



Department of Psychology

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA AIKEN

On the Origin of Theses: A Manual for Graduate Students

University of South Carolina Aiken

Prepared by the Psychology Department Faculty
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Table of Contents

1. Introduction
 - a. Overview of the master's thesis
 - b. General expectations
 - c. Timeline
2. Before Proposal
 - a. Selecting a topic
 - b. Organizing a thesis chair and committee
 - c. Planning your research project
 - d. Resources
 - i. literature review
 - ii. organization
 - iii. references
 - iv. grants
3. The written document
 - a. organization
 - b. formatting and stylistic guidelines
 - c. page numbering
 - d. placement of tables and figures
 - e. writing resources
4. The proposal
 - a. selecting a proposal date
 - b. proposal guidelines
5. Data collection
 - a. practical considerations
 - b. IRB information
 - c. getting participants
 - d. resources
6. The Defense
 - a. selecting a defense date
 - b. presentation guidelines
 - c. evaluative criteria
7. Registration
8. Publication
9. Final Steps
10. Thesis Format and Forms

1. INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Master's Thesis

Preparation of a thesis is one of the most important parts of your work leading to a master's degree. This manual is meant to help you through the process to meet the required standards of academic rigor, organization, appearance, and format for theses at the University of South Carolina Aiken.

General Expectations

The master's thesis is expected to be an original work by the student, formulated in a scholarly manner and with content of a quality consistent with respected publications in the field of psychology. Your project will be research-based and make a novel contribution to the field of psychology.

Timeline

The following timeline is recommended to maximize the likelihood of completing your thesis by the end of your second summer at USCA. It is possible to deviate from this timeline, but sticking to it is ideal.

Fall of first year: choose a thesis topic. You will likely discover various topics that interest you through course readings, but it is also a good idea to brainstorm with fellow students and faculty. If you are having trouble coming up with an idea, do not be afraid to approach faculty members for possibilities.

Spring of first year: assemble your committee and begin researching the literature for your thesis proposal.

Summer of first year: The thesis proposal is typically between 25-50 pages in length, so you will likely need the entire summer semester to complete this. You should also start talking to your committee members about proposal dates and attempt to officially propose your thesis to your committee. However, note that many faculty are not on campus during the summer. You will need to talk with your committee early about their summer schedule in order to propose during this time. You should also have the bulk of your IRB application prepared during this time, so that you will only have minor edits to complete after your proposal is defended. This will allow you to start data collection in a timely fashion following your proposal meeting. You may also want to collect pilot data if necessary for your thesis project during this time, however understand there are not many students on campus during these months.

Fall of second year: submit IRB application and once your study is approved, begin data collection if you are not using a pre-existing data set.

Spring of second year: it is likely that you will need most of the spring semester to finish data collection and to analyze your data. .

Summer of second year: officially defend your thesis. Submit final written document with edits, and make plans to publish your thesis with your thesis chair if that is of interest to you.

2. BEFORE PROPOSAL

Selecting a Topic

Your thesis topic can be anything that interests you, so long as it pertains to the field of psychology in general (e.g., clinical, social, developmental, neuroscience, etc.). Most often your topic will overlap in some way with your committee chair's area of expertise. There are many ways to get topic ideas, including the following:

- Read the latest journal articles to get an idea of what other scientists are doing
- Talk with professors about their current research interests and your research ideas and interests
- Read previous students' theses. There are hard copies located in the Psychology Department office (room 226) and the library which can be checked out. Digital copies of theses completed since 2014 can be accessed on ScholarCommons:
<http://scholarcommons.sc.edu/>
- Think of ways to elaborate on ideas discussed in your courses

Finding a Thesis Chair

The person who chairs your committee should ideally have some expertise in your topic area. Keep in mind that faculty will not typically chair more than three student theses simultaneously. This means that it is in your best interest to select your thesis chair as soon as your ideas come to fruition. If you wait too long, there is a possibility that the person you would like to chair your committee may already have too many obligations. Once you have found a faculty member who has agreed to be your committee chair, select two other faculty members to ask to serve on your committee.

Organizing a Thesis Committee

You will need two members (in addition to your thesis chair) on your thesis committee. Talk to your thesis chair about possible committee members. You will need two from the department of psychology, but you may have additional members outside the department. For example, faculty from other departments or staff from an agency where you will be collecting your data (if they have expertise that will assist you in producing your thesis) could be included on your committee. You don't need to find your committee members (other than your chair) to register for thesis preparation, but you need to have your committee in place well before you are scheduled to propose.

Planning Your Research Project

Once you have chosen a topic and found a chair, it is time to start planning your project. Data collection cannot begin until you have formally proposed your topic to the committee via a written document and an oral presentation.

3. THE PROPOSAL

The Proposal Manuscript:

Your proposal document will be formatted exactly like your thesis proposal, however of course it will not include the results and discussion section. Your proposal should follow the scientific method:

Scientific Method:

1. **Ask a question** – What question do you want to ask for your thesis? Be specific and concrete.
2. **Background Research** – Why are you doing this research? What is the purpose of your study? This will all be based on background research, and you should be looking for what limitations or holes are in the literature. You need to know and understand the literature(s) available on your topic. It may be helpful to meet with a USCA reference librarian to assist in searching the literature. If you are looking of an article and it doesn't appear to be available through our library be sure to search electronic journals: <http://library.usca.edu/Main/HomePage> on the library webpage before submitting an inter library loan request.
3. **Develop a hypothesis** – You must have a formal and specific hypothesis about how you believe your data will look like. Include the direction of differences (e.g. positive feedback will result in greater test scores, whereas negative feedback will result in lower test scores).
4. **Develop a study** – How you are going to answer your question? Are you going to conduct an experiment, or a survey study (for example). Determine what the independent and dependent variables are. Is there anything that can confound these variable measurements? Specify all your variables in your design and how they will fit into the appropriate statistical model.
5. **Define and describe your measures** –In this case, you need a defined “OPERATIONAL DEFINITION” of each of your measures – what measurements are you going to use to explain the behavior of interest? Make sure you address all data that should be collected (demographics? IVs, DVs, control variables/covariates?).

These last two steps come after you've collected your data so aren't included in your proposal.

6. **Analyze Results** – Be specific with what your analyses will be and how they will answer each hypothesis you have.
7. **Report Results** – This will be your final thesis product.

The Proposal Defense:

You are required to defend your proposal for your thesis to your committee prior to beginning data collection. During this meeting you will make a presentation that lasts approximately 30 minutes outlining your introduction/literature review and presenting your method and hypotheses, along with your proposed data analyses. Your committee will ask you questions

during or following your presentation and will make suggestions or may require changes to your document and/or your methods/design of your study. Following your presentation and questions, your committee will excuse you to discuss next steps and will then invite you back to inform you of what is required for you to move forward with your project. You are welcome to invite friends and family members to your proposal and final defense. Faculty and other students are also invited to attend.

A sample proposal presentation can be found on the k-drive called: Psychology Graduate Program > Thesis

4. YOUR THESIS AS A WRITTEN DOCUMENT

Organization

The organization of your thesis should mirror that of a scientific journal article. Specifically, you should have the following sections: Title page, Abstract Introduction, Methods, Results, General Discussion, References, Tables/Figures, Appendices (see below). There is no page limit to a thesis, but they typically range between 50 and 100 written pages (roughly 20-25 pages comprises the Introduction section). See previous student theses in the Psychology Department office for examples.

Thesis Sections:

1. Cover Page/Title page: see appendix for format. APA style manual suggests no more than 12-words in length and no abbreviations.

2. Abstract: An abstract is an important component to APA written papers. An abstract is a summary of the entire study in 250 words or less, including the background and purpose of the study, the main question you are trying to answer in your study, brief methods, major findings, and the implications of these findings. An abstract follows the title page, and has a page of its own with the title "Abstract" on the top of the page (and centered). Writing a good abstract is harder to achieve than one may initially think because a lot of important information must be concisely written in a limited amount of space.

3. Introduction: The introduction is meant to provide information about the significance/rational about your topic (what the purpose is), provide background information about your topic, and state the point/hypothesis of your experiment. The introduction should not just be a huge annotated bibliography, but should be organized such that it gives a comprehensive background about your topic and fully explains the purpose of your thesis. It should also present how your study may potentially add to this body of literature.

4. Methods: In this section you will provide a detailed description of your study. This section of the paper is meant to provide other readers the directions they need in case they would want to replicate your experiment. This is the most technical part of your paper, so make sure you are thorough and detailed.

5. Results: Here you will only explain the findings/results from your experiment. You should not give reasoning here for your results, or if you do it should be brief.

6. Discussion: This part of the paper is extremely important because it tells the reader “why” things happened, and it is where your scientific explanation is given. Specifically, this section of the paper is where you will discuss why you believe your results happened. You will do this by connecting your results with previous studies (comparing or contrasting findings). You may also integrate/connect this section with your introduction. You should explain the implications of your findings and how this new information adds to the body of literature about this topic. Lastly, you should discuss limitations and future directions in this section.

7. Reference page: See the OWL at Purdue website for what this page should look like.

8. Tables/Figures: Main findings are often best represented in a table or figure. See the OWL at Purdue website for what these pages should look like.

9. Appendices: Forms you used during your study should go here (e.g. survey measures). See the OWL at Purdue website for what these pages should look like.

Formatting and Stylistic Guidelines

Your thesis should be formatted in the most recent edition of the APA Style Manual for 8.5 x 11-inch paper in portrait format (text running across the shorter dimension of the page). All margins must be at least 1.25” (one and one-quarter inches), including those on tables, figures, and appendices. Tables or figures may be printed in landscape layout (content running across the longer dimension of the page) if necessary. Landscape-oriented tables should be formatted with the top on the left (binding) side. All text, besides tables with a lot of information, should be double spaced.

Page Numbering

Each page in the thesis, including pages with tables, figures, references and appendices, must include a page number. Page numbers must be placed in the top margin of each page on the right side. All pages should also have a running head. See APA Style Manual for details.

Placement of Tables and Figures in the Text

Each table and figure must have a unique number and title and must appear on a numbered page, either alone or on a page with text. Tables and figures typically come after the references section of the document. See the APA Style Manual for details on titling tables and figures, information to be included, etc.

Resources

A number of resources are available to assist you with the writing process. Here are some places to help you get started, but this list is by no means exhaustive.

- K-drive: Psychology Graduate Program
- Dissertations and Theses from Start to Finish: Psychology and Related Fields (Cone & Foster, 2006)

- Harvard writing guide for psychology:
http://writingproject.fas.harvard.edu/files/hwp/files/writing_for_psych_final_from_printer.pdf
- USCA writing room: <http://web.usca.edu/asc/tutoring/writing-room.dot>
- General APA style information: <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/index.aspx>
- Additional APA tips: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Ask your professors and fellow students for feedback at any stage of the writing process

5. DATA COLLECTION

Practical Considerations

Students in clinical psychology graduate programs are often interested in studying atypical populations (e.g., children with autism, veterans of foreign wars, people with bi-polar disorder, etc.). You are encouraged to engage in a research project that you are passionate about, but you are also encouraged to think pragmatically. Keep in mind that obtaining your Master's degree is contingent upon successful completion of your thesis. Thus, if you decide to conduct a study that requires a sample of third generation Chinese immigrants with schizophrenia, it is likely that you will spend a good amount of time collecting data, which may prolong your graduation. The psychology faculty have a great deal of experience collecting data from various populations. Thus, you are encouraged to solicit advice regarding the feasibility of your study ideas before getting too deep into the research process.

Recruiting Participants

The most common way to recruit participants is through the SONA system at USCA:

<https://usca.sona-systems.com/Default.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f>

You will need to register for an account to be able to post a study and have students sign-up for participation. Our subject pool is generally comprised of undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory psychology course. There are approximately 200 subjects available during the fall semester and 150 in the spring semester. There is no guarantee that you will have access to all of these students, as some of them may opt out of research participation. Furthermore, students typically have several studies available to choose from, so it is possible that they will participate in some other than yours. If your study requires more than 100 participants to achieve adequate power, plan accordingly. Also, a power analysis will be required for IRB approval which can be conducted using a resource such as GPower:

http://download.cnet.com/G-Power/3000-2054_4-10647044.html

If you are conducting research that can be administered online, there are a variety of platforms available to use, some of which are free, while others cost money. See the resources section below for more details regarding online data collection and associated fees. The psychology department does not typically have resources available to pay participants. If you choose to use a method of data collection that requires participant payment, you are encouraged to investigate outside funding opportunities (e.g., Psi Chi).

IRB Information

Before you can start collecting data, you must submit your study to be reviewed by the USC Internal Review Board. This can be a time-consuming process. For example, you will need to complete an online training program prior to submitting your study for review. When you actually submit an application for approval you will need to submit your approved thesis proposal, along with all the measures you intend to administer to participants. The IRB website at the University of South Carolina provides detailed information about the submission process, along with templates for all required documents. All of the relevant information regarding the IRB can be found at: <http://orc.research.sc.edu/irb.shtml>

Resources

- Lime survey: a way to make questionnaires electronic so that you don't have to manually enter data by hand. This software is free to USCA graduate students however you must attend a Limesurvey workshop to receive a username. <http://ie.usca.edu/Lime/>
- Surveygizmo: another type of electronic survey software. Free student accounts available. <http://surveygizmo.com/>
- Psychological research on the net: Site maintained by Hanover College where you can recruit online participants free of charge: <http://psych.hanover.edu/research/exponnet.html>
- Research match: Site where you can recruit research subjects online free of charge. <https://www.researchmatch.org/>
- Mechanical Turk: Site where you can pay individuals a small fee (e.g., 10 cents) to complete an online study. <https://www.mturk.com/mturk/welcome>
- Prolific Academic: Pay participants for doing your study online: <https://www.prolific.ac/>
- Psi Chi: National honor society for psychology. Grant opportunities and funding resources available: www.psichi.org
- Papers reference manager: Manage your references automatically to save time down the road. <http://www.papersapp.com/>
- Power analysis software: http://download.cnet.com/G-Power/3000-2054_4-10647044.html

Existing Data Sets

Sometimes faculty have data sets that students may use for their thesis. This is usually done when the topic or population of interest is not accessible to the student or it is not feasible for them to collect the data in a reasonable timeframe (e.g., longitudinal). Another instance in which students may use an existing data set is if one is freely available (e.g., through a governmental agency such as the Department of Juvenile Justice) that, again, gives them access to data that would be difficult or impossible for them to collect themselves. It is expected that if you use an existing data set that you will be answering a more sophisticated question(s) and/or using more sophisticated data analysis techniques.

What Happens to the Data and Informed Consent Forms?

If you collected your data by paper, your data should remain at USC Aiken with your thesis chair along with the signed consent forms where they can be retained for the necessary period in a locked space. You should also provide your thesis chair with an electronic copy (e.g., SPSS, Excel) of your data. You need to remain in compliance with your IRB proposal for storing data after your study is completed, thus if you say, for example, it will be on a USCA computer that requires a password, you shouldn't keep it on a thumb drive.

6. THE DEFENSE

It is important to walk into the defense knowing that your committee really wants you to pass. Even if criticism is harsh, it is meant to be constructive. After all, the defense is not solely an opportunity for the committee to compliment and congratulate you for the work you have done. It is also meant to challenge you and force you to consider tough questions. Below you will find suggestions to help you get ready for the defense and information to give you a sense of what to expect:

Selecting and Scheduling a Defense Date

If all goes as planned and you have made sufficient progress in your writing, schedule the actual defense date as soon as you can to ensure that your advisor, all committee members and the Department Chair are able to be present at your defense. Your committee **MUST** have the final draft of your thesis at least two weeks in advance of your defense. It is strongly suggested that you do not schedule your defense on the day (or two or three) before it must be turned in to meet a deadline (such as for August graduation). You will have edits/corrections to make before the final draft will be approved by your committee even if things go fabulously during your defense. You should also not plan to leave town immediately following your defense as you will need time to make changes, have your committee review and approve them and get the final draft printed. Defenses are typically held in Penland 225 so once you have a date and time, ask Ms. Toole if 225 is available so that she can reserve it. You will also need to provide her with the title of your thesis so that she can send out an email announcing your defense and inviting students and faculty to attend. You should schedule at least 90 minutes for your defense.

Know the Rituals

What happens at a thesis defense? The best way to know what happens and the best way for *you* to prepare for your defense is to regularly attend the defenses of your fellow students. You should be doing this throughout the graduate program, not just several weeks prior to your own defense. You should also speak with your advisor to get a sense of his/her specific expectations of a defense. Don't be afraid to ask! Finally you should do at least one practice defense with an audience of your chair and other students in your lab if they are available. These individuals can give you feedback so that you can be better prepared and help you identify questions that your committee may ask.

Guidelines for the Presentation

Use PowerPoint. PowerPoint is a professional approach to presenting the research that comprises the thesis. Your slides should encapsulate the study and focus on its most salient findings. In preparing, ask yourself these questions: “What do I want people to know about my thesis? What is the most important information that I can present and talk about?” Create a goal-oriented presentation that navigates attendees through a logical, point-by-point sequence of information that builds to the conclusion in a clear and focused direction.

- Use text large enough to be readable (especially text from figures)
- Ensure graphics and tables are clear
- Don’t clutter your slides – if necessary have things come up on mouse clicks
- Use spell check and also proof-read
- Time presentation to ensure it is long enough but will also allow time for questions

It is recommended that you do a trial run of your presentation a day or two before your defense in the room that you have booked. This will allow you to familiarize yourself with the space and the equipment and to address any problems that arise during the trial run.

Plan your defense to allow a 30-35 minute talk. Present enough information so that the audience understands what you did, why you did it, what the implications are and what your suggestions are for future research.

Evaluation

You will be asked to leave the room while your Committee reviews your thesis and decides whether it is acceptable/not acceptable. You will be asked to return to the room to be informed of the outcome by the Chair of your exam committee. See *Graduate Thesis Assessment form* for specific evaluative criteria.

Outcomes

- Passed with rating of notable (please see Graduate Thesis Assessment form for rating information)
- Passed with rating of satisfactory
- Did not pass (rating of unsatisfactory). Next steps will be determined by your committee. This would likely occur because you did not complete the project approved by your committee (e.g., did not collect a sufficient amount of data).
- It is extremely rare that at least minimal number of revisions will be required so while your committee may pass you, your thesis chair will have to approve a final draft that incorporates all changes required by your committee.

7. REGISTRATION

You should register for Thesis Preparation (PSYC 798) the first semester you plan to work closely with your Chair on your thesis, which is usually the semester after you have taken Statistics and Research Design (PSYC 625). You are required to take at least two credits of Thesis

Preparation, which can be taken in one semester, the semester you intend to propose your thesis. If you plan on taking more than one semester to complete your thesis proposal you may take one credit each semester. You must be registered for Thesis Preparation during the semester that you propose.

You must be registered for Thesis (PSYC 799) any semester you plan to collect data. Therefore, if you plan to propose in, for example, October and want to collect data during the fall semester, you must be registered for both 798 and 799. However, if you do not propose your thesis by the drop deadline, you must drop 799 as you have not made sufficient progress to get credit for that course during that semester. You must continually register for at least one credit of 799 while you are working on your thesis until you defend your thesis. You are required to register for a total of four credits of 799 but may take more than that if it takes you longer to finish your thesis than you planned.

Forms for Thesis Preparation and Thesis registration are to be completed with your Chair for each semester you register for either of these courses and handed in to the Program Director (see Appendix). You do not need to get them signed by the Department Chair as the Program Director will have this done for you.

8. PRESENTATION and PUBLICATION

We encourage you to present your results at a conference and to publish your thesis, particularly if you are interested in attending a PhD program or working in a research setting. If you are interested in presenting or publishing, let your thesis chair know early in the process as there may be recommendations that they make along the way to improve your chances of being able to publish your finished product. Typically, the student will be the first author and the thesis chair will be the second author of a published thesis however you should discuss this with your thesis chair early in the process as situations can vary. For example, it is possible that your thesis may be one study among several that are reported in a single publication. In such a case authorship and authorship order may be less clear. The APA Style Manual has guidelines for authorship that may be helpful to consult.

9. FINAL STEPS for GRADUATION APPROVAL

Printing

1. Please make sure you prepare *two (2) complete Title pages and Signature pages* on watermark paper (please obtain paper and instructions from the Department Administrative Assistant). These may be prepared before you are ready to run off your thesis. NOTE: Do not attempt to get signatures until your Supervisor has approved your thesis and you have run one complete copy of your thesis. Please make sure you have enough money on your printing account to cover your printing. Your copy will need to be printed in the Penland 214 lab for consistency.

NOTE: Please let the Department Administrative Assistant know when you would like to come in to print your thesis to make sure she is available.

2. When final revisions have been made to your thesis and you have run one complete copy of your thesis on watermark paper (which you will obtain from the Department

Administrative Assistant), get signatures for your Signature Page from your Committee members (the Department Chair is the last to sign-off).

3. E-mail a copy of your final thesis (the one you printed) to the Graduate Program Director to be uploaded to ScholarCommons.
4. *Make sure you send the Graduate Program Director your Open-Access form.*
5. Turn the original printed thesis into the Department Administrative Assistant. The Department Administrative Assistant will then make another copy from your original and then send out to be bound. If you are interested in making a copy for yourself, you will need to use your own paper. There is a company that has bound thesis for some of our students in the past:

Website: <http://www.hfgroup.com/>

Phone number: (336) 931-0800

You can get the information on where to send the document on their website. It may be helpful to call and talk to the people there as well.

Color code: 182

Side: last name, first initial Year

Name starts at line 24, date starts at line 20

Foil: G

Cost: varies as it depends on the length and other details of document

Scholar Commons

In addition to creating two bound copies of each thesis we have begun make digital copies available to the public through an open access portal called Scholar Commons. Thus, before you can be approved for graduation, you must print and sign the approval form (see *Open Access Authorization for Thesis form*) and email the Graduate Program Director a pdf of the approved final draft. If you do want your thesis made available through ScholarCommons you must submit such a request in writing to the Program Director (see *Open Access Authorization for Thesis form* for instructions).

Keys

All of the keys that you have been given must be turned in to the Department Administrative Assistant.

Stay in Touch

Please provide us with your whereabouts so we can keep in touch, cheer you on your way up the career ladder, and provide you with useful, up-to-date information about professional development and about the Program.

TITLE OF THESIS

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Psychology

University of South Carolina Aiken

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

By

Name

Month Year

Graduate Thesis Assessment

Rate each of the following items on a scale from 0 to 10, using the following guidelines:

- 0 - complete absence of the item
- 1 – 3 - limited attention to or understanding of item
- 4 – 6 - adequate coverage of item
- 7 – 9 - in depth analysis and clear understanding
- 10 - Outstanding achievement on the item with no room for improvement

Be sure to consider both the quality and comprehensiveness of the student's efforts. Items 1 through 8 should be considered with respect to evidence manifest in both students' written manuscript and oral presentation. Numerical ratings will be used to assign overall ratings of unsatisfactory (0 – 50), satisfactory (50 – 75), and notable (75 and above). P = important for thesis proposal; D = important for thesis defense

<p>1. Theoretical foundation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly describes theory (e.g., learning, psychoanalytic, cognitive) being investigated (P&D) • Compares and contrasts theoretical perspectives (P&D) • Research design addresses theoretical questions (P&D) • Integrates thesis findings with theory (D) • Understands alternative theoretical interpretations of findings (D) • Addresses theory-based questions (P&D) 	
<p>2. Literature review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review is detailed, covering the major and significant findings directly related to field of study (P&D) • Literature review is comprehensive, covering the significant findings that are indirectly related to field of study (P&D) • Demonstrates ability to summarize relevant findings in the literature, providing sufficient detail on relevant designs and outcomes (P&D) • Demonstrates ability to critically evaluate existing literature, discussing limits to internal and external validity of findings (P&D) • Demonstrates ability to generate hypotheses from existing findings in literature (P&D) 	
<p>3. Development of hypotheses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hypotheses are testable and appropriately conceptualized (P) • Hypotheses are logically developed from theory (P) • A sufficient number of hypotheses are identified to adequately test the proposed theory (P) • Demonstrates an ability to provide a link between theory and practical application of hypotheses (P&D) 	

<p>4. Internal validity of methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research design appropriate for hypotheses (P) • Appropriate controls are provided in design (control groups or statistical controls) (P) • Threats to validity (e.g., confounding, extraneous variable) are acknowledged and addressed as applicable (P&D) • Direction of effect is clear from research findings (D) • Understands alternative explanations for findings (D) • Able to discuss alternative designs to provide better controls (P&D) 	
<p>5. External validity of methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling method is appropriate (e.g., random, representative) (P&D) • Sufficient power to provide meaningful effects (e.g., sufficient number of subjects) (P&D) • Able to discuss ways to enhance generalizability of findings (P&D) 	
<p>6. Statistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an ability to understand the statistical procedures used (P&D) • Utilizes appropriate statistical procedures to analyze data (P&D) • Presents results in a clear and appropriate manner (D) • Understands appropriate conclusions that may be drawn from the data (P&D) • Able to discuss alternative statistical procedures for future research (D) 	
<p>7. Significance to field</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an ability to discuss the contributions of selected constructs to proposed study (P&D) • Demonstrates an understanding of study's specific and overall contributions to the field (P&D) • Able to distinguish and discuss the statistical and clinical significance of the study to the field (D) • Able to discuss alternative contributions to populations other than the presently identified (P&D) 	
<p>8. Synthesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately integrates theory and results in discussion section (D) • Demonstrates ability to discuss connection between internal and external validity (P&D) • Thesis (written product) evidences appropriate connections throughout (lit review, hypotheses, methods, results, discussion) (P&D) • Demonstrates ability to adequately answer questions concerning all sections of thesis (P&D) • Demonstrates a deep understanding of problem and issue (P&D) 	
<p>9. Professionalism in conducting thesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression in a timely manner (e.g., met deadlines associated with 	

development and completion of thesis) (P&D) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conscientiousness (P&D) • Understood and complied with ethical treatment of human and animal participants (P&D) 	
10. Oral presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization: well-structured – theory, hypotheses, design & methodology, potential stats, etc. (P&D) • Clarity: communication style (ability to articulate coherently) (P&D) • Flow: structural and communicative (P&D) • Responsiveness: thoughtful and precise response to questions posed during and after presentation (P&D) 	

Process:

- Each committee member independently completes assessment during or after the thesis defense meeting and gives it to the thesis chair.
- The thesis chair calculates averages for each of the 10 areas and provides them to the department chair.

Master's Degree Program in Applied Clinical Psychology
Psychology Department
USC Aiken

Thesis Preparation (PSYC 798) Enrollment Consent Form

Student's Name (print): _____

Student VIP Number: _____

Term taking 798: _____

1. Total Graduate Program Hours: Completed _____ **In Progress:** _____

2. Tentative thesis area: _____

3. Thesis Director/APSY798 Faculty Supervisor: _____

4. APSY 798 Requirements:

-
- Complete a formal research proposal
 - Obtain a thesis committee (thesis director and two full-time Psychology Department faculty members)
 - Obtain formal committee approval of research proposal
-

Student's signature: _____

Date: _____

Thesis Director: _____

Date: _____

Director of Graduate Program: _____

Date: _____

Department Chair: _____

Date: _____

Master's Degree Program in Applied Clinical Psychology
Psychology Department
USC Aiken

Thesis (PSYC 799) Enrollment Consent Form

Student's Name (print): _____

Student VIP Number: _____ PSYC 799 Hours Previously Completed: _____

Current 799 Term: _____ Credit Hours (1-4): _____

PSYC 798 completion semester: _____

Thesis Director: _____

Thesis title: _____

Committee Members: _____

The following section is to be completed by the thesis director, who will supervise the thesis project:

Goals and objectives of current enrollment:

Method of evaluation:

Student's signature: _____

Date: _____

Thesis Director: _____

Date: _____

Director of Graduate Program: _____

Date: _____

Department Chair: _____

Date: _____

Open Access Authorization for Thesis

The University of South Carolina Aiken is committed to digital open access of information. Open access allows for broader dissemination of information throughout the world. Promoting greater access to scholarly work and the accomplishments of the students, faculty, and staff of the University to support and promote scholarship is an integral part of our mission as a university.

To honor our commitment, USC Aiken joined the institutional repository, *Scholar Commons*, which was established through the Thomas Cooper Library at USC Columbia in the spring 2010 academic term. All USCA theses submitted electronically beginning with spring 2014 must be available in an open access format in this repository. A basic function of libraries, including university libraries, is to provide free access to their collections in order to support and promote scholarship. Putting electronic theses with a private company behind a paywall limits access to public records. Our electronic repository allows the University of South Carolina Aiken to maintain control and responsibility for its own records, provide free access, and not rely on a private company to maintain its public records.

On occasion, there is a need for delayed release, commonly referred to as an embargo. An embargo may be appropriate for some types of creative work, intellectual property with commercial implications, politically sensitive materials, and limited other types of work. Embargo requests for theses must be recommended for approval by the thesis committee and be supported by the graduate director of the academic unit. Embargo requests must be indicated in writing and must be submitted with a memo of justification to the director of the graduate program for final approval **BEFORE** final submission of the thesis.

By submitting my thesis, I am indicating that I understand the University of South Carolina Aiken commitment to digital open access of information and I hereby authorize the inclusion of my thesis in the electronic repository selected by the University. This authorization for inclusion may be modified by a formal embargo application that is submitted **BEFORE** the final submission of my thesis and as approved by my thesis committee and supported by my academic unit graduate director.

Name (Print)

Signature

Date