

# BRENAU UNIVERSITY



## THESIS GUIDE

Revised Edition

April 2014

Brenau Graduate Council

## **Brenau University**

### **Thesis Guide**

The thesis is the capstone experience of master's education. It provides an opportunity for you to develop and implement an empirical study which has relevance to your discipline. The thesis will involve an in-depth research investigation on an individual or small group basis. This thesis guide has been developed and approved by The Brenau University Graduate Council to assist you with the elements of thesis preparation which are common to all Brenau University Departments. The information contained in this guide is intended to summarize the major elements of thesis preparation and to be an example of how a thesis may be constructed and presented for publication according to the current (6<sup>th</sup> Edition) or most recent APA Publication Manual. The intention of these guidelines is not to establish a protocol for which all thesis projects must conform to, but to provide a clear example of a how a thesis project may be developed and prepared for publication. Each program and department will determine the unique requirements to be adhered to for completing respective thesis projects, however, all programs may wish to use these guidelines to assist in providing students with information regarding the thesis process, and this may result in achieving more similarity among thesis projects within the university.

### **Thesis Enrollment**

The course numbers used for thesis work will vary from department to department. You should consult your academic adviser and plan of study for thesis course numbers, syllabi, and advising regarding the semester in which you will enroll in your first thesis course and begin the

thesis project. You will enroll in the final thesis course required by your department for each subsequent semester until the thesis is accepted. A grade of “IP” will be assigned in the final thesis course until the thesis is accepted, at which time the grade will be changed to that assigned by your thesis chair or adviser.

### **Thesis Committee**

All students will be assigned a thesis adviser or thesis chair according to departmental policy. In addition, some departments will require a thesis committee. The thesis chair or adviser must be a regular faculty member in your department and must hold a doctoral degree or equivalent. In certain circumstances, qualified adjunct faculty or a Brenau faculty member from another department may be approved as thesis adviser or committee chair. This requires prior approval of the department graduate coordinator and/or department chair. Each department determines the number and qualifications of committee members.

The purpose of the thesis committee chair or thesis adviser is to provide guidance and direction to the individual or research group throughout the thesis process. This supervision will involve the following:

1. Assisting the student(s) with finalizing research topic.
2. Assisting the student(s) in identifying committee members if required.
3. Guiding the student(s) in the development of the research project.
4. Guiding the student(s) in the preparation of IRB application.
5. Serving as a resource to the student(s) in all phases of the research project.
6. Meeting regularly with the thesis group or individual student to provide guidance and critical review of work.

7. Critical evaluation of thesis and oral defense (if required by the department).
8. Critical review and sign-off on final copy of thesis.
9. Ensuring that the document respects copyright law through the proper use of citations and the securing of copyright releases when required.
10. Advising students as to the proper procedure to follow to ensure that copies are bound and provided to the department and Brenau Library.
11. Guidance and collaboration on submission of manuscripts for publication and/or paper and poster presentations.

Thesis advisers and chairs may be considered co-investigators and co-authors of works disseminated through publications and presentation. Order of authorship is determined by contribution to the published work. Refer to the APA guidelines on authorship for further information. Faculty members are typically not first authors unless the student's thesis is a direct extension of a faculty member's research. Refer to APA guidelines regarding authorship.

All thesis committee members serve as resource persons to the student(s). Each member is responsible for thoughtful review of thesis drafts and timely feedback to the committee chair. Committee members are responsible for attending all scheduled committee meetings, presentations and defenses.

### **Institutional Review Board**

Institutional Review Boards (IRB) or Human Subject Committees serve to safeguard individuals serving as research subjects or informants. All students and faculty must obtain approval from the Brenau University IRB before implementing any research involving human subjects. Brenau University IRB application forms are available on the Brenau web site. Under

no circumstances is the student permitted to collect data prior to IRB approval of the proposed research. Additionally, students need to be registered in a course before beginning data collection. If the study continues past the deadline cited on the original IRB proposal, it is the student's responsibility to file a continuation form with the IRB. Upon completion of the study, students must complete and submit to the IRB the "Notification of Completion of Study" form. Failure to submit this form will result in a hold on the release of transcripts.

Facilities through which students are allowed access to research subjects may also have an IRB or Human Subjects Committee. It is the responsibility of the student to determine the manner in which permission is granted by the facility for research and to plan accordingly with the thesis adviser or committee chairperson for obtaining needed approvals. A copy of the approval from the facility's IRB or permission to conduct research in the facility signed by the appropriate facility authority must be submitted with the Brenau University IRB application and retained with the research data.

### **Thesis Deadlines**

The thesis adviser or committee chairperson will assist the student(s) with developing a detailed timeline for completion of each step of the research process.

### **Thesis Format**

#### **Quality Control of Mechanics and Proofreading**

Students alone are responsible for the mechanical correctness, typing accuracy, and general neatness of each draft of the thesis. Carefully proofread each page of the thesis in both preliminary drafts and final version. Check for APA style formatting including punctuation,

spelling, capitalization, use of italics, abbreviations, numbers, metrication, statistics and mathematical copy, and equations as are relevant. Check also for typographical errors, correct spelling (with special notice to uncommon words and scientific terms), and proper syllabic division of words at the end of lines. Be sure that all citations in the text are matched correctly with reference entries and that all references listed are cited in the text. You, and not your typist or your advisor, are solely responsible for the final proofreading before your finished thesis is presented to the committee members for approval and signatures. Check all pages of the final copies to ensure that none are missing and that all pages are clearly reproduced.

### **Student's Official Name**

Master's degree candidates must use their full names as officially recorded at Brenau University. This official name must be used in reports, theses, and all other required graduation forms.

### **APA Format Required**

Please note that, as stated in the Graduate Catalog, "unless specifically instructed to the contrary, graduate students shall follow the standards set forth in the [most recent edition] of the A.P.A. Manual."

### **General Formatting Guidelines**

General guidelines follow regarding the formatting of your thesis. Please consult the APA Manual for more specific instructions.

1. Page Format and Layout
  - a. Paper quality, size, and color

Print the thesis on white, off-white or ivory bond paper, preferably sustainable paper of archival quality. Paper size is 8.5 x 11".

b. Font

Black Times New Roman in 12 point font is the preferred typeface.

c. Margins

The top, bottom, left, and right margins should consistently be 1”.

d. Line Spacing

With the exception of the approval page and special requirements for equations, tables, and figures, double-space between all lines of the manuscript. Refer to the sample approval page at the end of this document for formatting of that page.

e. Paragraphs

Spacing before and after paragraphs should be 0 points. Indent the first line of each paragraph using the tab key (set to 5-7 spaces). Justify using a flush-left style, that is flush against the margin on the left and ragged on the right.

Exceptions to this rule include abstracts, block quotations, titles, headings, tables, and figures.

f. Running Head

Identify each page of the work with a running head and page number in case the pages become separated. See the APA Publication Manual for the correct formatting. The first page of the paper should include the term running head accompanied by the short title, as in “Running head: MY TITLE.” All subsequent pages should include only the abbreviated title, as in “MY TITLE.”

g. Pagination

Beginning with the title page, consecutively number each page of the work in the upper right corner opposite the running head.



h. Tables and Figures

Give careful attention to the purposes and principles of table and figure usage as detailed in the APA Publication Manual. All tables and figures should be correctly formatted and cited according to the guidelines in the Manual.

i. Headings

Headings should be used and formatted according to the guidelines in the Manual.

The use of headings contributes to the organization of the paper and thereby assists the reader.

j. Table of Contents

Place the table of contents before the text and any lists of tables, figures, etc. It consists of page titles, chapter titles, subheadings. Items listed in the contents must exactly match those titles as they appear within the text. Chapters are labeled with Roman numerals in both the table of contents and in the text. Page numbers are right justified in the contents and preceded by a dot leader. Page numbers listed on the Table of Contents must agree with the correct page in the text

### **Order of Contents**

The thesis should be arranged in the following sequence:

- a. title page
- b. approval page (start on a separate page)
- c. acknowledgements (optional, start on a separate page)
- d. table of contents (start on a separate page)
- e. list of tables (optional, start on a separate page)

- f. list of figures (optional, start on a separate page)
- g. abstract (start on a separate page)
- h. body of thesis (start on a separate page)
- i. references (start on a separate page)
- j. tables (start each on a separate page)
- k. figures (start each on a separate page)
- l. appendices (start each on a separate page)

### **Publication Requirements**

Please see the Thesis Publication Guide do instructions about publishing your thesis.

### **Thesis Final Checklist Follows**

### **Thesis Final Checklist**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Paper quality, size, and color conform with requirement
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Font is black, Times New Roman, 12 points
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Margins are correct as described above. (Top, sides, bottom)
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Line spacing is correct as noted above and in the APA manual
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Paragraph spacing and justification are correct
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Running head is present and correctly formatted
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Order of pages is as specified above
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Page numbers are consecutive and properly placed, beginning with the title page. (No pages are missing.)
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Page numbering and wording on Table of Contents, List of Tables, etc., match what is in the text of the thesis
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Original signatures are on at least one signature sheet. The original signature page can be reproduced for additional copies.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Credentials and spellings in all signature lines are verified
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Title of thesis conforms to APA requirements
13. \_\_\_\_\_ Tables and Figures are formatted and cited according to the APA Manual
14. \_\_\_\_\_ Headings are consistent with APA formatting requirements
15. \_\_\_\_\_ Photographs are properly scanned, placed, and are of good quality
16. \_\_\_\_\_ All citations, references, and footnotes are correctly formatted in APA style

**Sample Pages Follow**

Put Title of Thesis Here: Can Run Onto  
Two or More Lines if Needed

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Department of XXXXXX  
Brenau University

---

in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
XXXXXXXXXXXX

---

By  
First Middle Last name  
(in the case of multiple authors) First Middle Last name  
Month year

MY TITLE

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Put Title of Thesis Here: Can Run Onto

Two or More Lines if Needed

Student author #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Student author #2 \_\_\_\_\_

List of Authors

APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Chair's name, Credentials  
Committee Chair  
Department of \*\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member's name, Credentials  
Committee Member  
Department of \*\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member's name, Credentials  
Committee Member  
Department of \*\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_

Dean's name, Credentials  
Dean, College of XXXXX

MY TITLE

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## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank....

(Optional page)

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## Abstract

Abstracts are 150-250 words and list keywords at the bottom. Below are examples of two popular abstract styles: the qualitative abstract and the quantitative abstract. Note that these were fabricated for purposes of providing an example and are not the results of actual studies.

### Example of a Qualitative Abstract (150-250 words)

The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of college students who have obsessive compulsive disorder and who live in residential housing. This 24 month ethnography used multiple qualitative methods, including participant observation, critical social research, and historical research.

Keywords: obsessive-compulsive behavior, higher education, mental health

### Example of a Quantitative Abstract (150-250 words)

Background: Patients with essential hypertension and the spontaneously hypertensive rat (SHR) are insulin-resistant and hyperinsulinemic. These findings suggest the possibility that insulin resistance and hyperinsulinemia may play a pivotal role in blood pressure regulation. Acarbose, an oral antihyperglycemic drug, decreases hyperinsulinemia and hyperglycemia. The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of acarbose on basal and postprandial insulin and glucose levels and whether changes in beta-cell function result in a change in blood pressure measurements. Methods: SHRs were fed custom diets ad libitum, six with and six without acarbose (40mg/100g of chow). Fasting and postprandial glucose and insulin levels were analyzed following glucose administration (1.75 g/kg body weight). Blood pressure was determined by the tail cuff method. Results: Fasting glucose values were similar, but fasting insulin levels declined 23% in the acarbose treated group ( $p < 0.05$ ). Postprandial glucose and

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insulin levels decreased 18% and 20% respectively ( $p < 0.01$ ) in the acarbose group vs. the control animals. Despite the decrease in fasting and postprandial insulin concentrations, systolic, mean, and calculated diastolic blood pressures were insignificantly different, in the acarbose group after six weeks of treatment, compared to control animals. Conclusion: Acarbose decreases fasting insulin levels and postprandial glucose and insulin levels without effectively lowering blood pressure in the SHR. The ability of acarbose to attenuate the hyperinsulinemic state in the SHR without effectively lowering blood pressure suggests that factors other than serum insulin concentration are important in the modulation of blood pressure.

Keywords: hyperinsulinemia, hyperglycemia, acarbose, blood pressure

(The preceding abstract was taken from the article: Swislocki, A., Lardinois, C. K., & Starich, G. H. (2007). Acarbose attenuates basal and postprandial insulin concentrations but fails to lower blood pressure in the spontaneously hypertensive rat. *Metabolic Syndrome and Related Disorders*, 5(4): 297-304. doi: 10.1089/met.2007.0004)

