

MSW Program

College of Education and Human Service Professions

University of Minnesota Duluth

Master Research Project Handbook

2006-2007

Preface

The material compiled in this Handbook is intended to provide students with background information and guidelines in undertaking and completing the Masters Research Project requirement for the MSW Program. The Master's Project Options appear on page 1 of this handbook, and the Research Project is one of the four options from which students must choose. This Handbook was developed and compiled by Denny Falk to serve as a generic set of guidelines for completing the Masters Research Project requirement. The Social Work faculty has agreed in principle to the materials included in this handbook, but individual students and Project Supervisors must ultimately decide how strictly to adhere to any of the suggestions beyond the official Masters Research Policy and other MSW program requirements.

Some additions and modifications have been incorporated into the handbook based on program changes and feedback during the couple past years. First, students are strongly encouraged to work in pairs on the Masters Research Projects. The project can still be done independently, but pairs are encouraged. Information about this option is incorporated in appropriate sections, and a separate sheet of guidelines for working in pairs is included. Secondly, a revised schedule for completing the Masters Research Project is included. Thirdly, we are no longer including a list of Masters Research paper topics in the handbook, because it changes rapidly and updated versions will be available in the department offices and on the Internet. Fourth, the handbook has been updated to incorporate information on how the research proposal relates to the Portfolio option.

This version of the Handbook assumes that you are selecting the research option of the Masters Project requirement. Separate handouts will provide additional information about the other three options for completing a Masters Project. You will also be provided with guidance in using this Handbook to complete the research proposal for the SW 8102 course.

This version of the Handbook is also viewed as work in progress, to be improved with each successive version. The current version includes modifications and resources suggested by a number of students and faculty. Therefore if you find some parts of the Handbook that have errors, are unclear, or could be improved in some manner, please let Denny know so future versions of the Handbook can be upgraded and improved.

Contents

	Page
Overview of Masters Research Projects	
Masters Project Options	1
Portfolio Learning Products	2
Narrative Overview of Research Project Activities	4
Graphic Overview of Research Project Activities	5
Relationship between Research Sequence and Research Project	6
Roles in Research Project Process	7
Summary of Steps in the Research Project Process	8
Phase 1: Deciding on a Topic and Completing the Literature Review	
Narrative Description of Phase 1	9
Outline of Problem/Literature Review Paper	11
Feedback Form for Literature Review	12
Phase 2: Completing the Research Proposal	
Narrative Description of Phase 2	13
Outline of Research Proposal	14
Feedback Form for Proposal	15
Proposal Approval Form	17
Research Project “Pre-Proposal”	18
Phase 3: Implementing the Proposal: Collecting and Analyzing Data	
Narrative Description of Phase 3	19
Options for Analyzing Data	20
Phase 4: Completing the Masters Research Paper	
Narrative Description of Phase 4	21
Outline of Research Project Paper	22
Guidelines for Research Project Executive Summary	23
Research Project Approval and Transmittal Form	24
References	25
Resources	
Social Work Faculty Research Interests	32
Masters Research Project Schedule for 2006-2007	34
Previous Research Project Papers	35
Guidelines for Working in Pairs	36
Additional Resources to Consult in Completing the Masters Research Project	37

Master's Project Options for MSW Students

(Retrieved from Department of Social Work Web Site on June 2, 2005)

Students in the MSW program have four options with respect to completion of the final master's project requirement. See the following links for additional information. Contact our Director of Graduate Studies, Lynn Bye, for further information.

1. Portfolio (see <http://www.d.umn.edu/sw/portfolio/overview.htm>)

2. Research Project (see <http://www.d.umn.edu/sw/MANUALS/documents/MasterResearchHdbook.pdf>)

3. Personal Practice Model (PPM) Project.

4. Individualized Data Gathering & Analysis Project (IP)

- Note that you need to have an approved proposal for the Individualized Data Gathering & Analysis Project option before pursuing it.

(end of retrieved material)

This Masters Research Project Handbook provides guidance on how to complete the Research Project (option number 2 above). This Handbook also provides guidance for completing a research proposal for SW 8102 Advanced Research.

The proposal completed for SW 8102 can be used as a learning product in the Portfolio (option number 1 above). You are encouraged to review the general requirements for the Portfolio at the web site referenced above. For your convenience, the learning products associated with the portfolio (obtained from the web site) appear on the next page. Please note that the research proposal that you complete for SW 8102 can be used for Learning Products numbered 1, 9, and 10.

Learning Products Associated with Concentration Year Learning Objectives

In using the following guidelines for items to include in your MSW Portfolio, keep in mind that:

1. You need to have at least 1 Learning Product to address each of the 13 Learning Objectives.
2. You normally must include at least one Learning Product from each of the 7 Concentration Year courses (i.e., SW 5235, 8102, 8441, 8331, & 8802; either 8332, 8031, or 8443; and either 8771 or 8881).
3. A single Learning Product can be used to address multiple Learning Objectives; as long as you include separate Reflection Statements for each Learning Objective (**Reflection Statements** are merely 1-2 page descriptions of how particular Learning Objectives demonstrate your having achieved particular Learning Objectives).
4. Although Learning Products will generally be selected from required course assignments, you have the option of requesting that particular outside-of-class projects be included instead (including those earned through Special Project or Independent Study coursework). You should make this request to your Portfolio Primary Reader.

Learning Products associated with 13 departmental Concentration Year learning objectives

1. Apply critical thinking skills and a systematic problem solving approach within professional contexts, including synthesizing and applying appropriate theories and knowledge to practice interventions. (M5.7.1)

- Policy analysis paper (SW 5235)
- Comparative analysis of 2 SW interventions (SW 8441)
- Research Proposal (SW 8102)
- Reflection on cultural immersion project,(SW 8100)
- Videotaped role plays (SW 8443)

2. Practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession and with an understanding of, and respect for, the positive value of diversity with an emphasis on American Indian families and communities. (M5.7.2)

- Videotaped racism reflection (SW 8100)
- Application of NASW Code of Ethics to a practice situation (SW 8802)

3. Demonstrate the professional use of self through reflection and feedback including the identification, development and evaluation of a personal practice model. (M5.7.3)

- PPM assignment (SW 8441)

4. Describe the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and the strategies and skills for change that advance social and economic justice. (M5.7.4)

- WebX-Learning Circle (SW 5235)
- Videotaped Racism reflection (SW 8810)
- Research paper on the effects of oppression and discrimination on child welfare policies (SW 8031)
- Report on community-based social justice project (SW 8332)

5. Apply the knowledge and skills of an advanced generalist social work perspective to practice that is organized around micro, mezzo and macro system levels. (M5.7.6)

- Cultural immersion project (SW 8100)
- Written description of field application (SW 8802)
- Videotaped role plays (SW 8443)
- Completing a community-based project (such as developing a non-profit, or writing a grant) (SW 8332)

6. *Apply the knowledge and skills of advanced generalist social work with an emphasis on practice with American Indian and rural communities and with children and families. (M5.7.7)*

- Videotaped role plays and brief written analysis (SW 8443)
- Class presentation and annotated bibliography on issue related to American Indian families (SW 8881)

7. *Critically analyze and apply knowledge of bio-psycho-social variables that affect individual development and behavior, and use theoretical frameworks to understand the interactions among individuals and between individuals and social systems (i.e., families, groups, organizations, communities, societies, culture and global systems). (M5.7.8)*

- Community Project (SW 8331)
- Paper and videotape class presentation on major child welfare issue (SW 8031)
- Completing a community-based project (such as developing a non-profit, or writing a grant) (SW 8332)
- Class presentation and annotated bibliography on issue related to American Indian families (SW 8881)
- Video tape role play demonstrating interviewing skills appropriate to different developmental stages (SW 5032)

8. *Analyze the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies and demonstrate skills for influencing policy formulation and change. (M5.7.9)*

- Policy analysis paper (SW 5235)
- Reflection on cultural immersion project (SW 8100)

9. *Evaluate relevant research studies and apply findings to practice, and demonstrate skills in quantitative and qualitative research design, data analysis, and knowledge dissemination. (M5.7.10)*

- *Research Proposal (SW 8102) and data collection and analysis in an Advanced Practice course or Field II.*

10. *Conduct empirical evaluations of their own practice interventions and those of other relevant systems. (M5.7.11)*

- *Research Proposal (SW 8102) and data collection and analysis in an Advanced Practice course or Field II.*

11. *Demonstrate cultural competence with a variety of client populations, colleagues, and members of the community (M5.7.12)*

- Policy analysis paper (SW 5235)
- Class presentation and paper on cultural immersion project, (SW 8100)
- Paper on Terry Cross' typology and organizational assessment (SW 8331)
- WebX discussion and self-reflection of community cultural event and participation in Learning Circle (SW 8881)

Note that Learning Objectives 12 & 13 must be met through Field II since there are no other courses in the curriculum that address them. These can be integrated into your field contract.

12. *Use supervision and consultation appropriate to advanced generalist practice. (M5.7.13)*

- 1-2 page description of the structure and dynamics of your supervisory relationship with your MSW Supervisor (SW 8802)

13. *Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems, and seek necessary organizational and delivery system change. (M5.7.14)*

- 1-2 page description of activities you completed during your field placement to assess and/or intervene around potential organizational issues (involving either your placement agency or another community organization). (SW 8802)

Narrative Overview of Masters Research Project Activities

Let's start out with a little honesty. The Masters Research Project Paper requirement is probably the one aspect of the MSW Program that strikes the most fear into the hearts of students. As a starter, most students did not pick social work as a career for the purpose of doing research; in fact for many students research initially seems unrelated to the rest of their practice of social work. Secondly, completing a Masters Research paper is a major task. It takes persistence, patience, and tenacity to complete a project that may stretch over the better part of a calendar year. Thirdly, many students feel initially that they may not possess the knowledge and skills necessary to complete a significant research project.

However, each of these three concerns can be addressed in turn. Research can be seen as an integral part of social work practice. While the Masters Research Project is a major task, it can be broken down into manageable chunks. And students will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to complete the project in the context of their research courses.

The process of completing the Masters Research Project paper for the MSW degree can be broken into four phases. Phase 1 involves deciding on a research topic and completing a literature review on that topic. Phase 2 builds upon the first phase and focuses on developing a proposal to do a particular bit of research. Phase 3 implements the proposal by collecting and analyzing data to answer research question(s) and/or test hypotheses. Phase 4 involves writing up the research project in the form of a final paper. Each of these phases will be briefly described below and more fully explained in the sections that follow.

Phase 1 is basically defining the research problem that will be addressed. This step involves selecting a topic for research and then finding what the literature says about this topic. Since the research project will also be community-based, it is important as well to work with a person or persons in the community who have a need for information that can be obtained through research; interaction with this (these) person(s) will help clarify what the problem is. This phase involves using the library to obtain information about the research topic and concludes with the completion of the literature review paper and development of the research questions and/or hypotheses.

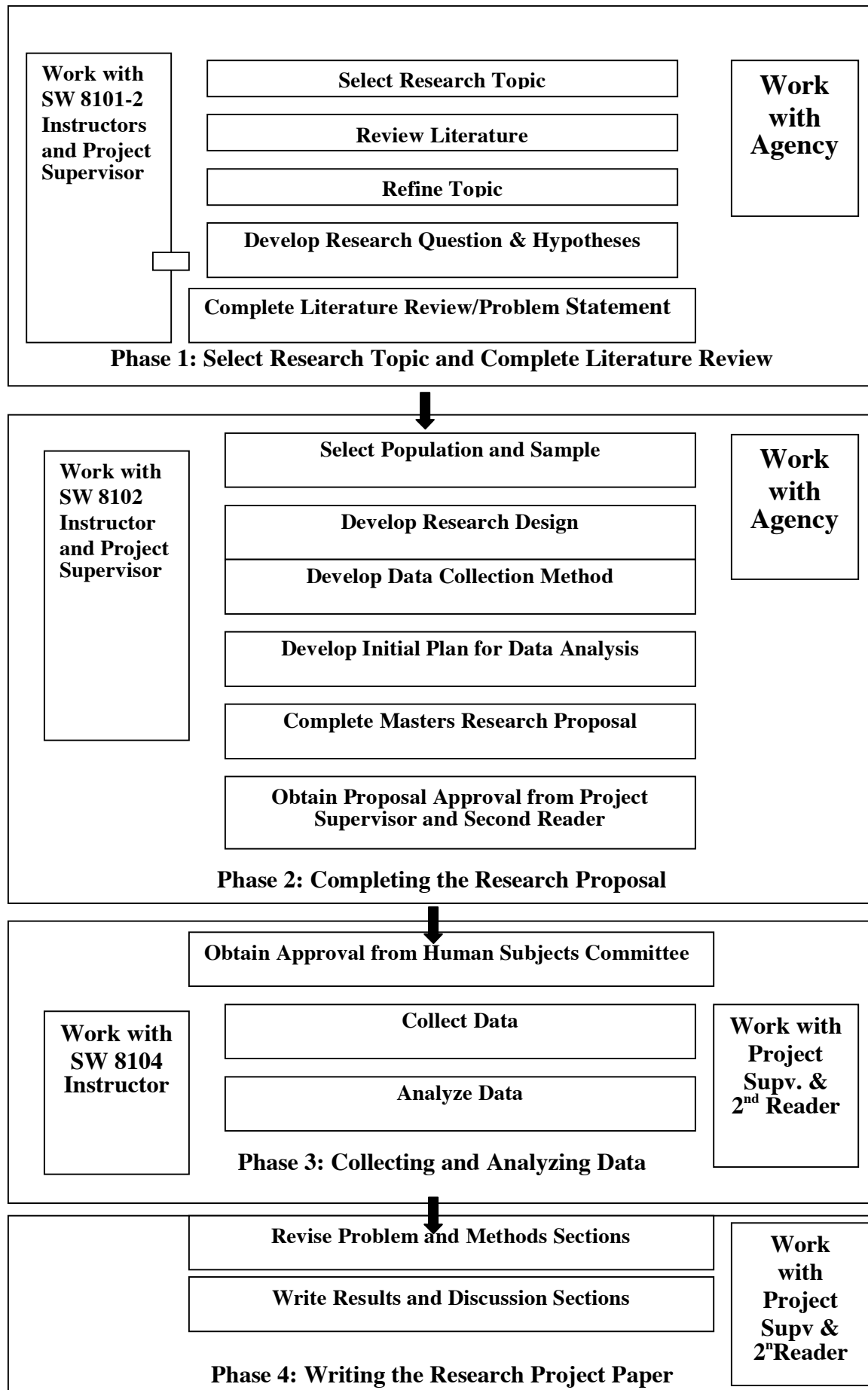
Phase 2 centers around developing a research proposal, which incorporates the literature review completed in phase 1 and adds to it a description of the methodology to be used in answering the research questions and/or in testing the hypotheses identified in phase 1.

Phase 3 involves implementing the research proposal generated in phase 2. Data is collected and analyzed. For quantitative studies this analysis may involve using a computer and statistical package to make sense of the data collected.

Phase 4 pulls together the information generated in each of the previous phases and concludes with a completed research project paper. The literature review completed in phase 1 becomes the statement of the problem in the final paper, and the description of the methodology from phase 2 is reworked to become the methods section of the paper. The results that were collected and analyzed in phase 3 are summarized in the result section of the paper, and the discussion section explains the meaning and importance of the findings.

Each of these phases will be described in greater depth in the sections, which follow. Each section will provide an overview of the activities of this phase, key decision points, the relationship to other phases, and the relationship of the phase to social work courses.

Graphic Overview of Masters Research Project



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESEARCH SEQUENCE & MASTERS RESEARCH PROJECT

MASTERS RESEARCH

RESEARCH SEQUENCE

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

COURSE(S) COURSE CONTENT

Phase One: Complete Literature Review

Choose research topic in consultation with community representative; select Project supervisor and work closely with this faculty member.

SW 8101
BEGINNING
RESEARCH

Foundations of SW research; ethics
Formulating problems & measuring variables
Research methods & designs; sampling
Data collection methods
Program evaluation

Begin SW 8102
ADV.RESEARCH
(prereq: complete SW 8101)

Apply basic research topics to Masters Research Project topics

Phase Two: Complete Research Proposal

Work primarily with Project supervisor to complete the proposal and have it approved; continue to consult with community contact person.

Complete SW 8102
ADVANCED
RESEARCH

Distributing & utilizing research knowledge
Program evaluation
Research ethics
Relating research & practice
Statistics & analysis of data
Intro to computer, SPSS

Conceptualize research
Human Subject forms
Completion of Research Proposal or Pre-Proposal
Timetable

Phase Three: Implement Research Project

Implement research project as proposed; collect and analyze data
(prereq: complete SW 8102 and full Proposal or Pre-Proposal)

SW 8104
PROJECT
SEMINAR II

Progress reports
Group consultations

Phase Four: Complete Writing The Plan B Paper

Complete research paper in consultation with Project Supervisor; Project Supervisor and Second Reader approve Masters Research paper.

SW 8104
PROJECT
SEMINAR II

Progress reports
Group consultations

Roles of Persons Involved in Masters Research Project

MSW Student. The Masters Research Project centers around the student, and the student is primarily responsible for completing all aspects of the Masters Research Project. The student develops an initial idea for research, discusses it with the Introduction to Research or Advanced Research instructor and a community representative and ultimately decides to pursue the initial idea for the Masters Research Project. Once the research topic has been clarified, the student selects a Project Supervisor (primary reader) from among the Social Work faculty members, choosing someone who is knowledgeable about the research topic (see research interests of the faculty in the resources section of this handbook.). The student then works with this faculty member to develop the literature review/problem statement, complete the research proposal, collect and analyze data, and complete the Research Project paper. The student should submit materials to the Project Supervisor that represent writing skills consistent with those expected of graduate students. The student is expected to proof read manuscripts, not the Supervisor. Students may complete the Research Project in pairs.

Research Project Supervisor (Primary Reader). The term Research Project Supervisor is used interchangeably with the term primary reader and signifies that the student and this faculty member will work together to toward the completion of the Research Project. (The term Supervisor is used rather than advisor to avoid confusion with the faculty advisor.) The Supervisor actually has two roles: 1) guiding the student throughout the research process and 2) assuring the quality of the products at key points. As a guide the Supervisor suggests resources, assists in clarifying issues, suggests possible directions to pursue, and generally works with the student in a facilitating role to develop the literature review, complete the research proposal, collect and analyze data, and write the Research Project paper. In assuring the quality of the products involved in the project, the Supervisor must read drafts and ultimately approve the research proposal and the final Research Project paper. The Supervisor serves on the student's final oral exam committee, and must certify that the paper is ready to present at the final oral exam prior to scheduling the exam.

Second Reader. The second reader generally plays a much narrower role in the Research Project process, checking on the quality of the products from an objective perspective at two key points. First, this person reads the research proposal at a point when the Project Supervisor views the proposal as basically completed, double checking to see that no problems exist with the proposal and approving the proposal when this is the case. Secondly, this person reads the final Research Project paper after the Project Supervisor is basically satisfied with the paper. The second reader again double checks for possible problems and signs off on the paper when s/he is satisfied with the overall quality. The second reader also serves on the student's final oral exam committee, and may have a greater role in the overall research project if everyone agrees. (Note: If the faculty advisor is not also the Research Project Supervisor, then the advisor should serve as second reader.)

SW 8101 Introduction to Research Instructor. The Beginning Research instructor provides instruction on the basic concepts of research and assists the student in identifying a research topic, beginning the literature review, and selecting a Research Project Supervisor. This faculty member's role is to support the student in beginning the research project before the Project Supervisor is selected.

SW 8102 Advanced Research Instructor. The Advanced Research instructor facilitates a process in class that allows the student to apply basic research concepts such as problem formulation, conceptualization, operationalization, measurement, and data collection to the student's Research Project topic.

Project Seminar Instructors. The SW 8104 instructor facilitates class members in a seminar format that serves as a support group for completing the research project. The SW 8104 instructor also introduces the student to Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements and to developing a timetable for the study. The student's Research Project Supervisor will usually be the seminar instructor for the section of Project Seminar II taken by the student.

Community or Agency Contact Person. The student is expected to work with a person in the community to assure that the Research Project will provide useful information to the community or agency. The community or agency contact person is available to the student to provide feedback on the usefulness of the project and to facilitate the student in completing a project that will provide useful information.

Summary of Steps in the Masters Research Project Process

1. Student selects research topic, often in consultation with community service provider. Student decides whether to work on Research Project as an individual or with another student.
2. Student selects Research Project Supervisor (and faculty member agrees to serve as Supervisor).
3. Student completes literature review/problem statement in consultation with Project Supervisor.
4. Project Supervisor provides feedback to student on literature review.
5. Student completes draft of proposal in consultation with Project Supervisor.
6. Project Supervisor provides feedback on draft proposal and student revises as necessary.
7. Project Supervisor is ready to approve proposal.
8. Second Reader reviews proposal and suggests changes as necessary.
9. Project Supervisor and Second Reader sign "Proposal Approval Form."
10. Student completes Institutional Review Board (IRB) Form and receives approval prior to collecting data.

Note: Do not begin collecting data until receiving approval on both the proposal and the Human Subjects form.

11. Student collects and analyzes data in consultation with Project Supervisor.
12. Student completes draft of Research Project paper in consultation with Project Supervisor.
13. Project Supervisor provides feedback on draft paper and student revises as necessary.
14. Project Supervisor is ready to approve Research Project paper.
15. Second Reader reviews paper and suggests changes as necessary.
16. Project Supervisor authorizes scheduling of Final Oral Exam.
17. Student completes final oral exam and receives feedback on Research Project paper.
18. Student revises Research Project paper as necessary.
19. Student prepares "Research Project Approval and Transmittal Form," including two-three page executive summary of the research project.
20. Project Supervisor and Second Reader sign "Masters Research Project Approval and Transmittal Form."
21. Student shares results and conclusion of research with community agency with whom they worked on research (distributes executive summary and perhaps makes presentation).
22. Student celebrates (optional).

Narrative Description of Phase 1: Deciding on a Topic and Completing the Literature Review

Overview of Activities

The primary activities in phase 1 are to interact with someone in an agency to identify a research need that is important to them and to use the library to inform yourself on the topics related to the research need in the agency. The process is interactive -- you have an interest in a particular topic and talk to the agency representative; based on this discussion you go to the library to identify key ideas and issues and return to the agency, etc. See the chapter "Choosing and Formulating a Research Question." from Dawson et al (1991) on reserve in the UMD Library, in addition to the relevant information from the Rubin and Babbie text and class, for guidance in this process. The culmination of this phase is to write a literature review that also includes a statement of the problem, information about the potential significance to social work, and research questions and (if appropriate) hypotheses. See the outline for this paper on the following page and information on what to include in the "Writing Research Proposals" chapter (pp 429-445) in Grinnell (1988).

Decision Points

The two key decisions are 1) selecting the research topic and 2) developing the research questions and (possibly) hypotheses. Criteria for selecting the research problem include relevance, researchability, feasibility, and ethical acceptability. Criteria for the research questions and hypotheses again include relevance, researchability, feasibility, and ethical acceptability, but add specificity as an additional criteria. As faculty members work with you to make these decisions, they will likely consider the following questions:

1. Does this emerging project provide the student the opportunity to demonstrate a level of research knowledge and skill appropriate for an MSW social worker?
2. Is it likely that this emerging project will provide useful information to someone in the community?
3. Is this emerging project feasible ("do-able")?

Another question that the student may want to ask herself or himself is:

Is this topic area of sufficient interest to me that I can maintain my interest and enthusiasm through a project that may last almost a year?

Another key decision to make in Phase 1 is to select the faculty members who will serve as the Research Project Supervisor (primary reader) and the Second Reader for the Research Project. The Supervisor will become your primary guide for completing the Research Project and will be the primary reader for the proposal and the final paper. The Second Reader gives the proposal and final paper a more general review and must also approve both the proposal and the final paper. See faculty research interests in the Resources section of this handbook.

A final key decision in Phase 1 is to determine whether to complete the Research Project as an individual or to work with another student on this project. Faculty are encouraging students to work in pairs on this research project based on the following factors: 1) students working in pairs previously have moved efficiently toward completion of their projects, 2) students seem to learn just as much about research by completing the project jointly, and 3) faculty will be able to provide more thorough supervision to each project if they are supervising fewer papers. It is, however, very important that students 1) select a research partner with whom they are compatible and 2) assure that the tasks of the research project are shared equally.

Relationship to Other Phases

Phase 1 is the foundation for other phases. It is therefore important to clarify the issues and questions raised above to provide a solid basis for further activities. The student should submit the literature review to the Research Project Supervisor about half way into the Project Seminar I course. A form that can be used by your Project Supervisor to provide feedback on the literature review is included on page 10 of this *Handbook*.

Relationship to Social Work Courses

Students in the 51 credit program are exposed to basic research knowledge in SW 8101 Introduction to Research ; as part of this course students are also exposed to the Research Project requirements and are encourage to begin the literature review/statement of the problem. The Introduction to Research instructor encourages students in beginning the literature review and helps them to identify an appropriate Research Project Supervisor (primary reader).

Students in the 51 credit advanced standing program typically do not take SW 8101, although they can do so if they choose. These students have three choices for completing the literature review. 1) They can wait until they take SW 8102 Advanced Research to review the literature and write the rest of the research proposal at the same time. 2) They can begin the literature review, and perhaps even complete it on their own prior to beginning SW 8102, building on the research knowledge and skills from their undergraduate research courses. 3) They can take an independent study course with a faculty member to provide some structure and guidance to their efforts to complete the literature review prior to beginning SW 8102. Advanced standing students will be advised of these options during the program orientation in May.

Both 51 credit and 34 credit advanced standing students will take the same Advanced Research course. In this course, students will apply the basic concepts of research to their emerging projects during the beginning of the course, with early topics including problem formulation, conceptualization, and operationalization.

SW 8102 Advanced Research is intended to support students as they do their literature review and conceptualize their Research Project. Students should plan to have a draft of their literature review completed 8-10 weeks into the SW 8102 course and should complete a complete draft of their proposal (see phase 2) by the end of the course.

Introduction/Literature Review Outline

The outline that appears below is generic in nature and should be appropriate for most literature reviews that also introduce and state the problem to be studied. This outline is intended to be used in conjunction with “Writing Research Proposals” by K.E. Moss, a chapter of the book *Social Work Research and Evaluation* by Grinnell (1988). The style of the proposal should follow guidelines in the Publication Manual of APA (American Psychological Association).

The literature review/introduction can deviate from this general outline if the Plan B Supervisor agrees that another organization would be more suitable for the particular research topic.

Title of the Master Research Paper

Introduction to Research Topic and Statement of the Problem

See Part 1: Research Topic in “Writing Research Proposals” for guideline

Literature Review with Integrated Conceptual Framework

See Part 2: Literature Review and Part 3: Conceptual Framework in “Writing Research Proposals” for guidelines.

This section should relate the main themes identified in reviewing the literature related to the topic/problem to be researched. It should not be a series of summaries of the various sources you have identified, but rather should inform the reader of the conclusions that can be drawn from the literature, with the sources cited supporting the conclusions. The research questions and/or hypotheses should logically follow from the conclusions of this section.

Significance of Topic to the Social Work Profession

This section should include the potential implications of the results of this project for the profession of social work. Both potential practice and policy implications should be proposed.

Research Question and/or (if appropriate) Hypotheses

See Part 4: Questions and Hypotheses in “Writing Research Proposals” for guidelines.

References

Use APA style for references.

Feedback Form for Introduction/Literature Review

Student's Name _____ Paper Title _____

<u>Guideline</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Research topic and problem clearly defined.		
Appropriate literature review		
Significance of study described		
Appropriate research questions and/or hypotheses		
Variables clearly conceptualized and defined		
Well organized presentation of material		
Effective writing skills Incorporated		

Narrative Description of Phase 2: Completing the Research Proposal

Overview of Activities

The primary activities related to this phase relate to developing the methodology to be used to answer the research questions and/or test the hypotheses identified in Phase 1. The outcome of the phase is the completion of a research proposal (see p. 12). The chapter in the Grinnell (1988) book on "Writing Research Proposals" (pp 429-445) is particularly helpful during this phase to identify the content to include for each topic on the outline. The forms to be reviewed by the Human Subjects Committee are also completed in this phase. *Plan to complete several drafts of the proposal, revising each draft in turn based on feedback from your Research Project Supervisor.*

Decision Points

The key decision points in this phase involve determining the methodology to be used to answer the research questions and/or test the research hypotheses. Questions to be answered include the following:

1. What is the population with which I am concerned? Who will be in the sample?
2. What research design should I use? or What process should I use to collect to collect the data that I need?
3. What instruments will I use to collect data? For quantitative approaches, how will I operationally define the variables I want to measure?
4. How will I analyze the data once it is collected? What is my tentative plan?

The questions to consider in this decision making process include some of the same questions used in Phase 1:

1. Does this emerging project provide the student the opportunity to demonstrate a beginning level of research knowledge and skill
2. Is it likely that this emerging project will provide useful information to someone in the community?
3. Is this emerging project feasible ("do-able")?

Relationship to Other Phases

The literature review completed in Phase 1 provides the basis for completing the research proposal in Phase 2. The literature review often provides one-third to one-half of the material for the proposal itself, perhaps modified in light of needs that arise while developing and writing about the methodology.

The proposal completed in Phase 2 provides the basis for collecting and analyzing the data in Phase 3. If Phase 2 is effectively completed, a student could presumably hand the research proposal to another student, who would have enough information to actually go out and collect and analyze the data that would be required to answer the research questions or test the research hypotheses. The proposal should be approved by the Master Research Supervisor and the Second Reader before the student begins collecting data in Phase 3. Once the proposal is approved, it serves as a contract, with the student contracting to undertake the project as described and the faculty contracting to accept the project if it is competently undertaken. The Human Subjects Committee must also approve the research before data is collected.

Relationship to Social Work Courses

The research sequence is designed so that the research proposal is completed in conjunction with SW 8102 Advanced Research. The Advanced Research course is structured so that some of the basic concepts related to completing the research proposal are reviewed and applied during the first part of the course. All students will be required to complete their research proposal as a requirement of SW 8102 Advanced Research, and completion of SW 8102 is a prerequisite for SW 8104 Project Seminar II. The Research Project Supervisor will read the proposal and inform the SW 8102 instructor when the proposal is completed satisfactorily.

MSW Master Research Proposal Outline

The outline that appears below is generic in nature and should be appropriate for most Research Project proposals. This outline is intended to be used in conjunction with "Writing Research Proposals" by K. E. Moss, a chapter of the book *Social Work Research and Evaluation* by Grinnell (1988). Section names following the capital letters in the outline below correspond very closely to the parts of the proposal identified in the "Writing Research Proposals" chapter. The style of the proposal should follow guidelines in the *Publication manual of APA* (American Psychological Association). The proposal integrates the introduction/literature which should have been completed previously.

Proposals can deviate from this general outline if the Research Project Supervisor agrees that another organization would be more suitable for the particular research topic.

Title of Master Research Project

Introduction to Research Topic and Overview of Proposal

Literature Review [with Integrated Conceptual Framework]

Significance of Topic to the Social Work Profession

Research Questions and/or Hypotheses

Methods

Population and Sample

Research Design

Operational Definitions and Data Collection

Data Analysis

Other Considerations

Limitations of the Study

Administration of the Study

Ethical Considerations

NASW Research Guidelines

Gender and cross-cultural considerations

References

FEEDBACK FORM FOR MASTER PROJECT PROPOSAL-p.1

Student's Name _____ Paper Title _____

Guideline

Rating

Notes

Research topic and problem clearly defined.		
Appropriate literature review		
Significance of study described		
Appropriate research questions and/or hypotheses		
Variables clearly conceptualized and defined		
Well organized presentation of material		
Effective writing skills Incorporated		

FEEDBACK FORM FOR MASTER PROJECT PROPOSAL-p.2

Student's Name _____ Paper Title _____

Guideline

Rating

Notes

Population and sample clearly described & appropriate		
Research design clearly described		
Data collection procedures clearly described		
Appropriate data analysis		
Limitations addressed		
Administrative concerns Addressed		
Ethical concerns addressed		

The Master Project “Pre-Proposal”

For those students who do not plan to take their Orals in the spring, it is possible to enroll in Project Seminar II during the Winter Semester, and in some years during Summer Session, without completing a full Research Project Proposal. In order to do this, you must submit a “Pre-Proposal” at the end of the Fall Semester for the Spring Semester seminar or by the end of Spring Semester for the Summer Session seminar (the exact deadlines are determined by the seminar instructor).

The purpose of the Pre-Proposal is to demonstrate that you have a sound, specifically articulated research plan that is informed by pertinent literature. As such, the Pre-Proposal must include finalized hypotheses and/or research questions, as well as a completed Methods section that follows the “Masters Research Project Proposal Outline”. A copy of the questionnaire or research instrument should be attached to your Pre-Proposal. You must also show that your project is of potential value to the social work profession.

Your Pre-Proposal needn't have a fully polished literature review. However, you must –minimally– demonstrate that your research questions and/or hypotheses are solidly “literature-based”. Potentially this could be done through an annotated bibliography. Be sure that the dependent and independent variables of hypotheses are clearly identified.

It is required that the Pre-Proposal be approved by your Research Project Supervisor and a spokesperson for the agency/organization at which you are going to do your research. The decision as to whether your Pre-Proposal is sufficiently developed to enroll in Project Seminar II is made by your Research Project Supervisor and/or the Project Seminar II instructor. When the Seminar is taken in Summer Session, your Research Project supervisor may or may not be the Seminar instructor.

Once your Pre-Proposal has been approved, you should give a copy to the participating agency (if relevant) and ask for official approval in the form of a letter. This same letter can potentially also be attached to your Human Subjects Review application (Web site:

<http://www.research.umn.edu/subject.html>)

Narrative Description of Phase 3: Implementing the Proposal: Collecting and Analyzing Data

Overview of Activities

This phase involves answering your research questions and/or testing your research hypothesis by implementing the research methods laid out in the research proposal. You collect data on the sample specified using the research design, operational definitions, and data collection procedures proposed. Once the data is collected, it is analyzed in such a way as to best answer the research question and/or test the hypothesis.

Decision Points

Two kinds of decision points are often present in this phase. Because the best laid plans sometimes need to be altered because of unforeseen circumstances, you may need to decide if you must change some aspects of the methodology. Before changing the methodology, consult with your Research Project Supervisor and Second Reader; since the approved research proposal is in essence a contract between the three of you, you should all three agree to change that implicit contract prior to altering the research methodology.

You must also decide more specifically how to analyze the data you collect. If you collect quantitative data, the initial decision in this regard involves determining whether it would be advisable to use a computer in the analysis. If computer analysis is indicated, you next choose among several options for computer analysis. These options are described on the following page.

Relationship to Other Phases

As suggested above, this phase is basically doing what you said you would do in the research proposal developed in Phase 2. **Before beginning this phase, your Research Project proposal should be approved by your Research Project Supervisor and second reader, and you should receive the written approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB).** (Request for exemption from Committee Review of Research involving Human Subjects contact **web site: <http://www.research.um.edu/subjects/htm>**) Once the data is collected and analyzed, you are ready to move on to Phase 4, which focuses on writing up and discussing the results and completing the entire Master Research Project.

Relationships to Social Work Courses

Ideally, you will be taking SW 8104 Project Seminar II while completing this phase of the Research Project. The Project Seminar II course is organized as a seminar where students share key aspects of their research projects and receive support for completing their research tasks. The Research Project Supervisor typically teaches the Project Seminar II course and meets with all of the students who are currently working with her/him on their Masters Research Project.

Options for Analyzing Data

The data you collect may be qualitative and/or quantitative in nature. If the data is solely qualitative, you can follow guidelines found in books such as *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* by Patton (1990), *Basics of Qualitative Research* by Strauss and Corbin (1990), and other books on qualitative methodology listed in the bibliography. If the data you collect is quantitative, you must first decide whether it would be beneficial to use a computer in the analysis. If you decide to use computer analysis, the options below are available.

Use Computers and Statistical Software in Social Work Office

The Social Work Department currently has two Dell computers that are available for student use in analyzing data. Both of these computers have statistical packages that are relatively basic and easy to use. At this point Mike Raschick is the faculty member most knowledgeable about the IBM statistical capabilities and Denny Falk is most knowledgeable about using the Macintosh for analysis.

Use Computers and Statistical Software in UMD Computer Labs

UMD currently has a number of computer labs with both PC's and Macintosh computers and a variety of statistical packages that can be accessed. Spreadsheets such as Microsoft Excel have the capability of doing certain statistical procedures and software packages such as SPSS and Systat are available on the server. The computers in the labs can also be used to access statistical software on the mainframe computer, such as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The current fee for using the computer labs where is \$63.00 per semester.

Use Computers and Statistical Software at Community Agency

Some agencies with which you may work may have statistical software on computers within the agency. These packages can be inexpensive and efficient to use if you have someone in the agency who knows the hardware and software well or if you possess this knowledge yourself. You may have less support available if you analyze data at an agency.

More specific and updated information on data analysis will be available from the Advanced Research and Project Seminar I instructors.

Narrative Description of Phase 4: Writing the Masters Research Project Paper

Overview of Activities

This phase involves drawing together the results of your previous research activities and writing a final report that summarizes the entire Masters Research Project. You will work closely with your Research Project Supervisor in completing this phase. Use the outline on the following page as a guideline for the organization of the Master Research Project, and use the *Publication Manual of APA* for guidance with format. See also (on reserve in the Library) the chapter "Writing a Research Report" from Grinnell (1993) for content to include in various sections. *Plan to complete several drafts of the paper, revising each draft in turn based on feedback from your Master Project Supervisor.*

Decision Points

There are two major decisions to make in this phase, both involving the content of your paper. First, you must decide what data to report in the results portion of your paper and then decide the best way to present those results. In general, you report only the data that bear directly on your research questions and/or hypotheses. These data should be reported in a clear and organized manner.

Secondly, you must decide what to include in the discussion part of the paper. In general, you want to describe the conclusions appropriate to the data and to explain the implications of your findings. You should acknowledge the limitations of the study and provide a summary of the overall study. You should relate your findings to other research and suggest future research that may be undertaken on related topics.

Relationship to Other Phases

Each of the phases completed previously contributes to the completion of this current phase. The literature review from Phase 1 forms the first portion of your paper, and the methods section from the proposal completed in Phase 2 can be reworked as part of the Research Project paper. The data collected and analyzed in Phase 3 are reported in the Results section of final paper and form the basis for much of the Discussion section. Often parts of the limitations of the study anticipated in the proposal can also be incorporated into Discussion section as well.

Relationships to Social Work Courses

You will typically write the final Master Research Project during the time you are taking SW 8104 Project Seminar II. Most often your Master Project Supervisor will also be your instructor for SW 8104, so you will be working closely with your supervisor at this point.

A Note About Length

Students often want to know how long the Master Research Project (or the proposal) should be. The general answer is that the paper should be long enough to 1) describe the relevant literature and research questions/hypotheses, 2) explain the methods used to address the questions/hypotheses, 3) present the results, and 4) discuss the importance of the results in the context of the literature and community setting. Typically, proposals range from 15-20 pages, and the full Master Research Project ranges from 20-30 pages, with appendices not counted in these totals. If you have questions about length, check with your Master Project Supervisor.

Masters Research Project Research Paper Outline

The outline that appears below is generic in nature and should be appropriate for most Research Project papers. This outline is intended to be used in conjunction with "Writing Research Proposals" by K. E. Moss, a chapter of the book *Social Work Research and Evaluation* by Grinnell (1988) and "Writing Research reports." A chapter of the book *Social Work Research and Evaluation* by Grinnell (1993). The style of the paper should follow guidelines in the *Publication Manual of APA* (American Psychological Association). The Final Research Paper integrates and modifies parts of the proposal., which should have been completed previously.

Papers can deviate from this general outline if the Master Project Supervisor agrees that another organization would be more suitable for the particular research topic.

Title of Research Project

Introduction to Research Topic

Literature Review

Significance of Topic to the Social Work Profession

Research Questions and/or Hypotheses

Methods

Population and Sample

Research Design

Operational Definitions and Data Collection

Data Analysis

Results

Data displays and narrative description of the results obtained, generally organized by research questions or hypotheses or other logical groupings.

Discussion

Interpretation of Results/Implications for Practice

Limitations of the Study

Recommendations for Future Research

Summary and Conclusions

References

GUIDELINES FOR MASTERS RESEARCH PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After you complete your Masters Research Project paper, you should provide about a 2 page "executive summary" which briefly summarizes the different aspects of your research. The executive summary resembles an academic abstract, except that it places less emphasis on the technicalities of your methodology and more on the practical application of your results. Its primary purpose is to succinctly communicate your findings to an audience who you believe can use the information to improve the quality of life of social work clients (potential clients). For example, if you have done a program evaluation, write your executive summary in a way that the agency's director could read it in a few minutes and clearly understand what you did, why you did it, and--most importantly--the implications of your findings for policy decisions facing him/her in relationship to the program.

Six topical areas should be included in the executive summary: 1) the purpose of the research, 2) the methodology used, 3) the results obtained, and 4) a discussion of the results, 5) limitations of the study, and 6) recommendations based on the study as appropriate. The following is an example:

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the *Parent Skills Training Program* at the Jones City Family Service Center. This is a structured, short-term educational program that teaches single parents behavioral-change skills such as how to reinforce positive child behavior and how to appropriately use "time-outs". **[the purpose]**

The sample consisted of 40 parents who applied for parenting services at the Jones City Family Service Center in June, 1999. An experimental research design was used. This design involved randomly assigning 40 parents to a treatment or control group. Thus twenty parents received services through the *Parent Skills Training Program* and another 20 through psychodynamically-oriented family counseling that the center normally provided parents. The well-validated, *Brown Parenting Skills Scale* was administered to both groups at the time they had their first meeting/session and again, eight weeks later, immediately after their services were completed.

An open-ended "client satisfaction survey" was also administered to the treatment group at termination. It was designed to find out what group members felt was "most helpful" and what was "least helpful" about the services they had received. **[the methodology]**

The quantitative results showed that members of the *Parent Skills* (treatment) group scored significantly higher on the *Brown Parenting Skills Scale* than those in the counseling control group. The *Parent Skills* group's scores showed that they had become "highly effective parents," whereas the mean score of control group parents were in the range of "lacking important parenting skills."

Qualitative responses to the client satisfaction survey indicated that *Parent Skills* group members felt that the information on using positive reinforcement was most helpful and that materials on time-outs was least helpful. They also indicated finding videos most helpful and assigned readings least helpful; and they suggested that the class be extended to last 12 instead of 8 weeks. **[the results and discussion of the results]**

The quantitative findings about the overall effectiveness of the *Parent Skills Training Program* were quite convincing in view of their being based on a controlled experimental design and the use of a well-validated measuring tool. However the sample size was small, and thus this part of the study should be replicated at the Jones City Family Service Center at least several more times so the results can be conclusive. The qualitative results were enlightening, but not definitive due to their explorative nature. That is, they *suggested* how group members may feel about different components of the training program, but they were not designed to systematically test any hypotheses about this. More structured research would be needed to accomplish the latter. **[limitations of the study]**

On the basis of my findings, I would recommend that the *Parent Skills Training Program* be expanded from one to two groups per month; and group leaders consider developing new ways of teaching parents how to use time-outs and that they generally spend more time using videos and less with assigned readings. I would also suggest that the *Brown Parenting Skills Scale* be routinely administered at the first group meeting and again at the final meeting. This is important in order to give group leaders ongoing feedback about their own group's effectiveness and more definitive data about the program's overall effectiveness over time. Structured post-treatment questionnaires should also be developed. They should include questions about how well people liked different types of course content (e.g., learning how to reinforce positive child behavior compared with developing effective ways to work with their children's teachers) and what their preferred teaching modalities were (e.g. video versus class discussions) **[recommendations]**

The organization of every executive summary will be somewhat different depending upon the nature of the study. For instance, most would have a more clear-cut distinction between the "results" and "discussion of the results" sections. However the overall purpose and style of the summary remain somewhat constant.

MASTERS RESEARCH PROJECT APPROVAL AND TRANSMITTAL

Master of Social Work Program University of Minnesota Duluth

Name _____ Date _____

Title of Paper: _____

Please indicate no more than three subject categories under which this paper can be indexed:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Attach an executive summary of the research project you have completed. This summary should be about two pages in length and should concisely describe 1) the purpose of the research, 2) the methodology used, 3) the results obtained, and 4) a discussion of the results, 5) limitations of the study, and 6) recommendations based on the study as appropriate.

We have approved the final version of the Masters Research Project, and executive summary (the primary reader is the faculty supervisor of the project and the second reader is another Social Work faculty member from the final exam committee):

Primary Reader _____ Date _____

Second Reader _____ Date _____

Two final Paper copies and one disc or email attachment copy with your name and word processing program of the approved Master Research Project, along with this form, must be submitted to the Student Affairs Assistant in 240 Bohannon Hall. One paper will be available to students through the Department and the other paper will be maintained by the Department. Your disc or email copy may be used for online publishing. Please do not put the paper in binders.

MSW Faculty Research Interests

The following brief descriptions of research interests are provided by the MSW faculty to assist students in selecting Masters Research Project Supervisors.

From **Lynn Bye**:

My areas of interest are in school social work, group work, social skills development, mentoring, cultural competence, mental health and assessment and interventions with children and families. I am currently working with faculty in the School of Medicine and the Department of Speech Sciences and Disorders on a project aimed at multidisciplinary teams and effective culturally competent patient-centered communication.

From **Priscilla Day**:

I am interested in rural practice, American Indian issues, working with areas that affect women, especially violence, and social change efforts. My current areas of research/outreach are creating systemic change in a rural public school with a high percentage of Indian children, assessing and developing cultural competency in organizations, and conducting ethnographic research on Indian gaming. I'm working with administration, staff, and community. I would welcome student's interest and input into these activities.

From **Denny Falk**: (Sabbatical 2006-2007)

My primary areas of interest involve needs assessments and program evaluation of human service and education programs. My educational background is in educational psychology with an emphasis in social psychology, and my research experience includes survey research, evaluation of education and human service programs, needs assessment, chemical use and abuse issues, and use of educational technology. Most of my experience involves use of quantitative methods, but I am certainly open to research with a strong qualitative component.

From **Kathleen Nuccio**: (currently on leave)

Most of my research and publishing results from my interests in women's issues, feminist theory, and social policy analysis. Specifically, I am interested in the issues of poverty, work, and welfare, postmodern feminist theory and social work, and issues affecting sexual minorities. I have been a caregiver and community activist in the AIDS crisis. I am particularly interested in qualitative methods.

From **Mike Raschick**

The type of Masters Research Project I would feel most comfortable working with would be:

- program evaluation
- secondary data analysis, including large data sets that require advanced data management and statistical analysis skills
- some types of qualitative research, especially used in conjunction with a quantitative study
- micro level intervention research (i.e. evaluating the effectiveness of different types of micro level interventions)
- research in child welfare
- research in developmental disabilities
- international social development
- some types of organizational dynamics research (I have some strong knowledge, experience, and interests in this area, although some types of organization research may be unrealistic for Plan B papers)
- program implementation
- client satisfaction surveys
- focus group research (although I don't have any background in this area, it is something I have considerable interest in)

I feel least comfortable with

- pure ethnographic research
- needs assessments

From **Melanie Shepard**

Most of my research has been in the field of domestic violence, and I enjoy working with students on projects in this area, as well as other forms of family violence. I have also been involved in research projects addressing public assistance and poverty. Program evaluation has been a particular interest of mine, and I have been involved in ongoing evaluation activities with the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project and the Duluth Community Action Program. I am most experienced in quantitative evaluation activities, although I am open to qualitative approaches.

2006-2007 Master Research Project Deadlines for Spring Graduation and for Fall Graduation with Option of Participating in May Commencement

Students can graduate in any month of the year, but many students prefer to graduate in the spring and/or to participate in May Commencement. Students may elect to graduate in the fall of the following academic year, but participate in May commencement nevertheless. Consequently there are two sets of deadlines. Note that final oral exams are generally not scheduled during the summer, and most faculty are not available during the summer months to consult on Research Project. Consequently, if you opt to participate in the May Commencement but to postpone completing your Research Project, taking your orals, and graduating until the fall, you should be prepared to work without faculty consultation during the summer. Ordinarily, faculty members will make every effort to review papers and provide feedback within two weeks after receiving them. However, if a number of papers are received just prior to a deadline, they will have to be read in the order received, and it may take more than two weeks to review. Faculty members will consult with students on doing statistical analysis, but students are responsible to complete this type of analysis. Individual faculty members may discuss additional guidelines with students they supervise.

Masters Research Project Schedule

<u>Required Tasks</u>	<u>Deadlines for Spring Graduation</u>	<u>Deadlines for Fall Grad'n with May Commencement</u>
Draft Research Project proposal submitted	Nov. 27, 2006	April 13, 2007
Pre-proposal submitted	N/A	Nov. 27, 2006
Degree Program Form Completed and in Social Work Office	Dec. 1, 2006	Dec. 1, 2006
Finished Research Project proposal submitted	Dec. 8, 2006	April 23, 2007
Pre-proposal approved	N/A	Jan. 12, 2007
Degree Program Form in UMD Graduate Office	Jan. 26, 2007	Jan. 26, 2007
Degree Program Form approved by Graduate School	Feb. 23, 2007	Feb. 23, 2007
Research Project proposal approved by Supervisor & 2nd Reader	Jan. 22, 2007	May 7, 2007
Application for Degree Form submitted to Graduate School	March 1, 2007	March 1, 2007
First draft of final paper submitted to Project Supervisor	March 16, 2007	Sept. 7, 2007
Second draft of final paper submitted to Project Supervisor	April 9, 2007	Sept. 21, 2007
Preliminary approval of final paper (ready for oral exam)	April 20, 2007	Oct. 5, 2007
Schedule Final Oral Exam	April 20, 2007	Oct. 5, 20067
Commencement Exercises in Romano Gymnasium	7:00 PM, May 10, 2007	
Complete Final Oral Exam	May 4, 20067	Oct. 15, 2007
Complete all course work	End of Spring	End of Summer
Submit revisions of final paper	May 11, 2007	Oct. 19, 2007
Final approval of Master Research Project; exam form submitted to UMD Graduate Office; grades on official UMD transcript	May 18, 2007	Oct. 26, 2007

Previous Masters Research Papers

Over 160 Master Research Project (previously known as Plan B research) papers have been completed previously by MSW students, providing a rich resource for students in various stages of the research process. A list of students completing various papers and their supervisors is located in a Masters Research Project binder in the Social Work lounge (240 Bohannon Hall). Almost all previously completed papers are in a file cabinet in the Social Work lounge (240 Bohannon Hall) and a select group of "exemplary" papers, along with the list of all papers, is on reserve in the library.

You can use the information in the list of topics in a variety of ways. First, for those students who have completed their projects, you can check out the paper from the file cabinet in the Social Work lounge (240 Bohannon Hall). The papers are in the labeled drawer, and the index cards you use to sign out the paper are in a metal box near the file cabinet. These papers can provide examples of successfully completed projects, including the types of projects that are appropriate, methods of study that can be used, and format of the paper. Special accommodations will be made to provide copies of papers to distance students.

Secondly, you can contact the people involved with various topics to get first hand information about the projects. Students currently working on their papers may share work in progress, and faculty members who have worked (especially as supervisors) over the years may be able to share their recollections of the content and activities.

We hope to have a list of previous papers on the World Wide Web in the near future.

Working in Pairs of the Masters Research Project

The faculty are encouraging students to work in pairs on their Masters Research Projects if two students have research interests that overlap. Working with a partner has the advantage of splitting the work and being able to bounce ideas off one another; working in pairs also requires considerable coordination and teamwork. Some guidelines for working in a partnership in completing the Research Project are provided below.

1. Partners should each devote a roughly equal amount of time and energy to the project. The partners should work this out among themselves, and the Project supervisor may ask the partners about equity in the project if s/he has a concern.
2. The faculty will expect each partner to be fully knowledgeable about all aspects of the project, including conceptualizing, operationalizing, sampling, developing the research design, data analysis, and interpretation of findings. Therefore, both partners should be sure they understand each step of the research process.
3. In general, partners should share the writing of the project somewhat equally. It is certainly possible that one partner may do a higher percent of the writing and the other may do more of the data analysis. Both partners are responsible for the written materials that are turned in the supervisor, so if one partner writes the initial draft, it would be expected that the other partner would read the draft and make suggestions.
4. Keeping written records of the general division of labor on the projects is advised.
5. Generally, the partnerships work well. If students have determined that they were compatible in style and interests at the outset and addressed issues when they were minor, the partnerships have functioned effectively. Do check in with your supervisor if you have concerns about how things are going.

Additional Resources to Consult in Completing the Masters Research Project

Three book chapters are mentioned in the narrative above and provide important resources for completing the Masters Research Project. These chapters will either be made available through class or on reserve in the library. Each of these resources is described below.

"Choosing and Formulating a Research Question." From Dawson, B.G. , M.D. Klase, R.F. Guy, and C.K. Edgley (1991). *Understanding Social Work Research..* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

This chapter was recommended by a former student who found it to be very helpful in clarify the research topic and questions to pursue. It provides guidance at the early stages of developing a research project.

"Writing Research Proposals" by K. E. Moss. In Grinnell, R. (1988). *Social Work Research and Evaluation (3rd Ed)*. Itaska, I.: F.E. Peacock Publisher, Inc.

This chapter describes what to include in the research proposal. The content of the proposal is explained well in this chapter; please use the outline on page 12 for organizing this content.

"Writing Research Reports" by W. J. Reed. In Grinnell, R. (1993). *Social Work Research and Evaluation (4th Ed)*. Itaska, IL: F.E. Peacock Publisher, Inc.

This chapter provides information on what to include in the final Masters Research Paper. Of particular importance is the description of what to include in the results (findings) section of the paper. Again, use this chapter as a guide to the content of the final paper; please use the outline on page 19 for organizing this content.

Additional Resources

A complete bibliography of books related to social work research is available on the Internet at the following address: <http://www.d.umn.edu/~dfalk/research/bib/htm>