

Graduate Study Programs
Faculty of Public Health

MPH Thesis Guidelines

For Students, Advisors & Reviewers

Thammasat University

MPH Thesis Guidelines for Students, Advisors & Reviewers

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This document is intended to supplement the Faculty's Handbook of Graduate Programs and to serve as a guide to students and faculty in the MPH Degree Programs of the Faculty of Public Health, Thammasat University, for planning, conducting, and submitting the master's thesis. The outline presented here incorporates University requirements, and includes discussion of the standards for acceptable theses, the roles and responsibilities of the committee members and the student, and detailed guidelines and timeline for completing the master's thesis. The goal of the document is to help make the thesis process predictable, enlightening, and yes, even enjoyable for both students and faculty.

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1. Introduction

The aim of this publication is to provide guidelines for students who wish to undertake a thesis study towards one of our graduate program degrees:

- Master of Public Health (MPH) Thai program
- Master of Public Health (Global Health) English program

The enclosed information provides information on the scope of the thesis study and what students should aim to achieve, how to plan the research, important considerations, and what assessors will be looking for.

At the same time, this publication also serves as a resource for advisors who work with students and provide advice during the progression of their research, and also for assessors who examine the final product.

The thesis research project is an in-depth study of a public health issue that allows the student to demonstrate their knowledge and application of the principles of applied research at a postgraduate level.

A thesis study consists of attendance and participation at academic seminars; self study under the supervision of an advisor; conducting an integrated practicum; participation in thesis development workshops; and developing, implementing and writing-up a thesis topic.

A thesis study in our MPH programs provides the opportunity to undertake a research study of a contemporary public health issue. For the Thai MPH it provides the opportunity to undertake applied research relevant to public health management, while for the international MPH (Global Health) program, the research question being addressed may be a topic of contemporary global health significance.

2. Getting Started

2.1 What is a MPH Thesis?

The master's thesis is an original research study that is carried out using rigorous methods that are appropriate to the research questions, that generates new knowledge, applies concepts and methods from one or more branches of science relevant to public health, and is presented in a scholarly format. The thesis demonstrates the student's comprehensive knowledge of the substantive area of the study and the research methods used. It represents the culmination of the master's program, and an opportunity to integrate and apply the concepts and methods learned in coursework.

Students in public health approach the thesis with varied skills in research methods and data analysis. The thesis is primarily a learning experience for the student, designed to challenge the student at her/his skill level, while adhering to a standard of high quality regarding the questions posed, the analytic methods, and the written product.

2.2 Types of Acceptable Thesis Projects

Several different types of projects may fulfill the thesis requirement: case studies, policy analyses, descriptive studies, analytic studies, program evaluations, or experiments. Each type of study requires a slightly different approach to formulating research questions, collecting and analyzing data. Regardless of the type of study chosen, the student investigator must apply critical thought, systematic analysis, and clear presentation.

In selecting their thesis topic and the research project type it is important that students carefully consider both: (a) the relevance to public health in general, and (b) the relevance to the major concentration of the program they are enrolled in.

- ❑ Case study: a detailed review of a unique or important program that captures the background, process, outcomes, successes, failures and lessons learned. The case study may include either qualitative or quantitative data or both. The case study provides an opportunity to explore a single program in depth, but places the responsibility on the investigator to provide clarity, organization and scholarship to the investigation. Case studies typically have limited generalizability.
- ❑ Policy analysis: a synthesis of existing and newly collected data brought together in an organized, structured and thoughtful manner to answer a policy question or present and evaluate policy the strengths and weaknesses of options for decision makers. A policy analysis usually employs multiple sources and types of information (e.g., literature, documents, interviews, and secondary data). The policy analysis also places the responsibility on the investigator to identify relevant data, and provide clarity, organization and structure to the analysis.
- ❑ Descriptive study: a qualitative or quantitative study to measure magnitude, variability of a need or problem and to explore associated factors. Descriptive

studies are often guided by questions rather than formal hypotheses, and are often the first step in more directed research.

- ❑ Analytic study: a case control or cohort study, although other approaches may fit into this category. Analytic studies utilize quantitative methods, and are often guided by hypotheses. Analytic studies typically have clearer methodology than case studies or policy analyses described above, and produce obvious results. Analytic studies conducted by master's students typically use existing data.
- ❑ Program evaluation: structured study to assess whether a program, intervention or technique was effective at accomplishing its goals (effectiveness or efficacy for interventions). A program evaluation addresses explicit questions, and the methods and measurement may be complex.
- ❑ Experiment: a study with randomized or otherwise highly controlled allocation of two or more identifiable intervention strategies to test a hypothesis, frequently one regarding causation or effectiveness. The experiment most explicitly addresses the study question, results are clearly relevant, and can be communicated in a straightforward way. Feasibility of conducting an experiment is usually limited within the time frame and resources available to the master's student, given that the student must take significant initiative in study design and execution.

Some types of projects are not acceptable as theses, including:

- ❑ A literature review, though a review with critique and suggestions to the field can be acceptable. A formal meta-analysis is acceptable in that it generates new knowledge;
- ❑ A group project, though the thesis may be part of a collaborative project, provided the student had the lead role in that part (original work);
- ❑ A "warmed over" class or practicum project, though the thesis can be a significant extension of work that began as a class paper, project or practicum.

2.3 Eligibility to Enroll

Normally, students will only be accepted into the MPH Thesis if they have completed the equivalent of minimum 12 credits core courses, for example 12 credits of public health core courses, or a combination of public health and major core courses equaling 12 credits, and have achieved an average GPA not lower than 3.00.

2.4 Developing a Thesis Topic

For the part-time MPH program, at the beginning of the study program, an "Academic Advisor" will be allocated for every student. The main role of the academic advisor is: to be your mentor in developing your overall plan of study, to provide initial guidance in thinking about your thesis topic, and based on your topic to assist you in identifying a potential thesis advisor.

For the full-time international MPH program however, no "Academic Advisor" is allocated. At the beginning of the study program a "Thesis Advisor" will be allocated for every student. The main role of the thesis advisor is to be your mentor in developing your overall plan of study, and to help you define and shape the thesis, to guide you through the thesis process, and, where appropriate, to refer you to other sources of guidance in areas beyond the thesis advisor's field of expertise.

Whilst undertaking coursework in the Master of Public Health (MPH) you should have been considering the field of research that you might explore for their thesis.

The research question you choose should have direct relevance to public health, i.e. it should illuminate an issue that is relevant to the health or disease of groups, as distinct from a biomedical research project which would tend to focus more on biological and clinical aspects of a disease process in individuals. Some theses involve the systematic collection and assessment of numerical data, usually to test a hypothesis or to analyze a proposition. Others involve the systematic collection and assessment of qualitative data. It is equally acceptable to undertake a thesis which makes a systematic, extended critique of a concept such as health promotion, or critically analyses concepts or activities relevant to public health policy or action. All theses must include considerably more than a review of other people's work and they must be the student's own project. A thesis should not be confused with a research project such as a research officer or project officer carries out under the direction of others as part of his/her employment.

Students should begin to think about this early in their program, and start exploring the feasibility of focusing on a research question which genuinely interests them and for which they can provide or arrange the necessary resources. Finding a substantive research question or issue in an appropriate public health topic area can be difficult. Academic staff of the faculty are happy to discuss thesis ideas and topics with individual students, and students are encouraged to take up this opportunity at an early stage. You can choose to investigate a question of your own or to link into one of the on-going research programs of the faculty.

2.5 Finding an Advisor

For students in the part-time MPH program:

Once you have decided on a topic or at least an area of interest, you need to find a thesis advisor. For an indication of the research interests of faculty academic staff, see our web site.

Initially you should discuss this with your "academic advisor". Your thesis advisor will be an academic staff member in this faculty. His/her role is to help you define and shape the thesis, to guide you through the thesis process, and, where appropriate, to refer you to other sources of guidance in areas beyond the thesis advisor's field of expertise.

For students in the full-time international MPH program

Given the broad, holistic and socio-political perspectives of the program's major concentration, the process applied to identify a thesis advisor differs from the part-time MPH program. For full-time MPH students, the Curriculum Committee allocates right from the start of the program a thesis advisor to students, based on their

intended career path, their interest in a specific public health domain, and their personal study plan.

On occasion, for example, when expertise in a particular topic or research methodology is not available within the faculty, external co-advising may be arranged. The role of a co-advisor is that of an adviser. Primary responsibility lies with the faculty thesis advisor, who, as early in the process as possible, should consult with the co-advisor and with you to determine your agreed approach to the project.

2.6 Obtaining approval for a thesis topic

Once students have developed their thesis topic, with the support from their respective advisor, they need to obtain approval of the proposed thesis topic from the Curriculum Committee. To make sure students are well prepared in seeking approval of their thesis topic advisors will provide feedback on student's readiness.

The main purposes of a thesis topic approval are:

- a. a cross-check on the relevance of the thesis topic to public health as well as to the student's major concentration;
- b. a cross-check on the acceptability of the proposed type of a thesis research project (see section 2.2);
- c. endorsement or replacement of the proposed thesis advisor or allocation of a thesis advisor in absence of a proposed faculty member¹;
- d. endorsement or allocation of a co-advisor if required; and
- e. establishment of a thesis committee

The proposal of a thesis topic for approval will be about 700 words and contain the following:

- Date: Please date the first, and any revised, topic proposal submitted.
- Student: Full name and student identity number
- Advisor(s): Names of all advisors (academic advisor², thesis advisor, and any proposed co-advisor
- Title: No more than 160 characters including spaces.
- Rationale: What is the problem to be investigated? Why is it a public health issue? Why is the problem important? What is the relevance of the thesis topic to the program's major?
- Research Question: What question will this thesis investigate? Why is this question important? What are your aim and objectives?

Research Project

¹ For part-time MPH students only

² For part-time MPH students only

Type: In this section you are expected to specify, and briefly explain, your research project type, such as: case studies, policy analyses, descriptive studies, analytic studies, program evaluations, or experiments.

A flowchart on the various steps in the thesis development process is presented in Appendix-1

2.7 Thesis Development Seminars

Prior to embarking upon their thesis or early in their candidature, each student is normally required to attend thesis development seminars. These seminars are offered throughout the program. The aim is to enable students to be well informed about the nature of the commitment they are undertaking with their thesis. If, for some reason, you are unable to attend one of the seminars, please make an extra effort to discuss the requirements and expectations with your academic advisor. In addition, students are encouraged to attend student thesis defenses held in the faculty.

3. Getting Enrolled

3.1 Thesis Enrolment is by Semester

Thesis enrolment is similar to course work enrolment, i.e. it must happen prior to the beginning of a semester, and normal coursework rules regarding withdrawal and deadlines for results apply. It is clear therefore that the thesis proposal development process needs to take place during a break between semesters or during the semester prior to the one in which you intend to enroll. Full time students will complete their thesis in one semester; part time students in two. Submission dates will be announced at the beginning of each semester. As with all coursework, extensions may be granted, on medical or compassionate grounds, if application is made prior to the advertised submission date.

In your planning and preparation you are advised to take official time constraints on candidature seriously. A thesis which drags on often becomes a burden, and not necessarily a better product.

3.2 What Does It Cost?

The thesis equals 12 credits of study and attracts a fee in the same way that the coursework does. In brief, what that will amount to depends on the arrangements that applied when you were accepted into the program. Details on costs per credit of study can be found at the Faculty website www.fph.tu.ac.th

In addition, depending on the nature of your thesis study, you should consider eventual costs related to: data collection such as: travel, accommodation, fees for assistance; data processing such as: fees for assistance or translations, or laboratory expenses; thesis report production such as: printing, copying, and or binding; and publication such as: journal fast track and or publication fees.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Curriculum Committee

For each MPH program, there is a Curriculum Committee. This committee is expected to:

- ❑ Set the graduate study program policy
- ❑ Administer the graduate study program
- ❑ Allocate an Academic Advisor of each student at the onset of the program for students in the part-time MPH program
- ❑ Review and approve proposed thesis topics
- ❑ Appoint Thesis Advisors and eventual Co-advisors
- ❑ Establish a Thesis Committee for students

4.2 Academic Advisor

Only for students in the part-time Thai MPH program an academic advisor will be allocated at the onset of the program, prior to identifying a thesis advisor. The academic advisor is expected to:

- ❑ Academic advisors must be Faculty members.
- ❑ Allocation of academic advisors is done by the Curriculum Committee and guided by workload among faculty members.
- ❑ Academic Advisors act as you mentor in developing your plan of study, guiding you in academic matters, and assist you in developing your thesis proposal, and refer you to appropriate academic resource persons if needed.

4.3 Thesis advisor

Your thesis advisor will meet following criteria and is expected to:

- ❑ Thesis Advisors must be Faculty members.
- ❑ Thesis Advisors should have a doctoral degree or an associate professorship.
- ❑ Thesis Advisors should be allocated a maximum 5 students/advisor at any given period of time.
- ❑ Allocation of thesis advisors will also be guided by the congruence between the student's domain of study and the advisor's expertise; however this criterion might be overruled to facilitate parity in distribution of workload among faculty members.
- ❑ Thesis Advisors must help you formulate an appropriate thesis proposal and outline of the thesis research report.
- ❑ Thesis Advisors should meet regularly with you to support your project work (your advisor is expected to meet with you at least 12 times for an average of one hour per meeting).
- ❑ Thesis Advisors will inform you and the Curriculum Committee if you are not making satisfactory progress and/or require additional support.
- ❑ Thesis Advisors provide ongoing assessment of your work throughout the period of supervision including advice on matters of presentation and style, supply written comments on your submitted work, when requested review a final draft of the research report, and advise you whether it is in a suitable form for examination, and act as a member of the examination committee.

4.4 Thesis Co-Advisor

A Thesis Co-advisor may be required in cases where:

- ❑ There is a need for special expertise in the subject matter, or the student is undertaking a thesis study outside the Bangkok region (e.g. overseas).
- ❑ A student must not engage a Co-advisor, without the approval of his/her Thesis Advisor.
- ❑ The Thesis Co-advisor does not need to have an academic appointment within the University, but he or she must be approved by the Curriculum Committee as having expertise in the field of your study.
- ❑ Thesis Advisors, after initial discussion with the student, can request the Curriculum Committee for approval of a thesis co-advisor.
- ❑ A Thesis Co-advisor request includes (name, qualifications, institute, position, expertise and rationale for appointing the co-advisor).
- ❑ Thesis Co-advisors should have a doctoral degree or an associate professorship.
- ❑ Thesis Co-advisors are only acceptable if there is a demonstrated need for additional expertise whether methodological or application domain, not to reduce the advisor's workload!
- ❑ Appointment of a Thesis Co-advisor does not dismiss the Thesis Advisor of her/his responsibilities.
- ❑ At least 3 joint meetings advisor/co-advisor/student must be organized throughout thesis development.
- ❑ Students have to submit progress reports to the Thesis advisor & Co-advisor 1 week prior to each joint meeting.
- ❑ Thesis Co-advisors will receive a remuneration/student at completion of the final exam (covering joint meetings, proposal reviews, and final assessment).
- ❑ The Thesis Co-advisor should maintain a level of communication with you and the advisor in order to participate in the supervision or act as substitute for the advisor whenever necessary.
- ❑ The Thesis Co-advisor act as a member of the examination committee.

4.5 Thesis Committee

The Curriculum Committee establishes a Thesis Committee for each student selecting study Plan-A (thesis). This committee is expected to:

- ❑ Review and approve the thesis proposal
- ❑ Determine whether ethical clearance is required to undertake the research project
- ❑ Review student's progress reports and provide feedback
- ❑ Examine the final thesis report and defense, and assign a final grade

4.6 Students' Responsibilities

Students are expected to:

- ❑ Schedule regular meetings (average 12 meetings of one hour) with their thesis advisor or arrange regular contact (by phone, fax, email or writing) if away from the University.
- ❑ At an early stage submit a review of the relevant literature (this usually forms part of your final thesis report).

- ❑ Consult their thesis advisor and suspend enrolment for a stipulated period if for some valid reason they are unable to proceed with the thesis study project for the time being.
- ❑ Submit the final thesis report in accordance with the requirements set out by the program and within the time of normal candidature of the degree (it is generally a good idea to submit sections of your report as you are proceeding with your thesis so your advisor can check whether your progress and writing is progressing satisfactorily).
- ❑ Familiarize yourself with all relevant sources of information including the Graduate Student Handbook, the TU Graduate Handbook, and APA or MLA guidelines on academic writing.

5. Submitting a Thesis Proposal

5.1 Developing a Thesis Proposal

By the prescribed date (before the beginning of the relevant semester), you will, in consultation with your thesis advisor, prepare a Thesis Proposal for submission to the Program Director, who will convene a Committee to review the proposal.

Guidelines for MPH Thesis Proposals

Candidates must submit a statement of 3,000-5,000 words describing the field of study which they propose, sketching the chief scholarly elements of the field, and nominating a principal thesis advisor.

It does not have to be grand and it does not have to be long. It should include the following elements:

- Date: Please date the first, and any revised, proposal submitted.
- Student: Full name and student identity number
- Thesis Advisor: Names of all advisors, Faculty of Public Health Advisor, and any co-advisor external to the faculty (include this person's contact information).
- Title: No more than 160 characters including spaces.
- Rationale: Also called introduction. What is the problem to be investigated? Why is it a public health issue?
- Literature review: What have other people had to say about this issue? What work has been done on this problem in the past? This should indicate how the question being posed sits within the field of current knowledge.
- Research Question /Argument: How will you go beyond what others have learned? What question will this thesis investigate? Why is this question important? What are your aim and objectives? While it is not always necessary to formulate hypotheses, it is necessary to formulate a clear research question. This section will indicate what will be original about your work.
- Methodology: In this section you are expected to specify, briefly, your research design. This will vary considerably from student to student, depending on the thesis topic and on the disciplinary approach which informs and determines your investigation and analysis. It may include the reason for selection of a particular methodology, discussion of particular difficulties anticipated in the research design and the ways in which you propose to overcome them, methods of sample selection, data collection,

controls or comparisons to be used, methods of analysis, the time frame, the specific role of the student as researcher, and any other relevant practical aspects.

This section will also provide information about the resources needed to complete the research. For example, do you have access to existing data bases or the time to gather your own? Do the necessary historical sources exist for your enquiry? How will you go about conducting interviews, and with whom, and how will you analyze interview data?

In general, the methods described must be appropriate for the research question and must be described in sufficient detail for members of a review panel to be confident that the research is feasible, and that it will be intellectually rigorous.

Note: Field work is not a requirement for MPH theses unless the thesis question requires field work to answer it.

Statistics in MPH Theses:

Methods of statistical analysis have advanced so far in recent years that there may be important issues of which you are unaware despite the statistics course(s) you have taken for this degree. Before submitting your Thesis Proposal, you should discuss with your advisor whether specialist statistical advice should be sought in order to avoid embarking on a project which may call for a level of statistical analysis for which you are not currently equipped, or not likely to master in the time available.

Ethics Approval:

It is necessary for all persons associated with Thammasat University to obtain ethical clearance for any research activity involving human subjects. Whether your research needs ethics approval will be determined by your Thesis Committee, and if it does, you need to seek approval from the appropriate Ethics Committee after you submit your proposal to the Thesis Committee for approval. The application for ethical clearance will be in your name with your advisor's name, mentioned as another person involved. For graduate students' thesis research no ethical clearance fees will be charged.

Wherever possible, original data must be retained in the faculty data storage section or research unit in which they were generated. Researchers are responsible for ensuring appropriate security for any confidential material. You must indicate what kind of data will be generated and how much, where the data will be kept and for how long, what resources will be required to do this, who will have access and who will keep a record of the data held?

5.2 Submitting Your Proposal

When you are ready to submit your thesis proposal to the Program Director, get your Advisor to write a brief memo supporting the proposal (see Appendix 2), and then send a copy of your completed proposal and the memo to the Administrative Officer, who will circulate a copy of the proposal to each member of the review Committee. The student is responsible for scheduling and presenting the thesis proposal in a forum approved by his/her program.

Students have to present their proposal orally and have to pass the assessment by the thesis committee. This committee will have minimum three members namely: the advisor (and eventually a co-advisor), an external expert, and the chair (who can be a faculty member or an external member).

Members of the Committee will provide feedback on the proposal to your Advisor. It is not unlikely that they will suggest some amendments, and occasionally may suggest that the proposal be re-submitted. If this happens in your case, you should not take it as a sign of failure or deficiency on your part. It is more properly seen as an example of collegial collaboration and support, and it will almost certainly lead to a strengthening of your proposal and your subsequent research.

A flowchart on the various steps in the thesis development process is presented in Appendix-1

6. Doing the Research

6.1 You and Your Advisor

It will be important to your success and to your happiness and efficiency during your candidature, for you and your Advisor to establish a good working relationship from the beginning. Together you should work out a schedule of discussions and meetings and be clear about what you require from this contact. If you are not happy about the advisory relationship, you should talk about this with your Advisor. He or she has agreed to work with you, and will be just as keen as you are that the process works well and leads to your success.

If there are difficulties in the advisory relationship that make such discussion impossible or uncomfortable, do not just do nothing. Make a time to talk to the Program Director about it, and earlier rather than later.

6.2 Your Thesis Seminar

All students present Thesis development progress in the seminars during the 1st semester of their candidature. This should take the format of a PowerPoint presentation presented to a learned society, and is intended to provide you with experience in presenting research in progress in public. This may seem a bit daunting, but it can actually be very helpful to you and your Advisor, by providing you with constructive feedback. It also helps other members of the faculty learn more about you and your work, and this increases the chances of ongoing conversations, sharing of ideas and general support. The seminar is required but not examinable.

A detailed timetable will be negotiated with students. Each presentation may last for an absolute maximum of 10 minutes, and will be followed by 15 minutes of discussion. Timing will be carefully monitored, reason enough for a rehearsal!

Advanced audio-visual materials are not required. However students must present with a PowerPoint presentation. Do ensure that your presentation is readable from the back of the room.

Your Advisor will attend your Thesis Seminar, and afterwards will expect you to be available for a feedback discussion covering: your communication skills (was your presentation interesting, lively, imaginative, and coherent?); your handling of questions and discussion (did you demonstrate real understanding and a capacity to reflect on issues raised?); what you have learned from the audience feedback; and the extent to which your presentation demonstrated satisfactory progress towards meeting the criteria for a Thesis.

If you are unable to be present on the day, or if you have a problem that will impair your presentation, you should contact the MPH Program Administrative Officer as soon as possible.

An alternative date and/or timing will generally be granted only on medical or genuine compassionate grounds, and may only be granted by the Program Director (or nominee).

6.3 Extension of Candidature

If candidates cannot complete the planned thesis and want to obtain extra advising for their thesis outside of the enrolment period, a formal application must be submitted to the Program Director through the Administrative Officer. The application must justify the request and explain the reasons for extension of advising. The application must be lodged at least two weeks before the end of semester at which the candidate had anticipated finishing.

Normally the maximum period of time for extension is a period equal to the formal program cycle i.e. 4 semesters for the part-time MPH program and 3 semesters for the full-time MPH program. Students need to be aware that delay of submission may result in delay of graduation until the following year.

7. The Final Steps

7.1 Preparing Your Thesis for Submission

The thesis is presented in a standard format. For details on formatting the masters' thesis, consult the University's Style and Policy Manual. Standard thesis format includes four sections: Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion. Topics within each section are described below. The organization of subsections may vary, depending on the topic and the preferences of the student and committee.

- ❑ Abstract
- ❑ Original paper(s)
- ❑ Acknowledgements
- ❑ List of contents
- ❑ List of tables
- ❑ List of figures
- ❑ Acronyms

- ❑ Rationale (introduction):
 - Problem statement (significance, magnitude, and importance of the problem)
 - Research questions or hypotheses addressed by the study
 - Literature review
 - Conceptual model

- ❑ Methods:
 - Study design
 - Population and samples
 - Source
 - Sampling method/recruitment
 - Criteria for eligibility/exclusion of cases
 - Description of intervention (if any)
 - Data collection
 - Instrumentation or sources (e.g. questionnaire, interview, record review, focus groups, vital records, etc.)
 - Measurement and variables
 - Procedures to assess and assure data quality
 - Analysis plan
 - Hypothesis testing/generation
 - Definition of key analysis variables
 - Sample size/power considerations
 - Statistical methods
 - Limitations

- ❑ Results: Provides a clear, systematic presentation of results, linked back to the research questions and conceptual model. It does not include interpretation or discussion of results.
 - Characteristics of the study sample, including the number of subjects and the response rate.
 - Table(s) or figure(s) addressing each research question. Tables and figures usually progress from univariate, to bivariate, to multivariate

analyses. Text highlights (but does not duplicate) results shown in tables and figures.

- Discussion: Provides the opportunity to discuss the findings, compare them with previous research, and consider the implications of the findings.
 - Study strengths and limitations
 - How key findings compare or contrast with previous work
 - Conclusions to answer research questions
 - Implications of findings
 - For the theory or conceptual model described in the Introduction.
 - For public health practitioners
 - For future research
- List of references: A list of literature that were cited in the thesis text. Strict conventions govern the process of producing a list of references (see APA Referencing Guide).
- Appendixes: Contain detailed materials related to the thesis, such as cover letters to respondents, informed consent form, samples of instruments used, instructions for computing a scale score from the raw data, documentation of the mathematical equations used in the data analysis, and so forth.

The Advisor must certify that the student has prepared and retained all appropriate supporting documentation, and the student may be asked to make this available to the examiners.

7.2 Submitting Your Thesis

Hand five copies of your thesis to the Administrative Officer, a certification by your Advisor (see Appendix 2) and the journal's letter of acceptance and we will do the rest.

7.3 Thesis Defense and Grading

An oral presentation of a master's thesis is a requirement of the Faculty of Public Health. The student is responsible for scheduling and presenting the results of the thesis in a forum approved by his/her program.

The thesis will be examined by a panel of minimum three examiners: (1) the chair, who can be a member of the Faculty, or an affiliated academic title holder, or a qualified external person; however Advisors or co-advisors cannot be the Chair of the Examination Committee; (2) the thesis advisor; and (3) an external examiner, who might be co-advisor if external. The Examination Committee will be familiar with your research topic, since they are most likely (but not necessarily) the same members who assessed your initial thesis proposal.

The MPH program requires a total of 12 thesis credits. All thesis credits can be taken in one semester, but may be distributed over two or more semesters. The chair assigns a grade of "I" (incomplete) for each semester until the thesis has been completed and signed by the committee. The Chair assigns a final grade for the

thesis. The final grade for the MPH Degree Program is Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U).

The panel will assign the final grade; and normally will make the examiners' reports available to you. You might be required to make corrections to your thesis in response to the examiners' comments, in addition to obvious grammatical and typographical errors before final copies are deposited, though no other amendments may be made.

Students who receive an unsatisfactory grade may, at the discretion of the panel, be given an opportunity to resubmit their thesis for examination.

For those who pass: one copy of your thesis will remain the property of the Faculty of Public Health, and your thesis advisor(s) will usually appreciate a copy. With your consent, we wish to publish on the Faculty web page an electronic copy of your title and abstract.

We do require that within one week after the examination process has concluded, the student and Advisor(s) meet in order to discuss comments and suggestions in the examiners' report.

7.4 Graduating

The Degree will be awarded in person or in absentia, at one of the university's commemoration ceremonies. The Faculty encourages you to attend the ceremony and receive your degree in person.

7.5 Publishing from Your Thesis

As most MPH students have not been through the process of preparing a paper for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, you should seek guidance from your Advisor. A common pitfall is being repetitive, and inefficient in tabulation of data.

Your supervisor may be able to suggest a tabular presentation format which is clearer and more concise. This is what a Journal Editor will be looking for, and may reject a paper simply on these grounds.

Remember that when you are this close to completing your thesis, your Advisor is your best friend. Ask your Advisor to guide you on how much explanatory content to incorporate. In some cases, there may not be any need for extra words.

You should prepare your paper within the word count limitations set by the selected journal for submission, of single spaced type, excluding abstract, tables, references and appendices. Always carefully consult the journal's guidelines for contributors! Journal Editors and reviewers can simply reject your paper if you are sloppy with the journal format and referencing style.

Publication of an academic paper based on your thesis in a peer-reviewed journal is a University requirement for graduation.

- ❑ You benefit through the satisfaction of making a contribution. Also, through publication you and your work become known to colleagues, which builds your reputation and resume.
- ❑ The field benefits by disseminating your results to other health professionals.
- ❑ The MPH Program benefits, for publication advertises the quality and content of the program which you completed.

It is often helpful to choose a journal before you start writing, and consult its "Instructions to Authors" (usually published in a regular issue of the journal a few times a year).

Co-authors usually include others who made a "meaningful scientific contribution" to the work, often the thesis chair, your advisor and or co-advisor, other committee members, and others outside the University who played a key role in your work.

The thesis examination process does not depend in any way upon whether or not you actually submitted your thesis-based paper to a journal for publication. However, graduation does! Graduation is based on completion of all required coursework with a minimum GPA of 3.00, earning S from thesis evaluation, and based on the thesis having a paper "accepted for publication" in an academic journal or having presented the full paper in an academic "conference with proceedings".

We hope you will be keen to inform the academic, professional and consumer community, especially because someone new to a research field may have a fresh perspective. It will also look good on your CV! Don't let time get away from you: we encourage you to submit prior to your thesis examination.

For work published from your MPH thesis, the name of the Faculty of Public Health must appear on the front page as the student author's home, even if you are employed elsewhere at the time of publication. (Two addresses can be listed if your employment has been relevant to your publication). The student should be first author on any such publication.

The Advisor(s) may be minor authors, having had the opportunity to read and make worthwhile comment upon the publication, and provided they can meet the terms of the journal's author statement.

7.6 Statement of Contribution-ship

In line with policy adopted by numerous journals, the MPH thesis is to include a statement of contributor-ship, which is the preferred term rather than authorship, and usually placed in a section labeled "Acknowledgements". You must acknowledge any help given or work carried out by any other people or organizations. This is in addition to the usual signed statement to the effect that the thesis contains no material that has been accepted for any other degree nor unreferenced material written by another person. If you have sought professional editorial advice, the name of the editor and a brief description of the service rendered should be included in the acknowledgements. Should the professional editor's current or former area of specialization be similar to yours this should be noted.

The contributor-ship statement should cover contributions to: original idea for the project, study protocol, literature search, obtaining data, data analysis, discussion, and editing drafts.

8. Don't Miss Any Steps!

8.1 Checklist

- ❑ Start thinking about a research topic early on in the program, and be open to suggestions and new ideas.
- ❑ Attend seminars, especially those where work on a thesis is presented.
- ❑ Preferably well in advance of the enrolment date, choose a topic that will engage your energy and enthusiasm, and an Advisor with whom you feel able to work.
- ❑ Develop your proposal in consultation with your Advisor and attend a seminars and workshops.
- ❑ Enroll. Remember, thesis students must enroll prior to the beginning of semester, as with all other coursework.
- ❑ Determine whether your research needs ethics approval, and if it does, seek approval from the appropriate Ethics Committee (TU Health Sciences Consortium Research Ethics Committee)
- ❑ For the part-time Thai MPH program, submit your Thesis Proposal to the Program Director before the end of the summer break between the 1st and the 2nd year. For the full-time international MPH program, submit your Thesis Proposal to the Program Director by the end of the 2nd semester. Submission of your Thesis Proposal must include a letter of support from your supervisor.
- ❑ Amend your proposal and re-submit to the Program Director if necessary.
- ❑ Do your research and write your thesis, with regular support and advice from your Advisor.
- ❑ Prepare your paper for submission, in consultation with your Advisor.
- ❑ Submit two paper copies of your thesis, through the Administrative Officer by the prescribed date; and also send in an electronic copy of your title and abstract.
- ❑ Make sure that your Advisor has seen the final version, and provided a note certifying that the supporting documentation is available.
- ❑ Await confirmation of the result of the examination.
- ❑ Meet with your Advisor(s) in order to discuss comments and suggestions in the examiners' report.
- ❑ Submit (electronically) a two-page summary of the final Thesis
- ❑ Apply to the University to receive your degree at the next ceremony.
- ❑ Accept our congratulations. Relax. Celebrate.

- ❑ Seek advice from your Advisor about publishing thesis-based future papers.

8.2 Sample Thesis Schedule for Part-time MPH Program

Semester-1

- ❑ Get ideas
- ❑ Talk to people about your ideas, settings, opportunities
- ❑ Work with your academic advisor to shape your ideas
- ❑ Not later than by the end of semester-1: choose a thesis advisor if different from your academic advisor

Semester-2

- ❑ Look at previous theses in the library
- ❑ Initiate an exploration of the literature
- ❑ Take courses that will help you complete your thesis

Summer

- ❑ Request a thesis committee
- ❑ Develop a formal structure to your thesis and submit a thesis proposal to your committee
- ❑ Obtain committee approval of proposal
- ❑ Complete your literature search
- ❑ Make logistic arrangements
- ❑ Apply to human subjects

Semester-3

- ❑ Pilot test your instrument(s)
- ❑ Start data collection
- ❑ Check-in with the committee
- ❑ Make final arrangements and finish data collection

Semester-4

- ❑ Analyze your data
- ❑ Write up your thesis
- ❑ Write up your journal paper
- ❑ Submit your journal paper
- ❑ Submit your thesis to the examination committee
- ❑ Revise thesis to address committee reviews
- ❑ Work with the education section to complete all details required for graduation

8.3 Sample Thesis Schedule for Full-time MPH Program

Semester-1

- ❑ Get ideas
- ❑ Talk to people about your ideas, settings, opportunities
- ❑ Look at previous theses in the library
- ❑ Take courses that will help you complete your thesis
- ❑ Work with your thesis advisor from the onset of the program.

Semester-2

- ❑ Request a thesis committee
- ❑ Develop a formal structure to your thesis and submit a thesis proposal to your committee
- ❑ Obtain committee approval of proposal
- ❑ Complete your literature search
- ❑ Make logistic arrangements
- ❑ Apply to human subjects

Summer

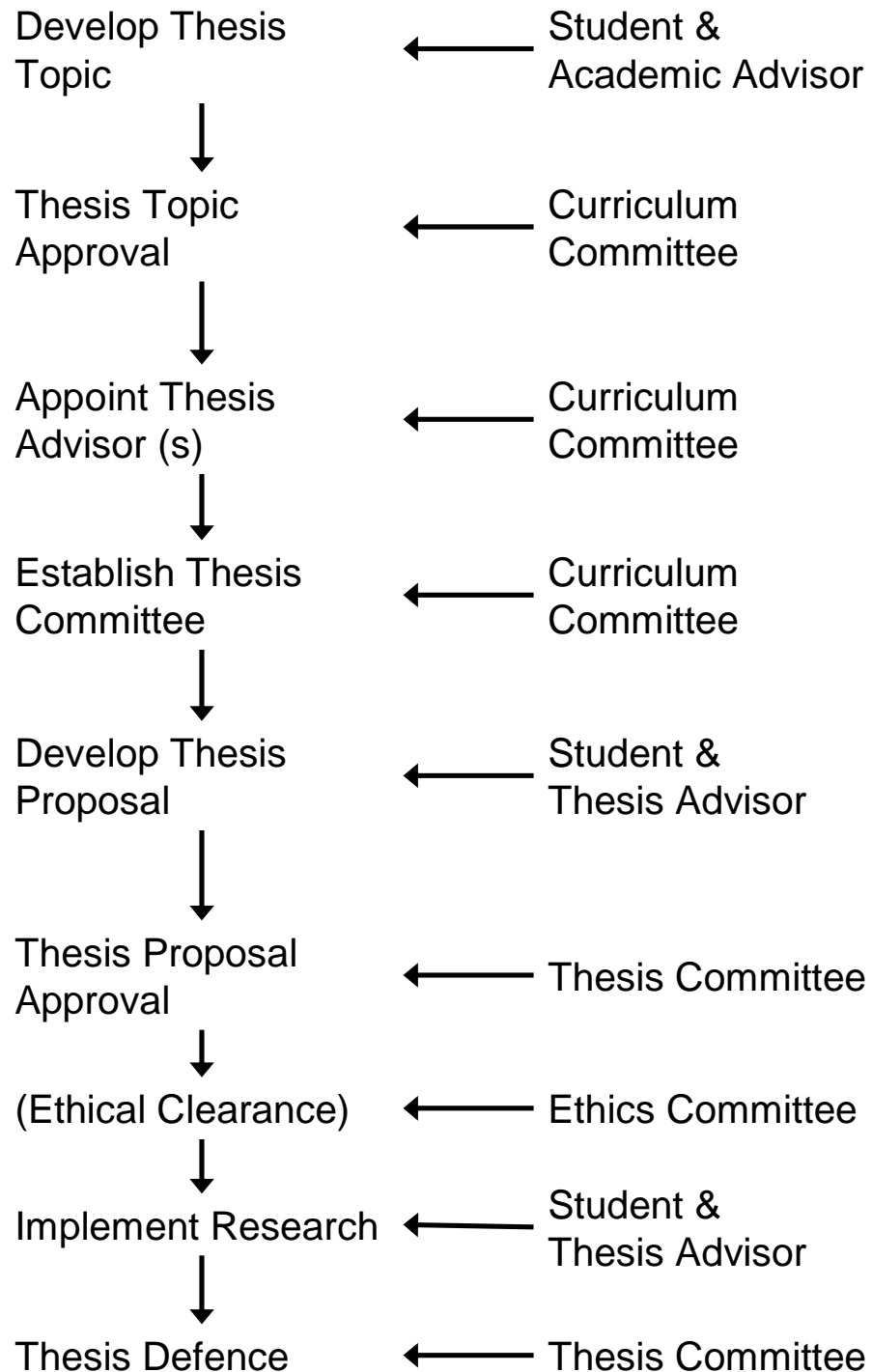
- ❑ Pilot test your instrument(s)
- ❑ Start data collection
- ❑ Check-in with the committee
- ❑ Make final arrangements and finish data collection

Semester-3

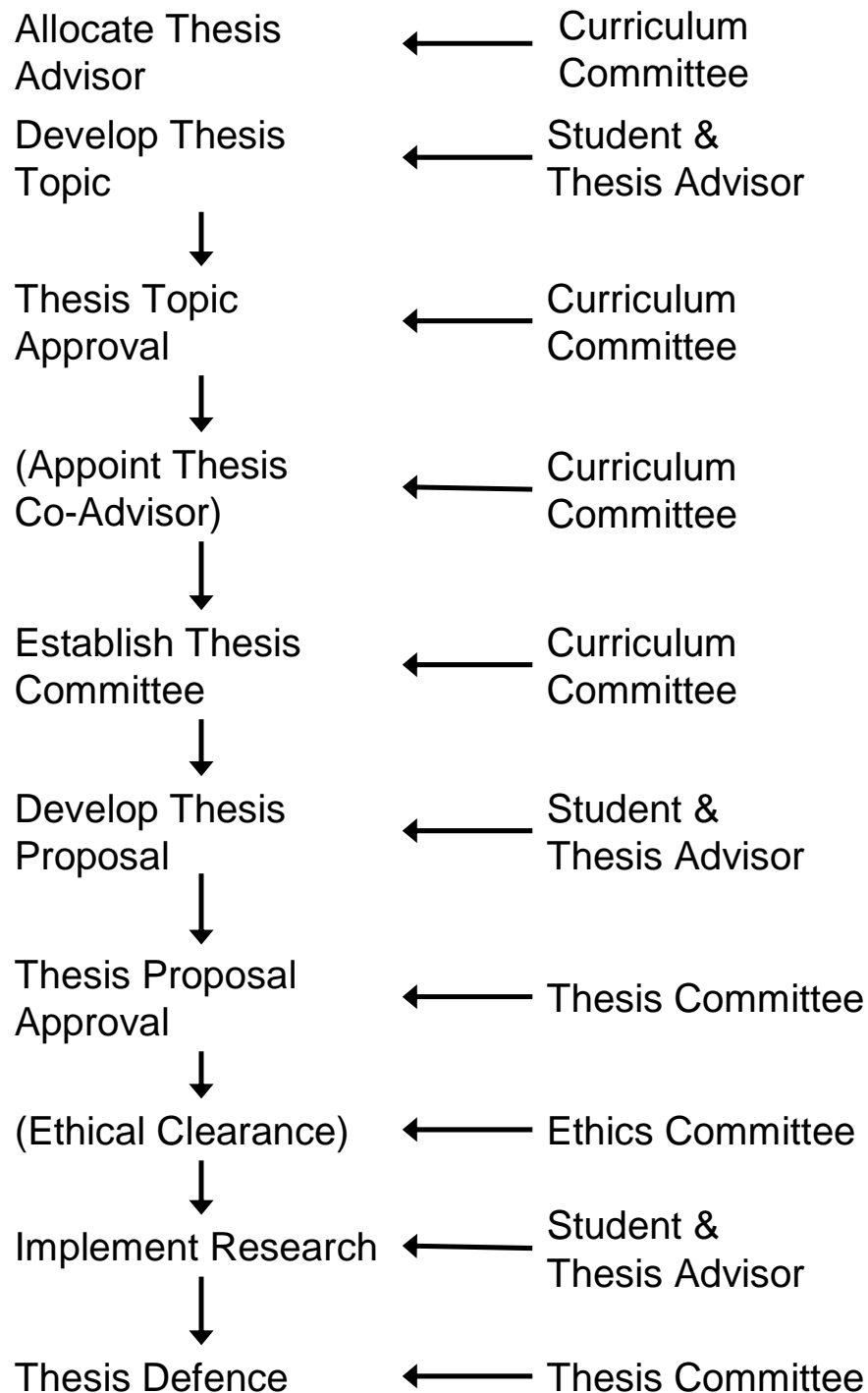
- ❑ Analyze your data
- ❑ Write up your thesis
- ❑ Write up your journal paper
- ❑ Submit your journal paper
- ❑ Submit your thesis to the examination committee
- ❑ Revise thesis to address committee reviews
- ❑ Work with the education section to complete all details required for graduation

9 Appendices

Appendix 1:
A. Key Steps in Thesis Development Part-time MPH Program



B. Key Steps in Thesis Development Full-time MPH Program



Appendix 2:
Support by Advisor on Submission of MPH Thesis Proposal

Thammasat University
Faculty of Public Health
Thesis Advisor Statement

I

support the Thesis Proposal entitled

.....

.....

by who is a MPH candidate

in the Faculty of Public Health, Thammasat University.

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 3:
Certification by Advisor on Submission of MPH Thesis

Thammasat University
Faculty of Public Health
Thesis Advisor Certificate

I being the Advisor of

..... who is a MPH candidate

in the Faculty of Public Health, Thammasat University, certify that I have sighted the documentation supporting the Thesis entitled

.....

.....

and I am satisfied that the documentation is sufficient as the basis for examination.

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 4:
Template Thesis Examination Report

Thammasat University
Faculty of Public Health
Thesis Examiners Report Form

Name of Candidate:

Degree Program:

Thesis Title:

Note for Examiners:

Please refer to Thesis Guidelines: for Students, Advisors and Reviewers for further details.

The award of the degree is based upon the candidate's overall performance, both in the formal course work and in the thesis research project. For the MPH the total course is equivalent to 16 months of full-time study or 24 months of part-time study, of which the thesis represents 28.6% of the total credit hours.

In my opinion the thesis research report is:

- Satisfactory
- Satisfactory subject to minor corrections as listed
- Unsatisfactory, but may be resubmitted in a revised form
- Unsatisfactory and may not be resubmitted in a revised form

Signature:

Examiner's Name:

Title and Position:

Date:

Appendix 5:
Template Thesis Approval Page

Thesis Title

Student's full name

Program

Advisor

Co-advisor (optional)

Accepted by the Faculty of Public Health, Thammasat University in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Master's Degree:

.....Dean of the Faculty of Public Health
Fill in Title, Dean's Name & Qualifications

.....Chair
Fill in Title, Chair's Name & Qualifications

.....Thesis Advisor
Fill in Title, Advisor's Name & Qualifications

(Optional).....Thesis Co-advisor
Fill in Title, Co-advisor's Name & Qualifications

.....Member
Fill-in Title, Examination Committee Member's Name & Qualifications

Appendix 6:
Template Thammasat University's Thesis Cover Page

TITLE IN CAPITALS

Student's First & Family Name without Titles

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Public Health

Global Health Program

Faculty of Public Health

Thammasat University

Academic Year

(use the year the degree is awarded)

ISBN XXX-XX-XXXX-X

© Faculty of Public Health, Thammasat University

Thailand

Appendix 7:
Template Thesis Abstract Page

Abstract

Thesis Title

Student's Full Name

Advisor's Name

Co-advisor's Name (optional)

Faculty of Public Health, Thammasat University Year (use year the degree is awarded)

ISBN

Fill in abstract text. Text should be left justified and single spaced. Do not center or double space this text. An abstract should be no more than 250 words and should succinctly describe your thesis study.

Appendix 8:
Template Original Paper Page

Original Paper

Following original paper is an outcome of this thesis:

Family name & first-middle name abbreviations of authors; Title of the paper;
Journal, volume, number, month, year, & page numbers (for published paper)

Family name & first-middle name abbreviations of authors; Title of the paper;
Journal (Accepted day/month/year)