A Note to Students:

This handbook is written to help guide students during what may be the most exciting, and perhaps most stressful, requirement of master's degree program—the development of the final project or thesis. Congratulations on nearing the completion of your degree!

Students in the Master of Science and Master of Arts Degree in Education may choose to complete a project or thesis as the culminating experience in the program. It is hoped that you will find your work meaningful and relevant and that you will be able to put what you develop to use in the schools or any other chosen career you decide to pursue.

This handbook contains only the basic information necessary to complete the project or thesis and is offered to simplify your efforts not complicate them. Further clarification can be found in the current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* remains the final word in any areas of question. Good luck and happy writing.

The Faculty

CBU School of Education

Revised May, 2005
An Overview of the Culminating Experience

EDU596 is one option for the culminating experience in the degree program in the School of Education and therefore should be taken during the final semester of a student's plan of study. Furthermore, at least 24 units normally must have been completed prior to enrollment. There are a few circumstances that merit waiving of this policy; however, permission of the Dean of the School of Education must be obtained.

It is highly recommended that students take only this class during their final semester in the program. It involves considerable work and you will be better off if your attention is not divided between the project and other course work. Prior to enrolling in the Research Seminar, you must obtain the signatures of your three committee members and the Research Coordinator to enroll.

Students in EDU596 can choose to do either a thesis or a project. Students who select the thesis option usually select a problem that they wish to investigate statistically or one that is abstract in nature such as a research investigation, an extended review of the literature (a monograph), or an analysis of theory. Those who select the project option normally choose something that is applied and practical in nature such as a curriculum guide or inservice presentation. Generally, work done by students for this culminating requirement contains elements of both a thesis and a project. Therefore, the distinction between a thesis and project can be fine.

EDU596 is a regular class that meets weekly with deadlines for turning in the chapters of the project. Upon completion of EDU596 students are expected to enroll in one unit of EDU597 (Project) or EDU598 (Thesis) each semester until their project or thesis is completed. If the project or thesis is not completed by the end of three
consecutive units of enrollment in EDU597 or 598 the student will be advised to take the comprehensive exams. The standards for acceptable work in EDU596, 597, or 598 are the same. Because this is the culminating work for the master's degree, very high quality work is expected. Students may be asked to revise their work in progress more than once in order to attain the standards set by the faculty. After the project/thesis committee has read and signed off on the project or thesis, the APA reader will then read for final confirmation that APA style has been adhered to.
Basic Procedures for Designing and Writing a Thesis or Project

1. Write a proposal (basically Chapters 1, 2, and 3), and submit it to the potential members of your committee.

2. Having obtained committee signatures, register for EDU596.

3. Set a meeting time with all three committee members to discuss the proposal and receive guidance from them. This is to be done during the first two weeks of the semester in which the student is enrolled in EDU596.

4. Write each chapter of the document. Submit the first draft to your EDU596 instructor and the following drafts to your committee chair for suggestions and correction.

5. Revise each chapter and submit to committee members for suggestions and correction. Provide a copy of the previously corrected and approved chapter(s) when submitting new material.

6. Upon the approval of your committee, the student will submit a clean copy to the Research Coordinator for final APA approval.

7. Bind final copies using archival paper for distribution to the Research Coordinator (two copies—one for the library and one for the School of Education) and committee members.

8. If your document is not completed during the original semester in which you registered, you must continue to register for at least one unit of EDU597 or EDU598 each semester (for a maximum of three semesters) until the document is finished and the title pages signed by the committee members.
Comments Regarding Preparation

Refer to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (current edition) for detailed information on the presentation of your project or thesis.

Below is a list of some important guidelines to follow in the preparation of your manuscript.

1. Use type that is dark, clear, and readable.

2. Type every page with a one-inch margin on all sides except the left margin. A margin of 1 1/2 inches should be allowed on the left for binding. Do not justify the right margin.

3. Double space between all lines of the manuscript, whether these involve quotations, references, or headings, etc. (The one exception is the Table of Contents—See example p. 27.)

4. Page numbers should appear in the top right hand corner except for the frontis materials. On these pages, the number should be placed in the center of the bottom of the page. The frontis pages should be in Roman numerals. Chapter Four of a master’ project (curriculum guide, inservice presentation) should have numbers in the upper right hand corner continuing from Chapter Three and separate numbering for the guide on the bottom center (numbering from 1 to the end of Chapter Four).

5. Do not use a running head.

6. The tab default setting should be set at five to seven spaces, whichever will give a 1/2 inch tab for the first line of every paragraph.

7. Use only one space after each period in a sentence.
8. Incorporate quotations of 40 words or less within the text itself and enclose them with double quotation marks. Display quotations of more than 40 words in a double-spaced block, with no quotation marks and indented five to seven spaces from the left margin.

9. Center the word References at the top of the reference list page. References should be listed in alphabetical order according to APA style and beginning each reference with a “hanging indent” (flush left first line, continuing lines are indented).

10. APA suggests the following levels for headings: (Note: Level 5 is used only when 5 levels of headings are necessary and subordinates all other levels.)

   Centered Uppercase and Lowercase Heading (Level 1)
   
   Centered, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading (Level 2)
   
   Flush Left, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Side Heading (Level 3)
   
   Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.
   
   (Level 4)

   CENTERED UPPERCASE HEADING (Level 5)

11. Do not have a heading appear at the bottom of a page. If you have no room after the heading to begin typing the section then move the heading to the following page. Format your computer to eliminate “widows/orphans” before beginning your writing.

12. Avoid the use of writing in first person and writing that shows bias.

13. Avoid sexist language.
14. As a general rule, spell the numbers zero to nine and use the numerals for numbers 10 and above. (See APA for exceptions.)

15. Use in reference lists the official two-letter U.S. Postal Service abbreviations for state names. Note those major cities where states are not needed.

16. For the final bound copies use 8 1/2" x 11" white 20-pound weight with a 25%-100% rag content paper.

Use of Copyrighted Materials

Some students elect to include previously published materials in their guides. This may be done only if the student has obtained permission in writing from the publisher and includes a copy of the permission letter in an appendix in the project. (See APA for details on footnoting copyrighted materials for which permission has been received.)

All work is expected to be original except where otherwise noted. Passages, even very brief ones, from other sources must be referenced. Students must also obtain permission when incorporating copyrighted computer programs and “clipart” artwork into their projects. Students should refer to the CBU Catalog for the university-wide policy on plagiarism, which is considered a serious offense and may result in disqualification from the university.
Content and Format of Chapter One

The Problem and Its Investigation

The title of Chapter One is *The Problem and Its Investigation*. Chapter One and the title should be typed in uppercase and lowercase letters on a new page and centered. Chapter One is written on the first line. Double space and then type and italicize *The Problem and Its Investigation*. The subsections of Chapter One are as follows: *Statement of the Problem, Rationale, Assumptions and Limitations, Definitions of Important Terms, and Organization of Remainder of Paper*. The title of each subsection should be in capitals and small letters, flush left, and italicized.

Prior to the first subsection, *Statement of the Problem*, a brief overview or introduction should be presented. The purpose of this overview is to prepare the reader for the statement of the problem. The content of this introduction could include a current problem that has motivated you to work on this paper, or a very short historical account of your topic.

*Statement of the Problem*

In this subsection you need to state clearly and specifically what you intend to do. You should be able to complete the following in one sentence: "The purpose of this project/thesis is…" One and no more than two sentences can follow this statement for purposes of elaboration.

After the statement of the problem, in this same subsection, you need to start a new paragraph, which indicates the questions you intend to study. You may begin this paragraph as follows:
The following questions were investigated:

1. 
2. 
3. 

These questions are critical components that represent the essence of your topic. They are so important that without investigating them your study will be incomplete. They should be questions that require researchable answers and therefore cannot be answered with a “yes” or “no” answer.

*Rationale*

You need to explain in this subsection *why you want to invest so much time and effort in your topic*. Included in this explanation should be a discussion of the significance of the problem. You can give a brief history of the topic or problem in the traditional way by going from the past to the present, or the reverse, by going from the present to the past. You need to present reasons why this study will help educators in general. Also, be sure to discuss how this study will help students. Your rationale will be strengthened by a comparison of the similarities and differences between what you propose to do and what other scholars have done on this same topic.

*Assumptions and Limitations*

Assumptions are premises that you start with before working on your topic or problem. For example, if you intend to develop a curriculum guide on learning to read through literature, you might assume that primary grade pupils are able to learn to read by being exposed to good literature. If you want to write a handbook of activities to
promote parental involvement at your school, you might assume that parental involvement contributes toward a child's school achievement. This paragraph can start as follows:

The following assumptions are made:

1.

2.

3.

Limitations are extremely important with respect to helping you complete a high quality paper. The tendency for inexperienced graduate students is to cover too much in their paper. It is better to do an in-depth study of a few selected subjects related to your statement of the problem than to try to cover all possible issues in a superficial way.

Accordingly, you need to indicate the few subjects you will work on in this study and those you will not address. You may begin this paragraph by stating:

The following limitations are established:

1.

2.

3.

Definitions of Important Terms

Assuming the reader does not have expertise about your area of study, you need to list exact definitions of technical or esoteric words. You can use the Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (current edition), an education dictionary, textbooks, or your own definitions for this purpose. You will need to leave this subsection open as you work on the remaining chapters of your paper to add definitions, especially after you
have completed Chapter Two, *Review of Related Literature*. Typically, between five and fifteen words are defined in this section, though this depends entirely upon the topic you have selected. The format for this section of the chapter is to indent and italicize the term, followed by a colon. The definition follows, using a hanging indent format as it wraps.

Example:

*Term:* The term is followed by a definition of the term either from the dictionary, a textbook, or a definition that you, the writer, have chosen.

*Next term:* (Note that the italicizing includes the colon as well as the word.)

*Organization of Remainder of Paper*

In this section you may simply identify the titles of the remaining chapters of the project using narrative form. Discuss the contents of each chapter varying your sentence pattern for readability.
Content and Format of Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

The title of Chapter Two is Review of Related Literature. The words Chapter Two should be typed in uppercase and lowercase letters and centered on the top line of a new page (double-spaced between the lines). The words Review of Related Literature should be centered and italicized on the second line. The review of the literature is essentially an extended term paper on what the professional literature has to say about your problem. As you read and take notes, an organization of topics for this chapter should become apparent. The list of questions to be investigated in Chapter One can serve as a guide to possible topics. Each topic title should be flush left, typed in upper and lower case letters, and italicized.

In Chapter Two, you need to paraphrase and synthesize what various authors have to say about your problem. The use of direct quotes should be kept to a minimum and should only be used to make a critical point. It is important in a scholarly work to give credit to authors you have paraphrased or quoted directly. (See the CBU Catalog for a discussion of plagiarism.) Use the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (current edition) as a guide for reference citations in this chapter and all other chapters. Reference citations should follow APA format.
Content and Format of Chapter Three

The title of Chapter Three will depend on the type of project or thesis you are doing. Included on the next three pages are the descriptions of the content and the formats for (a) a curriculum guide, (b) a research project, and (c) a survey. Chapter Three and the title should be typed in uppercase and lowercase letters on a new page and centered on the top two lines of the page.
(The format of Chapter Three of a curriculum guide should be as follows:)

Chapter Three

Design of the Guide

Organization

Give a brief review of each section of the guide and why you chose this organizational scheme.

Sources of Activities and Materials

Give credit to books, fellow teachers, instructors and their courses, workshops, and conferences attended that were especially helpful in contributing to the activities and materials for your guide.

Criteria Applied to the Selection of Activities and Materials

Explain the criteria you applied to select or reject activities and materials for your guide. For example, you may select activities that are easy for other teachers to follow and do not require them to undergo special training or that are inexpensive and easy for teachers to obtain. Activities should be appropriate to the age and developmental characteristics of the students. Your criteria must also relate to the research and theories of authorities. Your research chapter should have reviewed the materials on which you base you criteria.
(The format and content of Chapter Three of a research study should be as follows:)

Chapter Three

*Design of the Study*

*Description of Subjects of Study*

This section should include a discussion of the socioeconomic level, ethnic group composition, number of participants, and any other relevant characteristics of the subjects involved in the study.

*Procedure*

Include, in detail, what happened first, second, third, and so on. Also, present the hypothesis or hypotheses expressed in the null form.

*Instrument or Instruments*

Describe the instrument(s) used to collect data and include information about validity and reliability.

*How the Data Will Be Analyzed*

Give a description of the statistical treatment to be used and identify the level of significance (p-level).
(The content and format of Chapter Three of a survey should be as follows:)

Chapter Three

Design of the Survey

Description of the Population

Provide all relevant data about the subjects.

Description of the Instrument(s)

Describe the instrument(s) to be used to collect the data. Give examples of the items included on the survey. If the survey is a published instrument, include validity and reliability data. If the instrument is original, describe its development, efforts to determine reliability and validity, and the rationale for items selected. You should include a copy of the instrument in the appendix.

Procedure

Narrate the steps in enough detail that the survey could be replicated.

How the Data Will Be Analyzed

Describe how the data will be coded and analyzed.

(Note: All surveys need the approval of your committee prior to administering it to the subjects of your research.)
Content and Format of Chapter Four

Curriculum Guide

The content and format of a curriculum guide, the most common type of project completed by our students, is as follows:

The title of Chapter Four will differ for each student. Students are often quite creative about the title of their projects. This chapter begins on a new page and the words Chapter Four and the title of the guide appear centered on the top two lines (double-spaced) of the page. The second line is italicized. The body of Chapter Four should be organized as stated in Organization of Guide section of Chapter Three.

Chapter Four of a master’s project should have page numbers in the upper right hand corner continuing from Chapter Three and separate numbering for the guide on the bottom center (numbering from 1 to the end of Chapter Four).

Research Project or Survey

Chapter Four of a research project or survey will be devoted to a presentation of the findings. The words Chapter Four should begin a new page and be typed in uppercase and lowercase letters at the top of the page. The second line, titled Findings, is italicized. Present the hypothesis in the null form, followed by the results. If the findings are significant indicate at what level (i.e., .05 or .01). State whether the null hypothesis has been accepted or rejected. Include tables here, presenting all data.
Content and Format of Chapter Five

*Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations*

The title of Chapter Five is *Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations.* Chapter Five should begin a new page and be centered. The words *Summary, Conclusion,* and *Recommendations* should be italicized. The subsections of Chapter Five are as follows: a) *Summary,* b) *Conclusions,* and c) *Recommendations.*

*Summary*

A summary of the prior chapters is presented here. Include the statement of the problem, the rationale, the review of the literature, organization of the guide (in a curriculum guide), or design of the research investigation or survey with the findings in brief form.

*Conclusions*

For those doing a curriculum guide, you need to answer the questions raised in Chapter One and discuss any other conclusions you have formed while completing the study. For those doing a research study or survey, you should base your conclusions on the findings presented in Chapter Four.

*Recommendations*

Indicate promising areas for further study that you uncovered in your work on this paper that other scholars may be interested in pursuing. The limitations that you listed in Chapter One pertaining to the subjects your paper would not cover could be mentioned here as recommendations.
Content and Format of the Reference List

A reference list of all works cited in Chapters One through Chapter Five must be provided on a separate page following Chapter Five. The word References should be centered and typed in uppercase and lowercase letters, but not italicized. References, presented in alphabetical order, should be double-spaced with no added spaces between references. Each reference begins a new line and has a hanging indent. Succeeding lines of an entry are indented.

It is *extremely important* that students follow APA style for references and carefully check references for accuracy. Check to ensure that all works cited in your work are included in your references.
Content and Format of the Bibliography

Following the reference section, you may need to have a bibliography. The bibliography should include all works you read for background information that influenced you in developing the project but that you did not cite in the Reference section. The bibliography should be formatted in the same manner as the reference list. Be sure to use APA style for bibliography citations and check carefully for accuracy in format and information.
Content and Format of the Appendix

An appendix is occasionally included in projects. This section is located at the end of the entire project and follows a divider page entitled Appendix and is centered (see example). If there is more than one item to be included in an appendix then each appendix must be identified with a letter (e.g., Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.), and each has its own divider page. Several conceptually related pages may be included in a single appendix.

Included in an appendix may be a copy of a letter introducing a survey to participants, proof of copyright permission obtained, instruments used, examples of student work, etc. Check with your committee.
(Example of Appendix Page)

Appendix
Frontis Materials

Preceding Chapter One, you need to have the following in the order listed: a) a title and approval page, b) an abstract, c) a dedication page (optional), d) an acknowledgment page (optional), e) a table of contents, f) a list of tables (if any), and g) a list of figures (if any). These pages are numbered using lower-case Roman numerals at the center of the bottom of the page. The title and approval page should not be numbered although it is regarded as page "i". The first number will appear at the bottom center of the abstract page—this will be page "ii". A copyright page can be included (see example) and it is not numbered.

Samples of the title and approval page and the abstract may be found in the following pages. The abstract should summarize the entire work stating briefly: a) the current problem, b) the questions and design of your study, and c) the results you found through your research. It should be tightly written, and should be no more than 120 words in length. It should contain no references or footnotes. The acknowledgment page and the dedication pages are optional and allow the student the opportunity to thank and acknowledge whomever he or she wishes or to dedicate the project to someone. The table of contents should include all the headings and subheadings found in the paper. The format for the table of contents also appears in the following pages.
Children's Literature in the Math Curriculum

A Project (or Thesis)

Presented to the

Faculty of

California Baptist University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science (or Art)

in

Education

Name of Student

Month, Year

Approved by:

Name of Professor, Title
Committee Chairperson
Date

Name of Professor, Title
Member
Date

Name of Professor, Title
Date
Member
(Example of Copyright Page)

Copyright by
Joe Student
2005
Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of different instruction models on total performance scores awarded by appraisers using the Texas Teacher Appraisal Instrument. Fifty-six appraisers were randomly assigned to two groups. One group viewed a lesson taught using direct instruction, the other using inquiry. Trained appraisers evaluated the lessons in accordance with state guidelines. A factorial analysis of variance, conducted at a .05 level of significance, was computed to detect whether the treatments, level of appraiser training, and interaction influenced teacher performance scores. Results revealed a significant difference among the groups in favor of the direct instruction model. There was no significant difference between the levels of appraiser training or the interaction of these two effects.
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(Note: In your manuscript, the “p” will be replaced with actual page numbers)

Completion of the Project
**Approval Signatures**

Your committee members must sign the approval page of your project or thesis before it will be accepted for binding. Upon acceptance, your project or thesis will be read for final APA approval by the Research Coordinator. It is recommended that you obtain original signatures for each copy of the project. Therefore, when submitting the final copy of the project for approval (before binding) be sure to include several title and approval pages.

**Binding and Embossing**

Students may select from a variety of approved local binderies to get their projects bound. Books should be embossed with their names and the title of their projects on the front cover and side binding.

**Copies**

Students are required to give two copies of their project to the Research Coordinator to be retained by the School of Education. (One copy will be placed in the Reserve Room of the college library so that they are available to other students. The other is kept in the School of Education.) Most students make several copies. Four are required: One for the School of Education, one for the Library, one for your committee chair, and one for yourself. It is also appropriate to give copies to other members of your committee. These, however, may be soft bound.