



## UNO Counseling Department Thesis Procedure & Agreement

1. The M.A. option (i.e., “thesis option”) requires faculty permission, and an additional 6 hours of graduate thesis credit past the credits required for each concentration (60 for Clinical Mental Health; 48 for School Counseling; 36 for Student Affairs).
  - a. Permission to pursue a thesis (and enroll in thesis credits) is provided by the **Thesis Review Committee** upon review of the student’s formal **Pre-Proposal** presentation (process outlined below).
2. A master’s thesis involves conducting original research, and requires a significant time commitment and effort on the part of both the student and the faculty. Students should plan on a **minimum of three semesters** (Fall, Spring, Summer) to complete (i.e., “defend”) a thesis.
  - a. A summer thesis defense is not guaranteed due to summer teaching schedules of faculty. Students must receive written permission for a summer thesis defense at least **one** semester prior to the intended summer defense date.
3. Students enrolling in the Clinical Mental Health concentration during or after the Spring 2015 semester are required to take the CPCE exam as the official comprehensive/exit exam. The thesis option is in addition to the CPCE and not a substitute for the CPCE comprehensive/exam for Clinical Mental Health students, nor the comprehensive exit requirements of the School Counseling and Students Affairs concentrations.
4. Due to the research-focused nature of the thesis, students intending on pursuing the thesis option are required to complete *TED 8010: Introduction to Research* and receive a grade of B or higher within the first academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer) of their program of study.
5. Faculty advisors may assist students in discussing research ideas. However, students should approach faculty for discussion of topic *after* a general area of interest has been determined. It is the student’s responsibility to determine an intended area of research prior to meeting with a faculty member.
6. **Students are responsible for meeting all thesis guidelines outlined by the graduate college at UNO, which are outlined on the following webpage:**
  - a. <http://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/thesis-format.php>



### **Pre-Proposal Presentation (Required)**

1. A formal pre-proposal presentation to the Thesis Review Committee. The meeting will be scheduled by the committee, and announced to students in advance via the departmental listserv and departmental newsletter ("The Communicator). Only **one** pre-proposal meeting will be offered each semester. The presentation should be 20 minutes in duration, and should include the following:
  - i. Rationale for pursuit of thesis, including how this will impact academic/career goals.
  - ii. Description of the specific problem/issue to be investigated.
  - iii. Concise literature review, with a focus on the gap(s) in the literature filled by the proposed project.
  - iv. Detailed tentative timeline for completing the thesis within 1 full academic year (i.e., Fall, Spring, Summer).
  
2. The **Thesis Review Committee** will discuss each pre-proposal, and render one of the following decisions:

#### **Decision 1: Permission to proceed to full thesis proposal, after which students will:**

- Be formally notified via email by a member of the *Thesis Review Committee* of permission to proceed with thesis.
- Be *assigned* a Thesis "Chair" who will supervise the project. Students should set up a meeting with their chair as quickly as possible to discuss the next steps in the process, including the selection of at least **two** thesis committee members, one of whom must be faculty outside of the department (per UNO guidelines).
  - *Note: Thesis chairs reserve the right to deny permission to enroll/continue if s/he observes consistent progress not being made toward timely completion of thesis.*
- Select the remaining members of their thesis committee. **Note: all other committee members must be approved by the Thesis Chair.**
  - *Note: A thesis committee must consist of at least two UNO Counseling core faculty (Dr. Bjornsen, Dr. Blount, Dr. Carter, Dr. Kissinger, and Dr. Luther) and an additional approved committee member who carries graduate faculty status outside of the department).*
- Be encouraged to discuss their research ideas with all faculty to gain a clear understanding of faculty availability, expertise, and professional interests.
- Complete the **Thesis Agreement** (see below). A copy will be placed in the student's file along with practicum and internship documents.

#### **Decision 2: Permission denied to proceed to thesis proposal.**

- Student will be formally notified of this decision via email by member of *Thesis Review Committee*.
- Student may re-apply for permission to pursue a thesis the following semester if at least **one** full academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer) remains in their program of study.



**UNO Department of Counseling  
Thesis Agreement**

**Date:**

**Dear (Student),**

Thank you for your participation in the Counseling Department's *Thesis Pre-Proposal*. The *Thesis Review Committee* has reviewed your presentation, and I am pleased to inform you that you have been granted permission to pursue a thesis. Dr. (to be assigned by Thesis Review Committee) will be your thesis chair. Please arrange a formal meeting with your chair as soon as possible to clarify thesis procedures and select the remaining members of your thesis committee.

As you begin process, we encourage you to consider:

1. Arranging meetings with departmental faculty members and/or potential faculty members outside of the department as potential committee members.
2. Discussing your thesis topic, goals, timeline, and expectation(s) of the committee member (time commitment, expertise such as methodology/stats/content knowledge/research experience).
3. Preparing to present the following elements at your formal thesis proposal:
  - a. Name of thesis chair and committee members
  - b. Thesis Title (*may be working title*)
  - c. **Introduction (Chapter 1)**
    - i. Significance of the Problem
    - ii. Purpose of the Study
    - iii. Research Question(s) or hypotheses
    - iv. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework of Study (if applicable)
  - d. **Literature Review (Chapter 2)**
  - e. **Methodology (Chapter 3)**
    - i. Research Design/Statistical Analysis
    - ii. Potential Instruments/Participants

**The signatures below represent my intention to complete a thesis & the agreement of each committee member to serve on my committee**

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**Student:**

**Date:**

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**Thesis Chair:**

**Date:**

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**Committee Member:**

**Date:**

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**Committee Member:**

**Date:**