Master of Education Program

Culminating Written Project Option B

Research Report Guidelines

The Research Report should be a product that is insightful and practical. It should have a potential to make a difference for students in your classroom and/or your institution (i.e., your classroom, school, or a unit). The project should be one that you are **personally** interested in—since you will be ‘living’ and writing about it for a year or more! Because it is a progressive project, remain in touch with your university advisor and field supervisor if needed, right from the start to make sure all are aware of the direction of your project. Moreover, the project should be of benefit to you as an educator.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

**Background:** In this section, provide background information and “introduce” the research report topic. Cite research and literature, and possibly personal experiences to help build a case for your project. The reader should be informed about the general importance of your project.

**Significance of the Study:** In this section you will connect the project to the context of your specific school, district and/or state. Thus, you are moving from a general to a more specific approach. Consider: How and why is the project significant? (Start to ask yourself the “So What?” question throughout the paper—why is this important?) What kind of information do you hope to gain from your investigation on the focused area? How will the new information improve your practice?

**Statement of the Problem (Area of Focus):** Begin this section with a defined and narrowed definition of your particular area of focus in the project: write a specific problem statement (often one or two sentences). For example, your statement of the area of focus might be: “The purpose of this research report project is to investigate the best practice based strategies to develop a school-wide interdisciplinary curriculum. The project will provide additional researching findings to my school’s current efforts.” This clearly defined problem should be the focus of your entire project that you are going to research and “resolve” through your research project. The problem statement will help you decide on the best way to investigate the area of focus in your project and “stimulate” the direction of your research project.

**Research Questions:** Following the statement of the area of focus, you should pose several questions, which will be the focus of the project. These questions will be addressed in your review of literature and subsequent chapters as you seek to resolve your problem.

**Possible Limitations:** Whether limitations need to be stated will depend on the context of your project. For example, limitations may relate to generalizing your results to another situation, the research design, or basing conclusions on very few subjects.

**Definition of Terms:** List and define any terms that the reader will need to know. Remember, you are familiar with key terms because you are living with the ideas daily, a reader may not be familiar with terms that you believe are very common (e.g., EALRs). Cite references related to specific terms.
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW
(At least 40 sources must be included with 15 research sources. Since this chapter is the center of the project, an extensive review of literature on the topic must be ensured.)

Introduction: Write a paragraph or two to describe the basic organization of the research and literature reviewed in Chapter Two. This paragraph will inform the reader of the logical progression of your review.

The Review: The review will cover both educational research and general literature to address the statement of the area of focus and questions raised in Chapter One. Specific research studies (such as those reviewed during your EDUC 520 class) and additional literature will be reviewed in this section. Research studies and literature used should be primarily from the last ten years unless the works are “classics”. The most influential theories on the project topic should be thoroughly studied.

The research and literature will be organized into several major sections for clarity, with headings and subheadings (follow the latest edition of APA style). Your headings and subheadings should make sense on their own, even before the rest of the paragraphs are developed. Thus, there should be a common sense “flow” from study to study, from idea to idea. It is your responsibility to tie the ideas together. Obviously, developing an effective outline, for your own use, before drafting the review section will be critical. Cogent, well-constructed, and logical transitions between and among sections are critical. Again, the review of research and related literature must be logically organized.

It may be appropriate to write about and analyze the classical research studies and studies that examine topics in a more general fashion early on in your review, to provide a foundation and/or background for the more specific studies.

Beyond the research studies, important related literature should be tied to your review (e.g., philosophical points of views, exemplary programs, standards, anecdotal information, personal interviews, excellent articles that are not specific studies, historical records, etc.).

Conclusions or Summary: This chapter will end with conclusions or a summary of your research and literature by concisely reviewing and synthesizing the most important points of the topic and reflections to help lead the reader to Chapter Three (and beyond, depending on the project).

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH ANALYSIS

Introduction: As in Chapter Two, begin with a brief overview noting how the chapter will be organized.

Analysis: In this section, you will demonstrate your analytical and logical thinking skills by conducting a thoughtful analysis of the major concepts/frameworks/models synthesized in Chapter 2. The historical, social, educational and/or psychological perspectives that relate to the topic need to be addressed. Your own points of view in agreement and/or disagreement with the information and/or findings in Literature Review should be logically expressed with convincing arguments. You should provide sufficient evidence (examples of practical actions or bodies of knowledge) to support your viewpoints. Concerns and/or issues with the topic also entail critical discussion.

Reflections: You should report learning you gained through conducting this project. Consider answering the following questions: 1) What new perspective(s) have you obtained? 2) How have you been changed
with the new perspectives? and 3) What is the implication of the new perspective upon your future educational practice?

CHAPTER 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 4 is the opportunity for you to integrate the theoretical learning into practice. You need to come up with some recommendations to your own or your school’s educational practice. You also should set some professional development goals for your continued growth in this area.

REFERENCES

The latest edition of APA format must be used.

APPENDICES

Portfolio and artifacts are highly encouraged to include if they can enhance the validity and effectiveness of your project. If students’ work from your classroom is used, erase names and other identity clues to maintain confidentiality.