The Gerontology Academic Program recommends these guidelines for structuring your MSG Project. We strongly encourage you to examine the MSG projects on display in the Gerontology Program Office.

Note*: **These guidelines differ from those of the M.S.G. Thesis. Please see the Gerontology Academic Program website and CSUF Graduate Studies office for specifics regarding thesis preparation.***

All work that is not your own must be cited according to APA procedures. For more information, refer to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition, or visit http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2015/09/best-of-the-apa-style-blog-2015-edition.html*. For instructions regarding inclusion of digital object identifiers (DOIs) in your bibliography, please visit* http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/digital-object-identifier-doi/*.*
You may also visit
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html
Note: Unlike MSG theses, projects DO NOT necessarily follow APA formatting. How your format your project needs to be discussed with your project committee. Note too, that compared to deadlines/dates set by the University for completing/defending a MSG thesis, deadlines and requirements are decided upon with your project chair and committee.

You should avoid direct quotations in your project write-up, opting instead to <u>***use***</u> <u>***your own words***</u> ***in describing other's research and then cite these sources using APA-style****)*

SUGGESTED SECTIONS:

A. ABSTRACT

B. TABLE OF CONTENTS

C. LIST OF TABLES/FIGURES (IF APPPLICALBE)

D. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

E. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

- ***Brief Overview of The Topic or Problem Statement****:* State the problem that motivated your research. Your statement should provide an overview of an issue, and be expressed in only one or two sentences. Include facts (from a credible source).

- ***Relevance/Background of the Problem State***: the reason the problem is worth exploring. You may include a sentence describing the major positions held in the literature regarding your subject matter. You may also briefly state the relevance that the problem has or the implications it has for the field of gerontology.

- ***Purpose/Significance and Justification of the Project***

- ***Description of the Proposed End Product***

- ***Definition of Terms***

- ***Assumptions***

F. CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE: The purpose of your literature review is to demonstrate the need for your research project by evaluating the state of knowledge on the topic (i.e., what we already know, what is contested, and what we don't know). It provides the context for your study. It is your responsibility to identify the most influential theories and writing on your topic, the methods used to address your topic, and the current findings and conclusions concerning your topic. Be familiar with these, and position your project in relation to the literature.

Read and evaluate the literature with an awareness of its connection to your proposed research. The general question to keep in mind is: **what contribution will my proposed project make to what has already been said or done?**

USE HEADINGS AND SUBHEADINGS TO ORGANIZE YOUR WRITING

Describe the State of Current Research (often defined as within the past ten years): Present significant viewpoints or discoveries that have emerged within the past ten years. (If you intend to discuss trends, however, it may also be appropriate to mention older research or theories.)

- What is already known about this issue? State facts or conclusions, with evidence from the literature.

- What is contested? Identify conflicting theories or contradictory approaches to your topic.

- What is unknown? Identify gaps in the current research.

G. **CHAPTER 3: METHOD:** Even though you are not collecting and analyzing data, you still need to have a section that describes your PROCESS of how you formulated your project and/or how you would implement your ideas.

   Some flexibility is allowed when writing a method section for a project. In this respect a project differs from a thesis, which must follow APA format. (But a project method section is not necessarily easier to write.)

   Despite variations in organization and content, the goal of every method section remains the same, including addressing the following:

   How the proposed issue will be examined
   Describe how your project will be performed or implemented. Be concise.

   Identifying the resources and materials required

   - Materials: <u>What</u> will you need to produce your desired result?

   - Justification: <u>Why</u> are these resources necessary?

   - Procedure: <u>How</u> will these resources be used to analyze the data or create an end product?

   - Procurement: <u>Where</u> can these resources be found?

Discuss with your chair all possible content areas relevant to your project. Consider inclusion of the elements listed below:

- Brief summary of your method
- Research design, including theories that guide your method
- Research setting
- Instruments used
- Manner of data collection, including:
  o Interviews
  o Surveys
- Procedures and permissions
- Investigator qualifications

- Program planning and development, including:
  o Collaborations
  o Timelines
- Development of forms and/or surveys for participants
- Process for developing PowerPoint, curricula, or literature
- Plans for recruitment of participants and for marketing your project, if applicable

For any project involving participants, you should also describe the characteristics of the target group and the process of selection:

- Characteristics of the target population
  o Age range
  o Sex
  o Educational level
  o Ethnicity

- Process of participant selection
  o Goals of sample selection
    ▪ Sample size
    ▪ Representative sample
  o Eligibility criteria
  o Recruitment process

(Specific) Procedures:

- Describe the materials, instruments, and/or equipment to be used.

- Describe how these resources will be used.

- If applicable, describe Institutional Review Board approval process

- If applicable, describe how your procedure differs from existing procedures, i.e., how it will produce an end product that differs from those already available.

H. **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS/FINDINGS:** This section describes your project's outcomes. Consider

- Stating your results (*describing) your end product or your findings.*
- Discussing what the steps beyond completion of your current project are, such as *describing how your results could be applied, developed, evaluated, and/or marketed.*

I. **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:** Consider discussing your projects usefulness and potential for further development. Also consider that the conclusion section is often more than a reiteration of the research findings. This section often sums up the outcomes of the project and then discusses the implications of the work. The implications could reside at the theoretical, empirical or policy levels. Also consider:

- Summarizing your outcome(s).
- Describing the ways in which your project contributes to the field of aging.
- Identifying the theoretical, policy, clinical, or community implications of your project.
- Describing the directions that future research/project could take.

J. **APPENDICES (IF APPLICABLE)**

K. **REFERENCES**