

## PROSPECTUS FORMAT

All Thesis students must complete a prospectus as part of their program requirements. (NOTE: prospectus is **not** required of Applied Project students starting with Fall 2018 cohort). Given that the research and mentoring style of advisors vary, there will be a lot of flexibility in the structure and timeline of the prospectus format. However, students should present their prospectus to their committee no later than the end of the Fall semester of their 2<sup>nd</sup> year (or no later than the semester prior to their defense). **The prospectus should be presented PRIOR to the collection of the thesis data**, in order for the committee to provide feedback on the methodology that can be incorporated into the study ahead of time. Thus, if a student wants to begin data collection prior to the Fall semester of their 2<sup>nd</sup> year, then they need to have their prospectus submitted and approved to the committee ahead of data collection. In some cases, the thesis may involve analysis of a secondary data set. When this is the case, the student should submit the prospectus prior to performing analyses for their thesis so that committee members can provide feedback on the research question and data analytic strategy.

The prospectus should consist of a comprehensive proposal of the topic and/or research idea that they will pursue for their thesis. This proposal may be a more formal oral presentation to their committee in a defense-like setting, or a written proposal that is submitted to their committee for approval and feedback, or some combination of the two formats. If a student wants to use the 2<sup>nd</sup> year brownbag presentation for their oral prospectus defense, then they need to get approval from their advisor and make sure that their committee members can attend (if a member is unable to attend, then they may be given a written prospectus to approve or the student can present the oral prospectus at a separate time for that committee member). Please note that the final format of the prospectus is the decision of the advisor – and this decision is made on a student-by-student basis. In other words, the prospectus requirements may look very different between students in the program (and even between students with the same advisor). Advisors will decide the prospectus format based on a consideration of a student's unique circumstances, goals, and needs, as well as the nature of the specific thesis/applied project.

Regardless of the format of the prospectus, students are responsible for providing their committee members with a print copy of the Prospectus Defense Rubric at the start of their oral prospectus defense or an electronic copy of the Prospectus Defense Rubric when they email their written prospectus to committee members. Committee members will return their completed rubric forms to the student's advisor, who will communicate the feedback to the student and submit the forms to the MS Psychology Program Director.

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