

Suggestions for Developing Research Contract and Evaluative Criteria

Each graduate student in the Department of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation must complete a Research Project/Thesis. Projects typically progress over the course of the curriculum and are dependent upon each discipline's timeline. In the first semester, students enroll in the Research Methods class (ATTR 691/PASS 635). In a subsequent semester(s), students enroll in research classes (ATTR 698/699, OCTH 798, PASS 655, PHTH 891). The coursework addresses the conception, methods and procedures necessary to design, conduct, deliver and publish research. A faculty member (from your discipline) will serve as a Chair and must mentor each student through the research process each semester. The purpose of the Research Project/Thesis Semester Contract is for the Student and Chair agree upon and clearly define 1) the steps needed to complete the project and 2) the criteria by which the student will be held accountable. Each Chair Evaluation should reflect the Accountability Criteria described in the Semester Contract.

The Semester Contract is a binding agreement between the Student and their Chair that clearly defines the expectations of both participants. Each Semester Contract should provide a detailed description of the steps required to complete the individual research project and a clear timeline. The more detailed and structured the goals, expectations and timeline, the better. Research projects/theses often require individual timelines. Each Semester Contract should reflect the individual research project. For grading purposes and clarity, each semester contract should address the **Minimum Requirements / Due Dates for Research Project Materials** for the corresponding semester. In the event that these materials are not planned for in their standard semester, please describe the circumstances necessitating the altered timeline on the contract.

Each Semester Contract should include detailed descriptions for expectations regarding:

1. **Goals and Timelines** (as described in the Timeline document)
2. **Review Process** (Time needed by Chair to review [5-7 days])
3. **Accountability Criteria**
 - Describe specific objective standards of performance and the time of evaluation
Examples
 - Monthly / Weekly / Bi-weekly meetings with Research Project Chair to present materials
 - Chair Semester / Mid-Term Evaluation to review progress for specific objectives and criteria
 - **Consequences** - specify positive and negative consequences, what does and will happen as a result of the evaluation. **Include Grading Criteria.**

Students **MUST** allow 2 weeks of “reading time” to the committee prior to proposal and defense.

EXAMPLE of CRITERIA for EVALUATION
Accountability Criteria

I intend to meet with *Professor X* on a *bi-weekly* basis, *Tuesdays at 10:00*. I intend to review with her, my progress on those tasks / materials described on my Semester Contract. I intend to have *Professor X* complete my Thesis/Research Project Chair Semester and Mid-Term Evaluations based on successful completion of my **Goals and Timelines**.

My goals are ‘successfully completed’ if they:

1. are submitted within the timeline indicated and,
2. address each suggestion made on previous reviews effectively

Consequences – I earn 100% of the points indicated for each goal successfully completed. I earn 0% of the points indicated for each goal not successfully completed.

Expectations of my Chair

I expect my *Chair* to be available to meet with me *weekly, Tuesdays at 10:00* to answer questions and help guide me through the research process, review my material, review, share/help locate literature, assist in data collection, reduction and analysis. I expect my *Chair* to evaluate me based on the agreed upon criteria.

Expectations of my Committee Members

I expect my *Committee Members* to be available to meet with me twice a semester as needed and attend my Research Project/Thesis. I expect my *Committee Members* to answer questions and help guide me through the research process, review my material, *review, share/help locate literature, assist in data collection, reduction and analysis*. I expect my *Committee Members* to evaluate my material honestly and fairly.

Material / Document	Due-Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-Page Review of Literature (referenced) 	Due to me 9/19 Return 9/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline Review of Literature 	Due to me 9/28 Return 9/30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Literature (1st Draft) 	Due to me 10/18 Return 10/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Literature (2nd Draft) 	Due to me 11/7 Return 11/11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Literature (Final) 	Due to me 11/26 Return 12/1