesis, field study, or professional paper is a stimulating and demanding process. This guide was approved by the Graduate Faculty of Public Administration on _____, and supercedes any previous information on the final thesis, field study, or professional paper research.

Objectives of final thesis, field study, or professional paper research: One of the important purposes of final thesis, field study, or professional paper is to introduce students to original research under the supervision of a graduate faculty member. The primary value of a final thesis, field study, or professional paper is that instead of studying by way of a series of minor and highly-specified topics, the student is obligated to examine a sizeable topic for a much longer period of time and to learn to clearly define both the very question and the research findings. By the time a final thesis, field study, or professional paper is completed the student can often claim to have mastered some aspect of knowledge and is much more aware of the processes of research.

In particular, you will gain experience with:

- 1) formulating a research question,
- 2) making critical use of published work,
- 3) selecting and using appropriate research methods, and
- 4) organizing and presenting material in a clear, logical, convincing way.

Definition of thesis, field study, and professional papers: Theses and field studies are similar professional papers. They are both attempts to share with the professional community information that may be used to enhance the common knowledge base of a particular profession. The focus of the thesis research is to answer a question that is of interest to the general profession. The focus of field study research is to answer questions that are of concern to a segment of a profession. The results of thesis research are generalizable to an entire field, while field studies are not.

In both cases the Master's candidate must show familiarity with previous work in the field and must demonstrate ability to organize data and explain results. Thesis at the Master's level does not require exhaustive review of work in the student's field, nor is original scholarship necessarily expected.

A professional paper attempts to share with the professional community information that may be used to enhance the common knowledge base of a particular profession. The focus of the professional paper is to produce a product that is of interest and of use to the student's professional field of study.

The Master's candidate must show familiarity with previous work in the field and must demonstrate ability to organize data and explain how his/her end product will add to the previous body of knowledge. Examples of a professional paper may include but are not limited to curriculum design for a particular discipline, training programs, or computer programs for a particular application. The professional paper is a professional paper,

which should be accompanied—if appropriate--by the finished product.

Selecting a final thesis, field study, or professional paper topic: Students may select their own topic after consultation with a graduate faculty member who is willing to act as your chair. You should discuss topics that interest you with your chair. For a Master's final thesis, field study, or professional paper, a Pre-Approval Form (see Appendix A) is to be submitted before any data is collected.

The role of your chair: Your chair is there to offer guidance on methodological and theoretical issues as well as to provide encouragement and support. It is important that the committee chair/student team works well together. Regular contact is important and should be at least two hours per month. At times, contact will be daily. It is therefore recommended that you discuss numerous issues with your committee chair, and create a written agreement.

Presenting your research proposal: Preparing a proposal is a very important part of the research process. The proposal outlines your research topic, objectives, and methods. Your committee chair will inform you if your proposal requires approval from the University's Institutional Research Board.

Presenting your final thesis, field study, or professional paper: You should employ a standard referencing system. Use of the American Psychological Association style is suggested and the use of footnotes discouraged. It is your responsibility, and not that of your committee chair to ensure that the language used in the final thesis, field study, or professional paper is consistently of a high standard. Do not underestimate the importance of language and presentation. Although no final thesis, field study, or professional paper with inadequate content will be accepted (however good the presentation); a final thesis, field study, or professional paper with adequate content but poor presentation will often be marked down. Presentation can be improved by the careful selection and organization of the most important material, by the extraction of unnecessary material and replication, by a logical structure, and by clear and concise writing. Write, edit and re-write.

Publications: We strongly encourage students to consider publication of their research findings in academic and/or professional journals. Normally this would be done once you have completed writing up your final thesis, field study, or professional paper and have submitted it for examination.

There are three major reasons for publishing a final thesis, field study, or professional paper. First, writing research for publication requires different (although complementary) skills than those involved in a final thesis, field study, or professional paper. Experience in writing for publication will be very valuable in most careers and can help to develop important writing skills. Secondly, the empirical data you collect can make a significant contribution to the development of your subject, but only if this information is disseminated! Finally, publication enhances your career prospects and the public image of University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

We encourage students to conduct research, which is potentially publishable, and to regard the publication of their research findings as a natural sequel to writing up the final thesis, field study, or professional paper. Normally journal publication would be done in collaboration with your committee chair, whose input should have contributed to the quality of the research as well as the published paper, and thus should be recognized as a co-author. Such collaboration should be discussed and agreed upon early in the final thesis, field study, or professional paper process.

CHAPTER II

Characteristics of a Good Final Thesis, Field Study, or Professional Paper Topic

Need for research: A significant need for the research should exist. The results need not have immediate application but the topic should not be trivial. The candidate should believe that his/her research is important and worthwhile. This will help to retain motivation in periods of routine work on the final thesis, field study, or professional paper. The need to understand the nature of some specific phenomenon is the motivation for much research that has no immediate practical relevance, but there should, at the same time, be some need, importance or significance in knowing the results.

Amenable to research methods: Your topic needs to be feasible both as to the availability of data and the availability of tools for analysis. Some research projects and research methods are beyond the capabilities of students because of technical, cost, or length of time requirements.

Achievable in a reasonable time: Typically, a Master's final thesis, field study, or professional paper should be capable of being completed in one semester by full-time students and two semesters by part-time graduate students. A Master's final thesis, field study, or professional paper should normally be in the range of 45 and 75 double-spaced pages. The nature of the subject may require you to exceed these typical ranges.

Match with student's capabilities and interests: The research topic should match both your interests and capabilities. This will sustain you in times of frustration and offset the possibility of entering areas in which you are less competent.

Contribution of knowledge: The definition of this concept is difficult. A Master's final thesis, field study, or professional paper does not have to make a significant contribution to knowledge. Thus it does not have to be entirely original, yet it should be based on a significant problem, or research question. For example, you may replicate a study in a new geographical area, or with improved data and/or techniques. Your work should relate to, explain, solve or add proof to the question, or problem. The results of your research should increase knowledge of that particular field of enquiry. Knowledge can be increased by:

- New or improved evidence
- New or improved methodology
- New or improved technology/materials
- New or improved concepts of theories, or
- Any combination of the above

CHAPTER III

Planning Your Research

Many students find that it helps to break their final thesis, field study, or professional paper into smaller tasks, and to plan when and how each task will be completed.

Primary tasks of a final thesis, field study, or professional paper include:

- Selecting a research topic
- Reviewing literature on the topic
- Writing and gaining approval for a final professional paper proposal, including selecting specific research questions and developing research methodology
- Writing the first draft of the Method chapter
- Preparing for data collection
- Collecting data
- Analyzing data
- Revising the Introduction and Method chapters and writing the remainder of your final thesis, field study, or professional paper, including the Results and Discussion.

It is recommended that data collection begin only after you have undertaken a comprehensive literature review, since reading will often suggest more effective means of collecting data.

When selecting research questions and methodology, estimate the resources (time, money, sample size) you will need to carry out the study. Many students have found that obtaining an appropriate sample usually takes some effort as only a small percentage of individuals contacted for interviews or mailed questionnaires agree to participate. You will need to consider very carefully the nature of the sample, its availability and the practicality of obtaining data from your sample. Read studies which have used similar designs. If you are considering a design that involves collecting data within an organization, approval will need to be obtained from various members of the organization. The approval process often takes time and you may have to contact several organizations to arrange your sample. It is important to begin doing this early, while you are developing your research methodology. You may also require approval from the University's Institutional Research Board for special areas of study.

Timeline: All thesis, field studies, and professional papers are considered major research work of a graduate student/scholar. Each student/author should consider their work as important to their field as any published article in a recognized professional journal. A major research project cannot be done in a few weeks. Generally the planning for a thesis, field study or professional paper should begin a year in advance.

Table A: *Example of final paper or professional paper timetable*

| Task | Time Frame |
|---|--------------------|
| Choose a research topic, need, or issue. | Early in fall term |
| Find a chair that is interested in your topic, need, or issue | Early in fall term |
| Develop your final thesis, field study, or professional paper proposal, select a writing committee, and seek IRB approval if needed | October - November |
| Write the literature review and method chapters | December - January |
| Collect data | February - March |
| Analyze data | March |
| Complete final thesis, field study, or professional paper writing | April - May |
| Complete oral defense of paper | May |

CHAPTER IV

The Research Proposal

It is crucial that the research proposal be clear and well planned so that effort is not misdirected. A great deal of planning must go into your research project; possibly as much as 50 percent of the total time you spend on your final thesis, field study, or project will be taken up by planning.

The process of preparation of your research proposal should be subjected to constant revision as a result of constructive comment and criticism. You should actively seek expert opinion on your proposal; it is far better to develop a viable research project at the outset than commence with a research project that proves to be unrealistic after a great deal of time and effort has been put into it. You should continue with your literature study, discussions with experts and/or exploratory work until you are absolutely sure about your research problem and have a proposal, which constitutes a clear, crisp definition of the research project.

The research proposal should contain a brief but clear statement of exactly what you want to do and how you propose to do it. Do not expect your chair and other advisers to consult any other document to obtain a clear idea of your research project.

As you begin your planning there are a few questions you need to ask yourself. They are:

1. How can I develop a thesis, professional paper, or field study that shows imagination and intellectual craftsmanship?
2. How do I state the problem clearly?
3. Can I write hypotheses or research questions that are clear, unambiguous and testable (thesis, or field study)?
4. If I do not need hypotheses are objectives clearly stated; can they be accomplished?
5. If I am planning a professional paper, do I have the equipment, support services, and/or facilities I need?
6. How will I analyze the data or show that my project accomplishes the goals I set?
7. If I need a sample population, is the population from which the sample is to be drawn receptive to the research and easily available to me?
8. Is the final thesis, field study, or professional paper trying to do too much?
If yes to 8: What would make the project more manageable?

When you are ready to submit your proposal you will include the *Proposal Approval Form*. A copy of this form is on page 11.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT PEMBROKE
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

MPM 562 (PROFESSIONAL PAPER)

STUDENT: _____

PROJECT TITLE: _____

ABSTRACT: _____

APPROVAL DATE: _____

COMMITTEE: PRIMARY ADVISOR: _____ DATE: _____

RESEARCH ADVISOR: _____ DATE: _____

DR. NICHOLAS A. GIANNATASIO, DIRECTOR
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

CC: STUDENT
 COMMITTEE MEMBERS
 MPA STUDENT FILES

STUDENT SIGNATURE _____

NOTE: A FINAL COPY OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL MUST BE INCLUDED WITH THIS SIGNED FORM.

CHAPTER V Thesis/Field Study

Introduction

A thesis is generally defined as:

. . . the written product of a systematic study of a significant problem. It identifies the problem, states the major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, sets forth the sources for and methods of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished project [product] evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation.

While the statement above delineates the technical differences between a thesis and a professional paper, at times there is a fine line between the two. A thesis/field study is distinguished by certain elements such as an introduction to the study, a review of the literature, a methodology section, results, summary, and recommendations for further research, while a professional paper may not have these components.

The **field study** attempts to answer questions that pertain to a unique environment such as a classroom or single school district.

The **thesis** attempts to answer a general question or questions that are of interest to an entire profession. There is also a difference between the elements found in a quantitative thesis versus those found in a non-quantitative (qualitative) thesis, thus some sections of this description may not apply, and the format should only be used as a guide and not an unyielding outline.

In general, the introduction should contain one or more hypotheses that establish the purpose(s) of the study and upon which theoretical and organizational plans for the study are based. The literature review should provide empirical evidence supporting the study and put the study in context with other research in the field. The methodology section explicitly describes how the research was conducted, including any statistical treatment. The result section reports and discusses the findings of the study and recommends areas for future research. The summary section is self-explanatory. A specific format may be found in the style manual appropriate to the academic area in which the thesis is written. Appendices, which include data, maps, and other material too detailed or bulky for inclusion in the body of the text, may be appended at the end.

It should be noted here that a distinction is made between a quantitative thesis, which usually involves the collection and statistical analyses of numerical data, and a non-quantitative thesis that does not. Thus, there are some portions of the thesis outline below that may not apply to all theses. The following explanation is offered as a guide.

CHAPTER VI

Thesis/Field Study Content

The framework of the thesis is built around the sections noted above. Organizing the research material in an outline based on this format will help to clarify thoughts and present information in a logical sequence. The following is offered to elucidate what is to be included in the various sections.

Introduction to the Study

It is the primary function of the Introduction to introduce and give an overview of the study. The following components should be included in the Introduction:

- 1) **Background:** The beginning of the chapter should serve as a carefully organized lead-in to the problem under investigation. This section should include an overview of the historical evolution, the current status, the projected future dimensions of the problem, or all three.
- 2) **Statement of the Problem:** Present the focal point(s) of the research. Introduce the "what" of the present investigation (i.e., clearly state what the study will examine or investigate). State the specific major question(s) and/or hypothesis(es) to be studied or tested. Make a precise statement of all minor questions to be explored.
- 3) **Purpose of the Study:** Justify the study. Why is the present investigation significant? Explain how it supports other studies, differs from previous studies, extends present knowledge and/or examines new issues.
- 4) **Theoretical Bases and Organization:** How does the present research correspond with other studies? What are the underlying theoretical bases upon which the study is constructed? One or more hypotheses should create the solid foundation upon which the conceptual framework is built.
- 5) **Limitations of the Study:** Discuss both content and methodological limitations of the investigation. How will the research work within or around these confines?
- 6) **Definition of Terms:** Define any special terms used in the study and establish abbreviations that will be used throughout the text.

Review of the Literature

There are several ways in which this chapter may be structured: chronologically,

categorically, or through related theoretical viewpoints. Emphasis should be placed on the reasons underlying the particular areas, topics, and periods selected for review. The chapter should:

- 1) Provide evidence supporting the historical, theoretical, and research background for the study.
- 2) Define how the investigation differs from other studies in the field.
- 3) Show how the study relates to other research studies in similar areas. Theoretical foundations, expert opinion, and actual research findings should be included. Primary sources should be used whenever possible.

Methodology

This chapter describes the research design or approach in depth. This should be a detailed and clearly written description that permits a precise replication of the study. Several parts of this chapter apply mainly to a quantitative thesis, but may be appropriate to a non-quantitative thesis as well.

- 1) Design of the Investigation. Explain how the study is designed to investigate each question or hypothesis. If appropriate, identify all variables and how they are manipulated.
- 2) Population and/or Sample. Describe the principal characteristics of the population selected. If a random sample is used, describe the general population from which the sample was selected and the sampling procedure used.
- 3) Treatment. Describe the exact sequence followed to collect and tabulate the data. Describe the instrument(s) used to collect the data and establish the validity of the instrument(s) via studies by other researchers.
- 4) Data Analysis Procedures. Describe and explain data analysis procedures and/or statistical treatments used. Include descriptions of tests, formulae, computer programs, and procedures.

Results and Discussion

This section reports on and discusses the findings of the study.

- 1) Presentation of the Findings. The results of the investigation are presented in narrative form and may be supplemented with graphics. Whenever appropriate, use tables and figures to present the data.
- 2) Discussion of the Findings. The discussion of the results should be well argued

in relation to each question or hypothesis. Inferences, projections, and probable explanations of the results may also be included. Discuss the implications of patterns and trends, and include any secondary findings.

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This concluding section should summarize the entire research effort. A sufficiently comprehensive overview should enable the intended audience to understand the entire study. At this point it is appropriate to reacquaint the reader with the conceptual framework, the design of the investigation, the methodology, and the results of the study. This section should include the significance of the study and its conclusions, the limitations and weaknesses of the study, implications for future research, and recommendations.

References

Cite references according to the APA style guide, and be sure to include every source cited in the study, including material that has been adapted for use in tables and figures.

Appendices

Material too detailed for inclusion in the body of the text, or material that cannot be effectively presented due to its length or size may be included in the appendices. Tables and graphs that have been introduced in the main body of the thesis are required to be included in the text immediately following the first reference. They should not be placed in the appendices. Appendices might include such things as questionnaires, raw data, maps, photos, artwork, letters of permission to reproduce material, and personal correspondence.

CHAPTER VII

Professional Paper

Introduction

Graduate students in Public Administration have the option of producing a professional paper instead of the traditional research thesis. A professional paper is defined as:

...a significant undertaking appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It evidences originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. It is described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the professional paper's significance, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation. Whereas a thesis/field study is an empirical scholarly research study, a professional paper is distinctly more creative in nature.

Often, professional papers will be based on a compilation of comparative analyses of the works done by other researchers. Although such material provides the study with substance, culminating professional papers must evidence originality, critical thinking, and reflect the scholarly or artistic capability of the candidate. While requirements for various creative professional papers will vary, there will be certain elements common to each professional paper.

Types of professional papers

The type of professional paper is limited only by the creativity, capability, and budget of the graduate student. The graduate student's chair will be most concerned with the manner in which the material is researched, organized, developed, and presented. The content and format guidelines are much more flexible for a professional paper than for a thesis. Often, as in cases where the professional paper is a manual or handbook, the professional paper itself is placed in the appendix, while sections in the main body of the text are tailored to introduce, justify, and validate the study or creative effort.

Organization of the professional paper

Because of the uniqueness of professional papers, the introductory sections in the main body will vary in number. The following presents some of these sections and their respective elements commonly found in master's professional papers. This outline is only a recommendation and should be adapted as necessary. As a general rule, however,

professional papers will contain at least some descriptive sections selected from the following.

Introduction to the professional paper

The primary function of this initial section is to provide a comprehensive overview of the professional paper.

- 1) Purpose of the professional paper. A statement of the purpose of the professional paper explains why the professional paper was attempted. Include personal interest as well as other identified needs that the professional paper will help satisfy. Why is the professional paper significant?
- 2) Scope (Description) of the professional paper. Define what the professional paper is in terms of content and format. Include specific information regarding the subject matter, the intended audience, how the professional paper is to be used, and the results or effects expected.
- 3) Significance of the professional paper. Explain the significance of the professional paper in the field of study. What new dimensions or concepts have been presented? Emphasize the importance of the professional paper in its use of techniques and specify the intended effects. If the professional paper is designed to be informational, persuasive, or instructional, specify the effects in terms of behavioral objectives.
- 4) Limitations of the professional paper. If applicable, present and discuss the content limitations with regard to resources, time, and so forth.
- 5) Definition of Terms. Define any special terms and establish standard abbreviations that will be used throughout the text.

Review of Related Literature

This section constitutes the major research effort of the professional paper. It provides the source material for the content and puts the present professional paper in context of existing information in the field. Review and cite related studies and discuss their strengths and weaknesses pertaining to the purpose of the professional paper. Discuss the theories or techniques examined and their respective implications for the present study. Summarize the review with a synthesis of the literature identifying the various approaches and themes. This section ultimately justifies the need for the professional paper.

Methodology

This chapter describes in depth how every aspect of the professional paper was conducted, compiled, or created. It should be significantly detailed and should describe the format and technique used in presenting the material. Techniques, questionnaires, interviews, study sites, and material used to accomplish the study should be described here.

Results

There may or may not be a results section, depending on the type of professional paper. If there are findings to report, they should be synthesized for inclusion in this section. Material too detailed to be included in the body of the text should be presented in the appendices.

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

1. **Summary:** Present an overview of the previous sections and how the final professional paper addresses issues that have been raised. Reacquaint the reader with the conceptual framework and the design of the study. Basically, this section summarizes the entire professional paper effort.
2. **Conclusions:** Conclusions presented should validate both the need for the study and explain how the present study responded to that need.
3. **Recommendations:** Recommendations should include comments regarding content, technique, and the process of creating a master's professional paper of this type.

References

Cite references according to the APA style guide, and be sure to include every source cited in the study, including material that has been adapted for use in tables and figures.

Appendices

Material too detailed for inclusion in the body of the text, or material that cannot be effectively presented due to its length or size may be included in the appendices. Tables

and graphs that have been introduced in the main body of the thesis are required to be included in the text immediately following the first reference. They should not be placed in the appendices. Appendices might include such things as questionnaires, raw data, maps, photos, artwork, letters of permission to reproduce material, and personal correspondence.

CHAPTER VIII

Professional Paper Special Case: Non-print Media Projects and Web-Based Projects

Introduction

With the approval of the candidate's chair, graduate students have the option of producing a non-print mediated product or a web-based product instead of the traditional research thesis or professional paper.

Options available to qualified students include, but are not limited to, web-presentation of project, television, photography, computer graphics, video, or any combination of these. A written component is also required.

The rationale for a media professional paper is to stimulate creativity and broaden the expression of ideas, thus the content guidelines are somewhat broader than those for either a thesis or professional paper. The freedom allowed by this format calls for a good deal of self-discipline and organization if the professional paper is to be successful.

Non-print and Web-based Media Professional paper Approval Procedure

Non-print professional papers may be pursued only when the student has demonstrated technical competence in the medium chosen. All candidates wishing to pursue non-print mediated professional papers will be required to obtain approval by the chair and the program director.

The documentation of all non-print professional papers completed in partial fulfillment of the Master's degree will consist of:

1. A written component that must evidence originality, independent thinking, and appropriate form and organization.
2. Adequate non-print documentation (e.g., comprehensive photographic documentation) of the professional paper in accordance with University standards.

The Non-print Media Professional paper Proposal

The student's chair must approve a professional paper proposal. The proposal should include the following:

- 1) A statement of the purpose of the proposed professional paper, the need for the professional paper, and the student's personal interest.
- 2) A statement of the content and format of the professional paper, including specific information regarding the subject matter, the intended audience, how and where the professional paper is to be used, and the anticipated results or effects.
- 3) A statement of the intended method of production. A detailed written plan should be developed which outlines the major steps to be performed and procedures for the production. This would include such things as time required for the various aspects of the professional paper, and an estimate of technical support necessary for production, including personnel, equipment, and facilities. A production script would be appropriate here.
- 4) A statement substantiating the need for such a study/professional paper. An extensive review of existing materials and literature should demonstrate that the professional paper does not duplicate the efforts of others. This section should convince the chair of the merit of the professional paper.

If University facilities and technical personnel are approved for use, the non-print media professional paper must be carefully scheduled.

The Written Portion of the Media Professional paper

All non-print media professional papers must be accompanied by a written component. It must be more than the presentation of a mere outline, plan, description, or demonstration. The text should describe the professional paper, summarize its significance, objectives, and methodology, and present a conclusion and/or recommendation.

While the non-print media presentation demonstrates the creativity and quality of the technical and artistic aspects of the professional paper, the written component should be a significant contribution to others in the field that wish to learn from or expand upon this accomplishment. The following outline is a guide to the written component:

Introduction

The primary function of this initial section is to provide a number of introductory statements regarding the proposed non-media professional paper.

- 1) Problem statement: Briefly indicate what prompted an interest in the professional paper. Include any historical background, current technology, and/or future dimensions in the field of study. The introduction should provide a setting and focus for the professional paper.

- 2) Scope of the professional paper: Explain the professional paper in terms of content and format. Specify the audience to which it is directed and the context in which it is to be presented.
- 3) Significance of the professional paper: Present the purpose of the program and the significance of the professional paper. What new dimensions or techniques are being applied to the media or the subject that makes the work unique? Emphasize the importance of the professional paper itself in relation to techniques, support of information, or instructional needs.
- 4) Intended effects: List the expected users of the program and discuss the intended effects of the presentation on its audience. If the professional paper is designed to be informational, persuasive, or instructional, specify the anticipated effects in terms of behavioral objectives.
- 5) Limitations of the professional paper: Discuss any limitations in relation to the content and technical aspects, including resources, time, and abilities.

Review of the Literature

This portion constitutes the major research effort of the professional paper. It provides the source material for the content and defines how the professional paper differs from other media productions in content, format, or techniques. A description of how the work fits in relation to existing media with a similar purpose will provide a rationale for the approach and techniques chosen for the professional paper. Related media productions should be cited and evaluated. Discuss the techniques used and their applicability to the present study. The review should be summarized with a synthesis of the literature and products. Identify the various approaches and themes as a basis for justifying the treatment selected.

Treatment

This section provides an in-depth description of how each aspect of the professional paper was conducted. The explanation must be sufficiently detailed to permit the writing of a production script, and should be organized in the same manner as the completed production.

If the content of the professional paper is the focus, most chairs will be concerned with evaluating the manner in which the research, organization, and development of the subject has been done (i.e., what novel ways have been developed for presenting the context?). This section should contain all the information to be included in the content with a narrative description of the way it is to be mediated. It is not necessarily presented in script form, but it should describe the format and technique of presentation. If the originality and creativity of the professional paper rests in the manner and quality in which the content is presented, the major emphasis will be on the production quality of the medium chosen. In such cases, the treatment of the content will be the major effect of

the study.

Explain how the professional paper will be executed. Specify the techniques and methods that will be used to achieve the anticipated goals of the professional paper. How and/or why will these tools be effective?

The Production Script

This is the blueprint from which the media professional paper is produced. It is detailed, comprehensive, and describes the dialogue, set requirements, props, equipment, etc. The script should follow the standard technical format common to productions using similar media. Post-production work necessary to complete the professional paper should be included.

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This final section should summarize the entire professional paper. It should be written with the intention of evaluating the entire process of production from concept to final product. The summary should present an overview of the professional paper, reacquainting the reader with the purpose, design, and results of the study. Both negative and positive conclusions found as a result of the study should be discussed. Describe the areas in which the study could have been improved and how problems encountered along the way could have been solved or avoided.

Recommendations should include comments regarding content, technique, and the production process as a whole. This section will provide the reader with valuable information for future media productions.

References

Cite references according to the APA style guide, and be sure to include every source cited in the study, including material that has been adapted for use in tables and figures.

Appendices

Material too detailed for inclusion in the body of the text, or material that cannot be effectively presented due to its length or size may be included in the appendices. Tables and graphs that have been introduced in the main body of the thesis are required to be included in the text immediately following the first reference. They should not be placed in the appendices. Appendices might include such things as questionnaires, raw data, maps, photos, artwork, letters of permission to reproduce material, and personal correspondence.

CHAPTER IX

Organization of the Thesis, Field Study, or Professional Paper

General

A thesis/professional paper basically consists of four major parts: pre-text pages, text, documentation, and appendices. Some theses and professional papers may not require use of all four parts, but when used the sequence below should always be followed:

1. Pre-text pages
 - Title Page/Approval Page
 - Publication Rights (optional)
 - Dedication (optional)
 - Preface/Acknowledgments (optional)
 - Table of Contents
 - List of Tables (if used)
 - List of Figures (if used)
 - List of Symbols (if used)
 - Abstract
2. Body of text
3. Documentation (bibliography or references cited)
4. Appendices (if used)

Pre-text Pages

Title/Approval Page

The title page consists of evenly spaced components centered on the page. The page will be counted but not numbered. ***Original signatures in indelible black ink. All signatures must be those of the actual committee member; proxy signatures are unacceptable.*** All theses and professional papers must be approved and signed by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Sample: Title/Committee Approval Cover Sheet

The undersigned members of the Graduate Faculty
of
University of North Carolina at Pembroke
have examined the enclosed **{Thesis, Field Study or Professional paper}** entitled:

Title of the thesis, field study, or professional paper

Presented by: **{Name of the candidate}**
a candidate for the degree of

**{full title of the degree,
for example: Master of Science in Education: Special Education}**

and hereby certify that in our opinion it is worthy of acceptance in partial fulfillment of the requirements for this master's degree.

Date: _____

Chairperson
Examining/writing Committee: _____
(Print name below)

Director of Graduate Studies: _____

Publication Rights Page

This page is used whenever the work is to be copyrighted. If used, the pagination for all pre-text pages begins with this page as ii. The top margin for this page is (1 3/4"). The wording should reflect whether the work is a professional paper or thesis, a corresponding c-world (©) must be used before the author's name on both the title page and abstract page, and the year of copyright should follow the name.

Preface/Acknowledgments Page

Although the body of the thesis is usually written in the third person, this section, if

included, is usually written in the first person. Here you may wish to explain certain features of the thesis. It is also customary to recognize the assistance of your Chair and/or members of the faculty who have been helpful. Specific contributions by other persons or institutions should be acknowledged, especially if financial support was received. The top margin for this page is also 1 3/4".

Table of Contents

The heading "TABLE OF CONTENTS" should appear in capital letters 1-3/4" down from the top of the page. Second and subsequent pages, if any, begin 1-1/4" down from the top of the page and maintain the headings of "CHAPTER" and "PAGE" on the left and right margins respectively. If the table of contents requires a full page, double space between the last line of type and the page number at the bottom of the page.

List of Tables

The list of tables follows the table of contents on a new page. The title falls 1-3/4" down from the top of the page. Sequentially number the tables with Arabic (e.g., Table 1) numerals in the order in which the tables appear in the thesis/professional paper. Double space between titles. Be sure the list of tables contains titles and page numbers identical to those used in the text. Narrative that follows a table title should not be included with the title. Appendix tables are not included in this list.

List of Figures

The list of figures follows the list of tables on a new page. The title falls 1-3/4" down from the top of the page. The remainder of the instructions pertaining to the list of figures is identical to that for the list of tables.

List of Symbols

A list of symbols (sometimes called "Nomenclature") can be a valuable aid. This list follows the list of figures on a new page and should follow the same format as the lists of tables and figures.

Abstract

An abstract must be submitted as part of the thesis, field study, or professional paper. Type the word "ABSTRACT" in capitals 1-3/4" down from the top, centered within the required margins. Triple space and type the complete title of the thesis, field study, or professional paper in capitals. Double space and type "by," the author's name, degree for which the thesis/ professional paper is being prepared, the University's name, and date of

graduation, each on a separate line. If a copyright is to be involved, a c-world (©) should be typed before the author's name, and the year of copyright should follow the name. Triple space and begin the text.

The abstract should contain all the essential information about the thesis, field study, or professional paper and provide the reader with an overview of the study. It should be written in complete sentences and include statements of the problem, procedure or methods, results and conclusions. The abstract should include accomplishments, the most pertinent facts and implications of the study, and a brief explanation of the work, and should not exceed 250 words (approximately 1-1/2 pages in length). Mathematical formulae, diagrams, footnotes, illustrative materials, and quotations should not be used in the abstract.

Body of Text

The body of the text explains, illustrates, argues for, and in some cases proves by organizing in a coherent manner the evidence gathered from various sources. The thesis/professional paper will usually be divided into several chapters, some or all of which may be prescribed by the department. The text should be clear, accurate, and written in an academic, scholarly style. The presentation of the thesis/professional paper is as important as the research; take time to edit and proofread the final copy of the work carefully.

When typing the body of the text, there are two important requirements:

1. There should always be at least two lines of a paragraph on any given page. This is of concern when the paragraph begins at the bottom or ends at the top of a page.
2. Do not divide the last word on a page.

Reference Section

The reference section should be preceded by a half-title page which is counted but not numbered. The title of this section (for example, "Bibliography" or "References Cited") is determined by the departmental style guide and should be typed in capital letters and centered on the half-title page. The same title is repeated 1-3/4" down from the top of the first page of the reference section. Triple space between the title and the first entry in the list of references.

Appendices

An appendix contains material too detailed for inclusion in the body of the work. When diverse materials are included, create an appendix for each group of data (e.g., computer printouts, questionnaires, correspondence, and certain figures). Each appendix is

preceded by a half-title page bearing only its label, (i.e., APPENDIX A, APPENDIX B). This half-title page is counted but not numbered and is used when referring to the appendix in the table of contents.

Appendices are paginated just as the chapters are. Place the page number at the bottom of the page. Appendices will vary in format, and a certain degree of freedom is allowable. Spacing (single or double) is determined by the content; the decision to include the information is based on readability and overall appearance.

Publication Standards

The general format required of all typed final theses, field studies, or professional papers is listed below:

- 1) There is a minimal top, bottom, and right side margin of one (1) inch.
- 2) Left side margin should be a minimal of one and a half inches.
- 3) The body of the paper must be double-spaced. Graphs, tables and charts should be easily readable but do not have to be doubled-spaced.
- 4) Only 12-point typeface should be used.
- 5) All pages should be numbered at the bottom of the page.
- 6) Only white 8.5" X 11" paper may be used.
- 7) Manuscript should be printed on 20 to 25 pound bond paper.

For all other publication standards, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Graduate Department of Public Management Studies has adopted the American Psychological Association (APA) publication standards. APA publication manuals are available in most bookstores and libraries. Information is also available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.apa.org>.

NOTE: University of North Carolina at Pembroke's Institutional Review Board must approve all research dealing with Human Subjects. Failure to secure appropriate approval before data collection is a serious breach of professionalism, and could be grounds for a student's removal from graduate study at UNCP.

CHAPTER X

Miscellaneous Thesis, Professional paper, or Field Study Requirements

Manuscript

After successfully completing their oral defense, candidates must provide

Oral Examination/Oral Defense

All final evaluations require the candidate to complete an oral examination. The examination/defense committee can be the candidate's chair and invited faculty. The focus of the oral examination is usually the written manuscript, portfolio, and/or product produced by the candidate. While those at the defense are not limited in their range and scope of inquiry, the defense is meant to be collegial.

In the event the defense is unsatisfactory, the committee shall so inform the candidate and counsel the candidate as to possible future actions.

Standards of Conduct

All thesis, field studies, professional papers, or any paper developed by a graduate student must comply with University regulations concerning fabrication, facilitating dishonesty, and plagiarism. Material developed by someone other than the author of a thesis, field studies, professional papers, or class paper should be clearly credited.

Internet material must be treated as published material and must be fully credited. Purchased research materials must also be clearly identified as the work of others and not the original work of the author. In situations where material was developed through study groups or other formal or informal group interaction, the author is obligated to credit others for the ideas that were developed as part of a group process.

Copyright Restrictions

The US. copyright law provides federal copyright protection for both published and unpublished works. Therefore, authors who may wish to include quotations, illustrations, charts, graphs, and musical arrangements and so forth in their thesis/professional paper should make every effort to be sure that reproduction of the copyrighted material does not exceed the doctrine of "fair use," which considers both the purpose and character of the use of copyrighted material. Unpublished works, as well as works published without valid copyright notice, are eligible for protection. Absence of a copyright symbol (©) does not necessarily mean that a work is in the public domain. Tabular arrangements and compilations are specifically covered under copyright law. Permission to reprint or adapt charts, tables, graphs, tabular arrangements, and so forth must be sought from the copyright holder.

Fair Use

If a work is protected by copyright, permission must be acquired prior to incorporation of that work into a new document. Extracts and quotations may be used to a limited extent for purposes of illustration and criticism. The language of the copyright law is vague as to what constitutes fair use, so when in doubt, seek permission and consult with the thesis editor.

Securing Permission

Efforts to obtain permission to use material from other sources should begin well in advance of a final draft. The student is expected to acquire written permission to use the material, and evidence of such permission must be provided with the final copy of the thesis/professional paper. A statement of permission must appear in a caption or some other obvious location in the thesis/professional paper. The owner of the copyright may request that specific words or phrases be used to indicate that permission was granted. Requests for permission should be directed to the copyright holder or the copyright permissions editor of the publication. When requesting permission to reproduce copyrighted material, be sure to specify that the request is for a one-time, non-profit, educational use. For further interpretation of the copyright laws and for assistance in obtaining permission, see the thesis editor.