Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

MASTER’S THESIS/PROJECT RUBRIC

The purpose of this rubric is to guide students and the thesis/project committees as they develop high quality proposals and theses/project. The use of the rubric will provide timely and flexible evaluation of the drafts as they are written and submitted to committee members. Quality indicators are indicated in the rubric for each chapter of the proposal (Chapters 1-3) and the thesis/project (Chapters 1-5). The rubric also includes a rating category for the overall style and format presentation of the thesis/project. A numerical rating scale is associated with each chapter/category of the rubric. The rubric has been designed to be used with studies employing qualitative, quantitative and mixed research designs. Space has been provided to make specific comments in each chapter/category. Of course, more extensive notes or the marked copy of the chapter(s) should also be shared with the student.

QUALITY INDICATORS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THESS/PROJECT</th>
<th>Approved with Commendation, Exceptional Level of Scholarship</th>
<th>Approved as Written, All Crucial Elements Present</th>
<th>Approved with Minor Revisions</th>
<th>Revise and Resubmit, one or more Elements Lack Quality</th>
<th>Revise and Resubmit, one or more Elements are Missing</th>
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1 The rubric was developed based on the doctoral dissertation rubric in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at CSUN. Available at: http://www.csun.edu/senate/reports/Ed.D.%20Program%20Document.doc
QUALITY INDICATORS:

THESIS/PROJECT

<table>
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<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY</th>
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<td>Introduction to the study has a clear statement of the problem, demonstrating how topic is significant to your area of study and professional organization.</td>
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<td>Introduction situates specific problem within a broader context.</td>
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<td>The research questions are stated clearly.</td>
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<td>Research questions are directly connected to the theoretical orientation or conceptual framework.</td>
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<td>The Theoretical Orientation or Conceptual Framework delineates the ideas or concepts that are being applied to the issue or problem under investigation.</td>
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<td>Assumptions, limitations, and bounds of the study are clearly stated.</td>
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<td>Important terms are defined conceptually and operationally.</td>
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CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

- Coverage of the literature is adequate and within scope of problem.
- Literature review is well organized around major ideas or themes.
- The content of the review is drawn from the most relevant published knowledge and current research on the topic under investigation.
- Scholarly sources, such as books, peer-reviewed journals, or other materials appropriate to the issue or problem are chosen for study.
- There is a literature-based description of the research variables or potential themes and perceptions to be investigated.
- The literature review makes explicit connections between prior knowledge and research and the issue or problem under investigation.
- Relationship of the problem to previous research is made clear.
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CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

- The research design is appropriate and described fully.
- Research design is free of specific weaknesses.
- The role of the researcher is clearly explained.
- The research setting is described and justified.
- Population, sample, criteria for selecting sample/participants, and access to subjects/participants are appropriate and described in adequate detail.
- The process to generate, gather and record data is explained in detail.
- Data gathering methods and procedures are appropriate and clearly described.
- The systems used for keeping track of data and emerging understandings (logs, reflective journals, cataloging) are clearly described.
- Description of instrumentation or data collection tools is present.
- Measures for ethical protections and rights of participants are adequate.
- Data analysis methods and procedures are clearly described.
## QUALITY INDICATORS:

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### CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND RESULTS

- Findings and results are clearly and comprehensively described.
- The findings and results build logically from the problem and research design and, are presented in a manner that addresses the research questions or hypotheses.
- Discrepant cases and nonconfirming data are reported in the findings.
- Measures, patterns, relationships and themes reported as findings are supported by the data.
- Data collection instruments and tools have been identified and used appropriately.
- Data analysis is consistent with research questions or hypotheses, methodology, and the underlying theoretical/conceptual framework of the study.
- Tables and figures are self-descriptive, informative, and conform to standard thesis/project format.
- Conclusions drawn from outcomes are logically and systematically summarized and interpreted in relation to their importance to the research questions and hypotheses.
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CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

• The chapter begins with a brief overview of how and why the study was done, reviewing the questions or issues addressed and a summary of the findings and results.
• The interpretation of findings and results includes conclusions that address all the research questions or hypotheses with references to outcomes listed in Chapter 4.
• Generalizations, where indicated, are confined to the population from which the sample was drawn.
• Recommendations for action flow logically from the conclusions and include steps for action.
• Recommendations for further study point to topics that require closer examination.
• The work concludes with a strong closing statement with a “memorable” message.
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**OVERALL PRESENTATION: STYLE AND FORMAT:**

The thesis and project must conform to the guidelines for style as set forth in the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA Manual). This includes but is not limited to:

1. correct grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling.
2. proper in-text citations for references, direct quotations, and paraphrasing.
3. the reference list.
4. all tables and figures.
5. headings and sub-headings.

The writing:

6. is scholarly (i.e., the language is accurate, balanced, specific rather than overly general, tentative regarding conclusions, grounded in previous scholarship and evidence).
7. is direct and precise.
8. is clear and comprehensible, without excessive jargon.
9. paragraphs focus on a main point and all sentences within the paragraph relate to the main point.
10. transition sentences are used to bridge main ideas.

The thesis and the project:

11. are organized logically and comprehensively.
12. have headings and subheadings to identify the logic and movement of the dissertation and make it easy for the reader to follow.
13. have smooth and coherent transitions between chapters.
14. chapters fit together coherently into an integrated “whole”.

The format complies with CSUN thesis/project and University Microfilms (a.k.a. UMI for electronic thesis format) guidelines.
OVERALL THESIS/PROJECT ASSESSMENT:

☐ 29-30 points – Approved with Commendation
☐ 24-28 points - Approved as Written
☐ 18-23 points - Approved with Minor Revisions (Required score of 3 in each category/chapter)
☐ 17 points or less – Fail/Requires Revision & Resubmission of Specified Categories/Chapter(s)

Committee Chair

_______________________
Printed Name

_______________________
Signature

Candidate

_______________________
Printed Name

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Signature

Committee Members

_______________________
Printed name

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