

California State University, Long Beach  
Department of Health Science  
Master of Public Health – Thesis Option

# THESIS GUIDELINES





How much will completing a thesis cost?

The cost of completing a thesis is contingent upon a number of factors. For example, some organizations with secondary data sets may require a fee for use of their data; some projects using primary data collection may require the use of incentives; students may choose to buy statistical software to analyze data off-campus; among others. There are also costs related to submitting the thesis to the Thesis Office (e.g., open access publishing, copyright registration, hardcover printing, etc.); since these submission costs change with time, students must check with the Thesis Office to find out current costs. Internal and external scholarships and other funding opportunities exist to cover research expenses (e.g., one internal mechanism available to support thesis students during the Spring 2018 semester was the Marion Pollock Scholarship). It is the student’s responsibility to seek out and apply for funding, should this be necessary.

Can students really balance completing the required internship hours and completing the thesis requirements?

Yes, thesis students have successfully balanced both requirements. Previously, students have noted that if they only enroll in internship units and no other coursework, this has provided ample time to complete their internship hours while working on their thesis. The student should

If a student successfully completes HSC 590 but no longer wishes to pursue a thesis, they must obtain approval from the Department Chair and Graduate Director to change to the Comprehensive Exam option. Moreover, if a student initially wanted to take the comprehensive exam but decides after their first year that they want to complete a thesis, the student must understand that their graduation timeline may be delayed.

What deadlines are applicable to the thesis?

The student should be aware of the University deadline for submission of the thesis. In order to ensure respect for everyone’s time and schedule, all committee members must have a **minimum of two weeks to review** any thesis content. In addition, the Health Science Department has an internal deadline for completion of the thesis. All final edits to the thesis after the thesis defense must be completed **one week prior to the University deadline**. Students should be aware that submissions past this deadline may be accepted but their graduation most likely will be delayed until the following term. Students not in compliance with this internal deadline should make all necessary financial and per(e)10.5 ( al)2.6 (l)25.9 (e)10.5 ( t)-6.6 (ha)10.5 (t)-6.6 (n ( a

## Department of Health Science – Master’s in Public Health – Thesis Guidelines

As stated above, besides the Thesis Chair, at least one of the two remaining members must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty from any CSULB Department. The third member must be someone with a master’s degree or higher (e.g., lecturer or professional who can provide content expertise).

The committee is approved by the Department Chair. Appendix D shows the form that must be completed when the thesis committee has been formed.

Is there a list of eligible Thesis Chairs for the H SC Department?

Please see Appendix B for a list of tenured or tenure-track faculty in the Health Science Department.

How should a student approach someone to be on their thesis











**Appendix A:**

**Suggested Thesis Timeline**

You have decided to pursue the thesis option...now what? Following this timeline should keep students on track to graduate within 2 years. The timeline is based on a two-year schedule for students who start the program in the fall (i.e., Fall-1<sup>st</sup> Semester; Spring-2<sup>nd</sup> Semester; Summer

Public Health 3.004 To

**Summer**

- Data Collection/Acquisition
- Data Analysis
- Write Chapters 4 & 5

**Fall-3<sup>rd</sup> Semester**

- Register for Thesis - HSC 698
- Get







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(Student Signature and Date)

**By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read the CSULB MPH Thesis Guidelines, the student’s Thesis Prospectus, and that you agree to serve on the above-listed student’s Thesis Committee. Committee member agreement to serve on the thesis committee should be re-evaluated after the committee has reviewed the first three chapters of the thesis.**

Thesis Chair (Print Name):  
Thesis Chair Department: Health Science  
Thesis Chair (Sign and Date):

Second Committee Member (Print Name):  
Second Committee Member Department (can be tenured or tenure-track from any CSULB department):  
Second Committee Member (Sign and Date):

Third Committee Member (Print Name):  
Third Committee Member Department/Organization (must have at least a master’s degree):  
Third Committee Member (Sign and Date):

**\*OPTIONAL\***

Fourth Committee Member (Print Name):  
Fourth Committee Member Department/Organization (must have at least master’s degree):  
Fourth Committee Member (Sign and Date):

Fifth Committee Member (Print Name):  
Fifth Committee Member Department/Organization (must have at least master’s degree):  
Fifth Committee Member (Sign and Date):







## **FORM 4**

**Thesis committee member signatures indicate that the student has fulfilled the requirements to proceed with the thesis defense. In other words, there are no major issues with the complete product (i.e., no major issues with methodology, analyses, interpretation, etc), although there may be additional edits needed. Students may show this form to the Department Coordinator for assistance scheduling a date and time to for the defense. Students should also determine times of availability for each committee member before seeking assistance with scheduling.**

Thesis Chair (Print Name):  
Thesis Chair Department: Health Science  
Thesis Chair (Sign and Date):

Second Committee Member (Print Name):  
Second Committee Member Department (can be tenured or tenure-track from any CSULB department):  
Second Committee Member (Sign and Date):

Third Committee Member (Print Name)  
Third Committee Member Department/Organization (must have at least a master’s degree):  
Third Committee Member (Sign and Date):

### **\*OPTIONAL\***

Fourth Committee Member (Print Name):  
Fourth Committee Member Department/Organization (must have at least master’s degree):



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- ” If invited for specific expertise
  - o May take lead in mentoring student on some components of project (holds one-on-one meetings with student, and with Chair, as needed)
  - o Provides detailed support and guidance in area of expertise
  - o Works closely with student to develop drafts related to area of expertise

For all students, a final agreement on the roles and responsibilities of each committee member should be determined as early as possible in the thesis process.

With respect to authorship, a conversation should be had with each committee member to discuss authorship or acknowledgement for posters/papers based on substantive contribution.





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- p. Pledge to understand that if I enroll in HSC 698 but do not complete the thesis, I will not receive credit for HSC 698 units (even if the course was previously completed, your grade will automatically change to a W if a thesis is not successfully completed).

II. As a mentor, I (\_\_\_\_\_) pledge to the following...

- a. Pledge to be clear about goals and expectations
- b. Pledge to reply promptly to emails (within 48 hours during the work week)
- c. Pledge to provide feedback on drafts within 14 days
- d. Pledge to notify you directly and immediately about issues

**Student Mentee Name:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Faculty Mentor Name:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**



Appendix H

**COMPETENCY EVALUATION FORM**

**CSULB Health Science Department  
Evaluation of MPH Competencies for Thesis**

*Students completing the MPH degree must show they have fulfilled at minimum the 8 program competencies that must be met through the thesis project. This evaluation form should be amended to include additional competencies, if relevant. This evaluation form must be completed to confirm all agreed upon competencies have been met.*

*Once the initial evaluation form has been created, this must be submitted to the Program Director to be able to receive a permit to register in HSC 590. The*









## Appendix K

### Thesis Defense Information

#### Requirements and preparation

- x The student must work with their committee to identify the date by when they must provide the full, five-chapter, Chair-approved thesis to all committee members before the defense may be scheduled. This date should not be less than 2 weeks prior to the desired defense date. Once a due date is established, it is the student’s responsibility to meet the committee-approved deadline for submission of the final thesis. If the student does not meet that deadline, they will need to schedule the defense for a later date, and take full responsibility for any consequences (e.g., delay of graduation date) that result from their failure to meet the deadline.
- x Thesis Chair receives approval of the complete thesis from all committee members; approval implies that there are no major issues with the complete product (although there may be edits needed, they would not be considered major issues with methodology, analyses, etc.)

the defense can go forward if and only if the Thesis Chair and one other committee member are present, and the Department Chair approves this exception. If a committee member needs to join virtually (i.e., via phone, Skype or Zoom), that is acceptable. **If the Thesis Chair does not show up, the defense must be rescheduled.**

The total time for the defense may take up to 3 hours to complete. The thesis defense will commence with a PowerPoint presentation (usually 30-45 minutes, but no more than one hour) that covers all 5 chapters of the thesis. General questions from the audience and committee members can be taken during or after the presentation (the Thesis Chair can decide which is preferred).

The private oral defense exam portion will then commence (this component may take up to 2 hours). During the oral exam, the student will answer a series of exam questions that were developed by the committee members. The purpose of these questions is to assess comprehension and attainment of key learning outcomes, and to provide clarification on the content of the presentation and/or thesis. The exam portion is led by the Chair, who may choose to structure how the questions are asked (i.e., order, who will ask the questions, etc). The Chair should inform all committee members and the student of their preferred structure PRIOR to the defense. After the last question is answered, the student will be temporarily excused. The committee will confer privately on whether or not the student passed the defense and what edits are needed for final approval of submission of the thesis. The possible outcomes are: passed, passed4.3 (t)-6.6ie:ie:/.6 (f)-6.7 (i)2.7 941 TD(1-6.6 (c)-2 (s (a)10.5 .283 0 TdC7p54)10.5 ( f)-6.6 (o)10.6 (r)-( ar

**DURING THE EXAM**

- x Presentation of the thesis (30-45 minutes)
- x General questions from the audience (5-15 minutes)
- x Student and guests are excused
- x Committee meets privately to organize questions and related issues for the exam portion (5-10 minutes)
- x Student ONLY meets with the committee for the oral examination (30-90 minutes)
- x Student is excused
- x Committee meets privately to discuss responses, address any concerns, identify any required edits for the thesis, and whether or not the student passed the exam (5-10 minutes)
- x The Chair invites student in to share the results of the oral defense and discuss any required edits, provide feedback, student asks additional questions, etc. (5-20 minutes)
- x Defense is concluded

**AFTER THE EXAM**

- x If result is Pass with no edits, attain signatures and submit to Thesis Office
- x If result is Pass with contingencies, incorporate required edits, obtain approval, obtain signatures, submit to Thesis Office
- x If result is Fail, student must work with their Thesis Chair to prepare a second defense