



**Psychology Master's Thesis
PSY 580A and PSY 580B**

March 2021

In order to begin a Psychology Master's Thesis you need to determine a topic and find an adviser to help you. If you are considering conducting the thesis at Hood, you need to find a research adviser among the faculty. This need not necessarily be the same person as your academic adviser. (You could also do a thesis at an off-campus site, which is sometimes the student's work site, if that is a better match for you).

In choosing a thesis you need to consider the following:

1. What topics are of interest to you?
2. What skills do you know or will you need to develop in order to be able to study the topic(s) you have chosen? A good strategy is to have your project be a training ground that you can use to develop the skills and practical knowledge to make you more employable.
3. What are the time constraints? Can you work in the evenings and on weekends to finish your thesis or will it require larger blocks of time? Can you work on a thesis full time for a short period of time (e.g. a month in the summer)? Theses rarely fit into the neat 3-hour, 1-day-a-week schedules like your classes did, so you will need to make some adjustments for this.

4. Do you have sufficient background in statistics and research methodology to undertake thesis research?

5. Thesis which involve human subjects must be approved by the Hood College IRB (Institutional Research Board).

Once you have given these questions some thought and arrived at less tentative answers, contact potential advisers and make appointments with them to talk about where your interests and theirs may overlap. You probably have some ideas about what topics most on-campus faculty members study through your time at Hood. You can also do a literature search to see what they have published recently.

Once you and an adviser have mutually agreed to work together, your next step is to

write a proposal for the work you will do. An approved proposal is needed to allow you to enroll in PSY 580.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

General Information

For the Interdisciplinary Studies in Human Behavior (ISHB) program, students typically complete the 30 credits required plus the comprehensive exam. For students who wish to complete a thesis in lieu of the comprehensive exam, 36 credits, which includes the 6 credits of thesis work, is required for program completion.

Thesis Adviser

The student is responsible for submitting a thesis proposal approved by the reading committee and for securing a thesis adviser, *preferably a member of the Hood College faculty*, to oversee the project. If the proposed thesis adviser is not a member of the Hood College faculty, the sponsoring department must approve them. It is, in this case, the student's responsibility to forward a curriculum vitae and three letters of recommendation in support of the thesis adviser to the department Program Director prior to registration for thesis by the student. If the thesis adviser is on the faculty or staff of an accredited college or university and is engaged in research, the sponsoring department, if requested, may waive the requirement for three letters of recommendation. Advisers are approved by consent of the departmental faculty. The Program Director, with the advice and consent of the program faculty, generally reviews the thesis adviser qualifications, and gives final approval of the thesis proposal. It is expected that the thesis adviser will be a Ph.D., M.D., or D.V.M. experienced in the topic of thesis research.

The graduate dean must approve a thesis adviser who does not hold the Ph.D., M.D. or D.V.M degree. In such a case, the sponsoring department is asked to submit a curriculum vitae and three letters of recommendation in support of the thesis adviser to the Dean of the Graduate School prior to registration for thesis by the student. Final approval of the thesis adviser is made by the Dean of the Graduate School, based upon the credentials of the proposed thesis adviser.

Registering for Thesis Credits

Students writing a thesis must register during the regular graduate school registration period (up until the drop/add deadline of the term). The thesis course is divided into two course numbers: PSY 580A and PSY 580B, for 3 credits each. Students typically enroll in PSY 580A their initial semester, and then PSY 580B the subsequent semester. Students may register for all 6 credits within one term, if they wish to try to complete the project in that term. Students who do not complete PSY 580B within the original term of enrollment, will continue to be enrolled in the course as "In Progress" or "IP" for each Fall and Spring term thereafter until the project is completed. While no new tuition charges are assessed for IP enrollment, students are charged the comprehensive fee.

To register for the thesis, students must submit a written proposal to their reading committee for review and obtain signatures of approval from their thesis adviser, committee members and Program Director on a cover page, or email approvals. The

approved proposal and signed cover page or email approvals must be submitted to the Registrar's Office at hoodgrad@hood.edu, along with a Permission to Enroll form (www.hood.edu/gradforms) to complete the registration process.

The thesis requires planning on the part of the student well in advance of the semester in which the student wishes to enroll. Students first develop the proposal in consultation with the project advisor.

Reading Committee

The approved thesis adviser serves as chair of the reading committee. The adviser and the student, in consultation, will identify at least two additional persons to serve on the reading committee. At least one member of the committee must be a full-time equivalency (AC) faculty member in the sponsoring department. Additional members of the committee may be an AC faculty member in the degree program, another faculty member from the department, or another professional working on the research topic. For non-members of the faculty, a curriculum vitae and one letter of recommendation must be submitted to the Department Chair or Program Director, who approves such a member. The reading committee should be kept informed of progress on the thesis project, and should meet as required to help guide the research. The committee should meet at least once before the thesis defense.

Oral Defense

An oral defense of the thesis is required and will be conducted by the reading committee at an agreed upon date and at a specified location. To schedule a location on campus, the Administrative Assistant for the student's degree program should be contacted. Defense dates should not be set until the thesis adviser and the reading committee approves the thesis draft. Defense dates are not permitted in the two weeks period prior to the final thesis submission date set by the registrar's office. At least two weeks before the oral defense the student should submit the thesis, in final form, to the adviser, reading committee members, Program Director and Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School and the Program Director should be invited to attend the defense, whether or not they are members of the reading committee. The Program Director and Dean of the Graduate School are not required to attend the defense.

The candidate should expect to present the thesis research and findings in a professional manner, similar to presentations at a professional meeting. The use of well-prepared graphs, charts, and other explanatory aids is encouraged. The candidate is expected to explain the research and to answer questions relating to the thesis topic. The oral defense may be attended by members of the sponsoring department, the Dean of the Graduate School, and others in the research group interested in the topic, subject to the approval of the reading committee. Normally, the presentation of the thesis data by the student is an open event to faculty, students and other invitees. However, the question and answer session is closed and attended only by the student, the reading committee members, Program Director, Dean of the Graduate School, and (at their request) members of the departmental graduate faculty.

Approval of Master's Thesis

The thesis is approved after the oral defense and after corrections recommended by the thesis adviser and reading committee, Program Director and Dean of the Graduate School have been completed. Signatures on the title page indicate approval. (Names of individuals who sign the title page should be typed below the signature line.) Final

committee authorization and signatures of the Program Director are required before the thesis is uploaded to ProQuest and MD-SOAR. Please review the upload process instructions online at www.hood.edu/gradforms, under the Final Thesis, Projects, Capstones and Research section.

Grade for Thesis

The thesis is graded "S" (satisfactory) or "U" (unsatisfactory). After the first semester of PSY 580A, the thesis adviser awards an interim grade of "S". For the subsequent enrollment in PSY 580B, the final grade of "S" is entered either by the thesis adviser (instructor) or the registrar's office after the thesis has been successfully uploaded to ProQuest and MD-SOAR. The grade of "S" has no effect upon the student's grade point average. The grade of "U" has the same effect as a grade of "F" (failure). A final grade of "U" on the thesis usually results in the student's dismissal from the master's degree program.

An unsatisfactory performance at the oral defense of the thesis may result in the student's dismissal from the master's degree program. The Program Director, in consultation with the adviser, the reading committee and the Dean of the Graduate School, may allow the student one additional opportunity to defend the thesis. Unsatisfactory performance at the retake will result in dismissal with no additional opportunities to complete the degree.

THESIS PREPARATION

Introduction

The thesis will be written according to the format and style described in established publication manuals. Students will follow the format and style ***of the latest edition of the*** Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, published by the American Psychological Association (APA). This manual is available in the reference section of the Hood College Beneficial-Hodson Library, as well as in the Hood College Bookstore and other bookstores.

THESIS REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Copyright

Under the Copyright Act of 1976, the "copyright in the work of authorship" becomes the property of the author who created it. For further information, please refer to the Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20559.

Students completing a thesis must take care to obtain permission before using copyrighted materials within their thesis. Permission to use copyrighted materials, for example, tables and figures, must be obtained from the holder of the copyright. The student needs to search carefully for the source of the copyright and obtain permission to use the copyrighted materials in the thesis document. The permission to use copyrighted materials should be referenced in the thesis at the point where such materials are presented. The student must retain copies of the copyright permissions, and supply them to Hood College upon request. Students completing a thesis are able to facilitate the use

of their thesis research and findings by including a copyright waiver as part of the thesis document.

Copyright Waiver

In order to permit others to utilize the thesis research and findings, the following statement should appear in the thesis on the page immediately following the title page, with the heading in standard format: "I **do/do not** authorize Hood College to lend this thesis, or reproductions of it, in total or in part, at the request of other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research." Please circle **do** or **do not**.

Acknowledgment of Hood College in Publications of Thesis Work

The Graduate School of Hood College should be acknowledged in publications that result from the thesis research. A simple statement of acknowledgment is sufficient. An appropriate example would be "Research reported in this document was originally published in a Master's degree thesis sponsored by the Department of Human Sciences or Thanatology and submitted to The Graduate School of Hood College in Frederick, Maryland."

Fonts, Headings, Spacing, and Margins

Font sizes of 12 point are recommended for thesis work. Standard typefaces should be used, either proportional or monospace. Justification at the right margin is optional. Reduction of Tables or Figures such that type size is smaller than 10 point is not acceptable.

Section headings should contain all uppercase letters, be boldface, and centered at the top of a new page. All text should be **double spaced** with a left hand margin of 1.5 inches (3.8 cm.) and with right, top, and bottom margins of 1.0 inch (2.5 cm.).

The one exception to this is on a "facing" legend page where the right margin (adjacent to the spine) is 1.5 inches and the left margin (toward the outer edge) is 1 inch. The margin requirements apply to all tables and figures as well as pages with text. A facing figure legend page and the figure together have one page number.

Binding and Distribution

The final thesis document is uploaded to ProQuest for publishing and binding. The sponsoring department may require a bound copy for its files. Additional copies may be bound at the student's request for an additional fee. Students should review the library guide for full ProQuest instructions here: <https://hood.libguides.com/hoodscholarship>

Deadlines

The importance of observing published deadlines for final submission of the completed and approved thesis cannot be overemphasized. Students are urged to follow closely and carefully the published dates for thesis submission. Arrangements for the oral defense of the thesis should be made early enough to allow time for completion of required corrections. This will enable the candidate to earn the master's degree at the earliest possible date. Past experience has shown that the most common reason for thesis candidates to receive their diplomas later than anticipated is because of poor planning with respect to the deadlines. You can review the deadlines for each term on the Academic Calendar online at www.hood.edu/registrar.

THESIS GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAMS UTILIZING *APA* FORMAT

Preliminary pages

All of the below-named sections should begin on separate pages and must be double-spaced. The preliminary pages should be numbered in lower case Roman numerals located at the bottom center of each page. The title page is counted as page “i” but is not numbered. The preliminary pages should appear in the order specified below.

- a. Title page (see sample page in this document)
- b. Statement of Use and Copyright waiver (see example in this document)
- c. Abstract
- d. Dedication (this page is optional)
- e. Acknowledgements and Sponsorship
- f. List of Tables – should include the page location of each table, and short legends
- g. List of Figures – should include the page location of each Figure, and short legends
- h. List of Abbreviations (optional)

Main body of the text

The main body of the text should be numbered in Arabic numerals located at the bottom center of each page. The first page is counted as page “1” but is not numbered. If you use chapters, each chapter should begin on a new page.

Content Sections

Guidelines in this section are broad and intended for general information. Students should refer to the APA manual. Content Sections should be presented in the following order:

Abstract -- The abstract should be a short, concise summary of the thesis project outlining the purpose, rationale, and methods used. The most significant findings are also included. The maximum length of the abstract is 150 words.

Introduction -- This section is used to specify the problem, describe the rationale, and to provide an overview of previously published relevant work. It should have a clear statement of purpose. If a hypothesis is being tested, it is often stated explicitly in the introduction.

Materials and Methods -- This section should describe in detail all of the methods and protocols used to conduct the research. The purpose is to provide enough information so the data could be duplicated with only the thesis available as an information source. The Materials and Methods section should make clear all of the procedures performed by the candidate. Data collection and analysis methods (e.g. description of statistical analysis) should be described. This section may include tables and figures.

Results -- This section presents a comprehensive picture of all research results and data. The supporting data are included. This section usually contains tables and figures. Tables and figures must be interpreted and explained within the text.

Tables and figures are numbered consecutively (Arabic numerals) throughout the thesis document. Numbering for tables and figures is independent (start at Table 1 and Figure 1, etc.). Each table or figure has a legend and a title, and is listed by page number in the preliminary pages. Each table or figure should have one page number; it should be printed, centered, at the bottom of the page. For tables or figures presented in landscape format, page numbers should still be at the bottom of the upright page. Tables and figures must fit within the specified page margins (see above).

Discussion -- This section is for critique, evaluation, and interpretation. Describe conclusions and compare findings with your original hypotheses and other reported data. Where there is agreement, use it for validation. Where there is disagreement, suggest reasons and explanations. Suggest future directions resulting from your study.

Endnote ®, a commercial reference management software program, is available to all Hood College students. This software package can manage reference and bibliographic material.

References -- Follow the guidelines in the APA manual for approved reference format.

Appendix -- An appendix is not common in the thesis. Students who contemplate including an appendix should, in consultation with their adviser, follow the guidelines in the APA manual. One common practice is to include reprints of publications (if any) of thesis data in an Appendix.

APPENDICES

Copyright Letter Example

Date

Holder of Copyright
Street Address
City, State Zip

Dear Holder of Copyright:

I am a graduate student in the Human Sciences **OR** Thanatology Master's degree program at Hood College in Frederick Maryland. My thesis is _____. I am requesting permission to include in my thesis the following material:

(Include all relevant information about your request: title, page numbers, year of publication, etc.)

If permission is granted, proper acknowledgement and credit will be incorporated in the thesis document.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Contact Information

Sample Title Page

DEFINITION AND EXAMINATION OF END-OF-LIFE APNEA (EOLA)

AND VERBAL RESPONSIVENESS

by

Full Name

Bachelor's Degree, Institution, Year

THESIS

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements

for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS in

INTERDISCIPLINARY
STUDIES IN HUMAN
BEHAVIOR

in the

GRADUATE SCHOOL

of

HOOD COLLEGE

Month and Year

Accepted:

Ingrid Farreras, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Andrew Campbell, Ph.D.
Director, ISHB Program

Shannon Kundey, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Molly Moreland, Ph.D.
Thesis Advisor

April Boulton, Ph.D.
Dean of the Graduate School

Title Page Signature Guidelines

Names of the individuals signing the title page should be typed in the space below their signature line, above their title.