Department of Public Health

Thesis Guidelines and Requirements

Updated September 2014
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Introduction

A Thesis is a well-written document that describes an independent research activity undertaken to explore some problem or topic of interest to the field of public health. The goal of this activity is to add new knowledge to the discipline and to demonstrate that you are competent and worthy of having an advanced degree within the field of public health.

It might be helpful to conceptualize the Thesis as a voyage that must visit certain specified ports in a prescribed period of time. The Thesis Proposal then becomes the plan for the voyage. Obviously, the more precise the plan, the more successful the voyage will be. The voyage analogy helps to illustrate the difference between the Thesis Proposal and the final Thesis. Prior to actually leaving on the voyage, the traveler ideally makes a plan for travel. The plan is developed before the departure because there is little benefit in devising a plan after the voyage is completed. In a similar manner, the Thesis Proposal is a plan for an academic excursion. The Thesis Proposal is like an itinerary with tickets and reservations. Once the proposal has official approvals the academic voyage can begin. The Thesis is evaluated based on its congruency with the Thesis Proposal, previously approved by the Thesis Advisor, Second Reader, Department Chairperson and Graduate School Dean.

In addition to this document, Graduate School guidelines for Thesis project can be found at https://www.southernct.edu/academics/graduate/research/student-research/thesisinformation.html. These documents are essential for the successful completion of your Thesis. You must obtain these documents when you begin your Thesis, read them thoroughly, and keep them readily available throughout the process of conducting and writing your Thesis Proposal and final Thesis.

Thesis Eligibility

To be eligible to enroll in Thesis Seminar I (PCH 590) you must:

• be a matriculated student in the final year of study for the M.P.H. degree,
• have completed all public health core and specialization courses as specified in the Planned Program (*note: PCH 548 Public Health Administration and PCH 586 Health Promotion Methods & Strategies are taken concurrently, in the fall semester),
• possess a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 for all courses completed toward the degree,
• have achieved a grade of "C+" or higher in each course taken toward the degree,
• submit an Application to the Coordinator of Graduate Studies by the due date. Upon approval of this application each student will receive a letter indicating the name and contact information for the assigned Advisor for Thesis Seminar I (PCH 590) and Thesis Seminar II (PCH 591).

To be eligible to enroll in Thesis Seminar II (PCH 591) you must:

• have completed an approved thesis proposal and received a letter grade of at least “C+” in PCH 590.

Thesis Requirements

1. You must select a Thesis topic significant to public health which may include one of the several Thesis types approved by the Graduate School. These are described in the SCSU School of Graduate Studies - Revised Thesis Proposal Requirements and Guidelines available on the Graduate School website.
2. Your Thesis must demonstrate that you have mastery in the field of public health, can apply appropriate theory and research methodology, can use relevant bibliographic techniques and report research results in a manner worthy of submission for publication in refereed professional journals.

3. The Department of Public Health has instituted a three (3) draft maximum for each section of your Thesis Proposal and final Thesis. Should the third draft of any section be rejected a grade of “F” will be assigned for PCH 590 or PCH 591 and you will be required to retake the affected course by registering for PCH 590 or PCH 591 during a subsequent semester.

Research Involving Human Participants

By federal law, all research involving human or animal subjects requires prior ethical review and approval by an independent review committee. At Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU), the relevant committee for research involving human subjects is the Institutional Review Board (IRB). No data collection or recruitment of subjects may take place without IRB approval. This requirement includes use of all surveys, questionnaires, tests, interviews, focus groups, recruitment of study participants, and any form of primary and/or secondary data collection involving human participants. Additionally, no vertebrate animal capture, purchase, or research may take place without Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval. IACUC has jurisdiction over laboratory and field research involving all vertebrate animals.

Before beginning a research study, the student should consult with the advisor regarding the procedure for obtaining appropriate ethical review. Copies of the necessary forms and instructions for submission can be obtained from the School of Graduate Studies office or online at http://www.southernct.edu/grad/research/

In cases where research involving human or animal subjects is being performed at another institution, approval must be obtained from that institution’s appropriate review committee(s). Copies of such approval should be attached to the SCSU forms to expedite the review process.

Please note the following procedures:

1. If you are planning to conduct a pilot study as part of your research you will be required to submit a separate IRB application for your pilot study. This application should be limited to the study population and specific methodology that you intend to use for your pilot study.

2. After IRB approval of your pilot study application you should complete your pilot study and then submit a separate IRB application for your actual study which includes a description of your study population and any changes in methodology (e.g. changes in survey questions, data collection procedures etc.) resulting from your pilot study.

3. After IRB approval of this second application you may begin data collection. If any additional changes in methodology are made during the course of your study you are required to file a “Request for Revision” form and obtain IRB approval prior to continuing with your data collection.

The SCSU homepage contains a “Research” link to information, applications, and instructions for the SCSU Institutional Review Board including a link to a required online certification course. The IRB will accept your online certification for a period of 3 years from the date of completion on your certificate. Note: Your IRB application must also include an up-to-date certificate from your Thesis Advisor. You must submit a “Research Completed” form to the IRB no later than 90 days after your research project has been completed.
Integrity of Research and other Scholarly Work

Both the School of Graduate Studies and the Department of Public Health expect the highest standards of ethical behavior on the part of all persons engaged in research, and other scholarly work. Students are required to comply with the following School of Graduate Studies requirements about honesty and integrity in research, as in all scholarly activity. Students are reminded that areas of misconduct in scholarship include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Falsification of data, which ranges from sheer fabrication through selective reporting including the omission of data.
2. Plagiarism, which involves taking and using, as one’s own, the writing and/or ideas of another and ranges from outright stealing to inadequate attribution.
3. Violations of rules to protect patients, research subjects, and other persons and animals, which, while not fraudulent in the traditional sense, are unethical and undermine the integrity of the academic process.
4. The use of commercial organizations or paid individuals to write all or part of the thesis.

Violations of the requirements for integrity of scholarship shall result in a failing grade for the thesis and dismissal from the Graduate School.
The Thesis Proposal (PCH 590: Thesis Seminar I)

The Thesis Proposal is the most crucial part of the entire Thesis process because it determines how smoothly the work involved in preparing your Thesis will proceed. Final approval of the Thesis is largely determined by the clarity, organization and precision of your Thesis Proposal, the actual plan for your Thesis.

The Thesis Proposal is developed as part of your course requirement for PCH 590: Thesis Seminar I. The Thesis Proposal is comprised of the first three sections of the Thesis including the preliminaries. It must be approved by your Thesis Advisor, Second Reader, and Department Chairperson. Once your document has been approved, you must complete a Thesis Proposal Signature Sheet, and obtain the necessary signatures. You will submit ONLY the completed Signature Sheet (not the thesis proposal document) to the Graduate Dean for approval. You must obtain IRB approval for either your pilot study (if required) or actual study prior to submitting your Thesis Proposal signature sheet to the School of Graduate Studies.

You will be assigned a Thesis advisor during the summer prior to enrolling in Thesis Seminar I (PCH 590). Beginning in the fall semester, your Thesis Advisor will be responsible for guiding you in formulating and designing an original Thesis Proposal. During your first meeting with your advisor, you should gain an understanding of how the process for advising will take place, length of time required for your advisor to review documents and how and when contact/communication will be made. Thesis advisors are not typically available during the summer but individual advisors may be able to offer recommendations for work that you can do independently prior to the commencement of Thesis Seminar I in the fall.

A Second Reader will be required for your Thesis. This individual must have experience in the topic area and may be selected from any relevant department of any accredited university, or from a health or health-related agency or organization. If the choice of Second Reader is not from within the SCSU’s Department of Public Health, you are responsible for obtaining, from the prospective Second Reader, a copy of his or her résumé. This résumé must be submitted to your Thesis Advisor who will evaluate the qualifications of this individual to serve as your Second Reader.

Once your Second Reader has been approved you must complete the “Second Reader Form”, obtain their signature, and submit it to your Thesis Advisor by the third week of PCH 590. The Second Reader is an integral part of the Thesis approval process and is one of the signatories of the Thesis Proposal and final Thesis. Therefore, it is essential that the Second Reader be kept apprised of your progress on an ongoing basis.

Special attention should be directed to the following generic time-line for completing the Thesis Proposal. Additionally, your Thesis Advisor will provide you with a course syllabus for PCH 590 (Thesis Seminar I) which may outline additional procedures and requirements required by your Thesis Advisor. The dates indicated for each component of the Thesis Proposal should be viewed as the latest possible dates. Students are strongly encouraged to submit their completed Thesis Proposal at the earliest possible date to allow maximum time for participant recruitment, data collection, analysis, and other tasks required for the completion of the final Thesis document.
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<td>IRB approval obtained</td>
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<td>Second Reader</td>
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*Note: this timeline applies to students who are completing PCH 590 during fall or spring semesters. Timelines will differ for those completing PCH 590 during the summer.
The Final Thesis (PCH 591: Thesis Seminar II)

After gaining approval of your Thesis Proposal by the School of Graduate Studies, your Thesis Advisor will provide you with a course syllabus for PCH 591 (Thesis Seminar II) which may outline additional procedures and requirements required by your Thesis Advisor. You must work closely with your Thesis Advisor to set up a specific timeline for your project. You are strongly encouraged to submit your completed Thesis at the earliest possible date to allow maximum time for revisions, approvals, and signatures.

It is highly recommended that your timeline include specific dates for completion of the following:
1. Results
2. Discussion
3. Conclusions
4. Revised Thesis Proposal document including preliminaries, appendices and references
5. Review of the final Thesis by Thesis Advisor and Second Reader
6. Obtain signatures on final draft of Thesis
7. Submit final Thesis to the School of Graduate Studies

Template for Timeline for PCH 591: Thesis Seminar II *

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*Note: this timeline applies to students who are completing PCH 591 during fall or spring semesters. Timelines will differ for those completing PCH 591 during the summer.
Roles and Responsibilities

Author/Investigator
The graduate student enrolled in Thesis Seminar I (PCH 590) and Thesis Seminar II (PCH 591) is solely responsible for completing and submitting the Thesis Proposal and Thesis. He or she is responsible for being thoroughly familiar with the Thesis guidelines and requirements of the School of Graduate Studies and Department of Public Health, including all completion and submission procedures and due dates. The student, as author and independent investigator of this culminating document, will be expected to demonstrate mastery of M.P.H. course content and concepts, research methodology and statistical analysis, as appropriate, acquired during the planned program of study. The student is responsible for ensuring that the Thesis Proposal and final Thesis meets accepted standards for scholarly writing, including spelling, punctuation and grammar. In addition, it will be expected that the student will demonstrate the ability to convey his or her thoughts and ideas in an acceptable written style and in a logical and coherent format.

The Thesis Advisor
The Thesis Advisor, who must be a member of the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Public Health, accepts and assumes the major responsibility to work directly with the student in the research investigation. The Thesis Advisor will work closely with the student in all aspects of the thesis experience, including the development of the research proposal, the implementation of the research design, the analysis of the data, and the writing of the final Thesis. The Thesis Advisor has the responsibility to serve as a gatekeeper for submission to the School of Graduate Studies. The role of the Thesis Advisor is to ensure that the Thesis conforms to the approved Thesis Proposal and that it adheres to the Thesis Guidelines of the Graduate School and Department of Public Health. The Thesis Advisor fulfills these roles by indicating areas of concern in content and/or style, and offering “reasonable” editorial assistance, the extent to which will vary with the Thesis Advisor. It is not the responsibility of the Thesis Advisor to serve as a tutor for course content and concepts, not previously mastered by the student, but instead to guide the student in utilizing skills already mastered from completion of public health coursework. The Thesis Advisor can be expected to encourage and challenge the student to create a written document of the highest quality in content and literary style.

The Second Reader
The Second Reader’s major contribution is to offer commentary and suggestions to the student’s work that will increase the soundness of the overall proposal concept, literature review, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions of the Thesis. Comments from the Second Reader should be returned to the student and shared with the Thesis Advisor. Since the Thesis Advisor has overall responsibility for the Thesis, he or she will have the final say over any differences in opinion concerning proposed changes to the Thesis. If there are major concerns, the Second Reader is encouraged to confer with the Thesis Advisor, as necessary. The Second Reader, selected on the basis of established expertise and willingness to share his or her knowledge and insights, has an important role in the development of the student’s Thesis as a scholarly work. The Second Reader will be expected to review the final draft of the Thesis Proposal and final Thesis and provide a signature upon their approval. This review should take place after the Thesis Advisor has thoroughly reviewed the document with the student.

The Department Chairperson
The Thesis Proposal and final Thesis are forwarded from the Thesis Advisor to the Chairperson for approval and signature. This signature serves only to acknowledge that the Thesis Advisor has indicated that the Thesis is ready for submission to the School of Graduate Studies. The Department Chairperson is not responsible for proofreading the final Thesis for accuracy in terms of content and style. A thesis transmittal form must be signed and included with the Thesis Proposal Signature Sheet and final Thesis
document when obtaining the Chairperson’s signature. This form will be made available by your Thesis Advisor.

**The School of Graduate Studies**

The School of Graduate Studies oversees and implements all policies and procedures governing graduate theses and publicizes and disseminates the articulation of these policies to the graduate community. The Graduate School approves all Thesis Proposal Signature Sheets and final Thesis documents. The final Thesis document will be reviewed for compliance with the current version of the *SCSU School of Graduate Studies Guide to Formatting Your Thesis, Special Project Proposal, or Dissertation*. If the final Thesis does not fully comply with these guidelines, the document will be returned to the student for corrections and re-submission. The Thesis Advisor, Second Reader, and Department Chairperson must re-sign the Thesis signature sheet each time the Thesis is submitted to the School of Graduate Studies. The Graduate Dean is the final person to sign and approve the Thesis Proposal Signature Sheet and final Thesis. The student will be notified of approval via postal mail.

It is important to allocate adequate time for individuals to review documents and provide signatures. Most full-time faculty contracts end on May 31st and do not begin again until the third week in August. Students are advised to consult with their Thesis Advisor in advance to develop a plan for any work that must be completed during the summer. If a student has not submitted a final Thesis document to the School of Graduate Studies by the end of the spring semester they are required to re-register for PCH 591 either during the summer (if both student and advisor are available) or the following fall semester.

**The Thesis Document**

All guidelines for mechanics of presentation for your Thesis Proposal and final Thesis are provided in the most current versions of the guidelines referenced in the introductory section of this document. The pages that follow provide the specific headings and subheadings required by the Department of Public Health.

The Thesis Proposal must be written in future tense. For the final Thesis document, the Thesis Proposal must be revised into past tense and edited to include changes that occurred in methodology and updates in the literature review.

Students are cautioned to NOT utilize previous thesis documents for guidance with style and format requirements. The 6th edition of the APA manual was published in 2009 and this introduced substantial changes in format requirement for the Thesis document. Additionally, the School of Graduate Studies made substantial changes to the *School of Graduate Studies Revised Thesis Guidelines* document in 2010 and again in 2011.
Department of Public Health Thesis Headings

Introduction

Background
This should be a discussion of your topic of study placed in a public health perspective. Identify the target population and include a rationale for its selection.

Statement of the Problem
The statement of the problem is a clear and focused discussion of the specific issue/problem that will be addressed by your study. Consider conceptualizing the problem in terms of knowledge gaps between the theoretical and practical aspects of the problem; more or better knowledge needed in the problem area; present knowledge in the problem area that needs validation; current practices concerning the problem that need to be clarified; and/or, a solution to the problem that needs to be found. The problem should be recognized as substantial by most individuals engaged in professional public health practice in your particular chosen area of study.

Research Question(s) and/or Hypotheses
Typically, a research proposal will either have specific research questions or stated hypotheses. These are explicit statements in the form of a research question(s) or hypothesis(es) statement(s) that your study will address. They do not speak to all the sub-topics that may be covered however, they should provide a specific and concise synopsis of the primary purpose of your study. Such information will allow the reader to understand the subsequent chapters of your study without the nagging sense that the main objective has yet to be stated.

Definition of Terms
Your Thesis must include stated meanings of study-specific language as they relate to your study, including definitions for specific variables. Each definition must include appropriate reference citations. Terms should be listed in alphabetical order.

Limitations of the Study
Limitations are potential weaknesses that exist in your study related to your choice of research design or methods of sampling, data collection or analysis. For your Thesis Proposal you should describe the limitations related to your proposed methods, identify potential impacts on validity of results, and justify your choices. For your final Thesis, this heading should be removed. Your discussion section will include a discussion of strengths and weaknesses in your completed study.

Delimitations of the Study
Delimitations define the scope of your study. These are the self-imposed boundaries to which your study will be deliberately limited (e.g. specific variables, demographic characteristics of participants, settings, etc.) Describe the delimitations of your study and explain how these delimitations may affect the external validity of your results. For your final Thesis, this heading should be removed. Your discussion section will include a discussion of strengths and weaknesses in your completed study.
**Assumptions (if any)**

An assumption is a supposition, not a fact, about essential aspects of the study assumed to be true for the purpose of designing the study – an inference based on certain observed phenomena or underlying principles (e.g. the assumption that people will respond honestly when given a survey questionnaire). Assumptions may be made knowing that there is inadequate or no evidence to support an explanation that is tentatively inferred, usually as the basis for further study. Assumptions may be essential for your Thesis to be effective in the setting or with the target population you are studying. Assumptions must be realistic, but are made because they cannot be assessed in detail, given the scope of your study. Your assumptions should focus on the problem/issue/question being studied, based on your understanding of the field of study.

**Significance of the Study**

You must provide a statement of the importance of your study to the field of Public Health established from multiple vantage points, including statistical, human and societal dimensions. Because the aim of research is to increase knowledge, you should show how your particular study will do this by discussing what the results will mean to theory and information in the specific area to which the research questions or hypotheses are related. You should also discuss to what extent these results will be useful in solving problems and answering questions in the field of public health. To find the extent to which your study has application to public health practice, you may ask, “Will the results of my study change anything in the field of public health?” You should articulate the value of having answers to the research questions you have proposed for your study.

**Literature Review**

The literature review documents your mastery of the knowledge base you wish to contribute to with your study. It demonstrates thorough knowledge of the research, theory, concepts, ideology, and opinion related to the study topic. It makes the reader aware that the review has been selective and states the criteria for selection. The literature review provides a critical assessment of the reviewed literature relevant to the goals of the study.

The literature review is a thorough compilation of previously published theories, journal articles, documents, historical records, government reports, newspaper accounts, empirical studies and all research pertinent to your topic of study. The literature review should be more than a mere compilation of what others have written. It must include how your study relates to what you learned from the literature, i.e., is your study similar to or different from what others have done, and why? The literature review may also include interviews with persons knowledgeable about your topic with proper citations for interviews, as defined in the APA Manual.

**Introduction**

Your introduction should begin with an opening statement that elaborates on your study topic. Provide a complete list of the major topics you plan to address in your literature review and describe the process used for locating information for this section. Your review of the literature should include a summary of what others have done/written about your topic and what findings they reported. In all instances you must provide a description of relevant theories or models from public health or other relevant fields and documentation of their use in similar or related studies or programs. In addition, it may be appropriate to include a summary of research pertaining to specific aspects of your planned methodology.

**Text (Organized under appropriate headings)**

The text of your literature review should be organized into relevant headings. The length of your literature review will depend on the content and scope of your proposed study and the availability of literature on your selected topic.
Methodology

**Study Design**
Identify and describe the specific type of research design to be used for your study (e.g. cross sectional descriptive survey, randomized controlled trial, ethnography). Identify independent and dependent variables that will be included in your study (if applicable).

**Study Population (if applicable)**
Also referred to as the “sampling frame”, this is a description of all of the individuals who have a chance of participating in your study. This is not the same as the “sample” which is a description of the actual participants who are selected and provide data for your study. Provide a complete description of the study population you have selected and provide a rationale for your selection. Include a complete description of your inclusion and/or exclusion criteria.

**Sampling Procedures (if applicable)**
If it is not feasible to study every member of your “study population” you will need to provide a complete description of the sampling procedures that will be used to select a subset of the study population. Your description should include the correct use of sampling terminology (e.g. specific type of probability or non-probability sampling technique), the approximate number of participants you intend to obtain and a rationale for your decisions.

**Institutional Review Board (if applicable)**
Provide a brief description of the process you followed for submission of your research protocol to the IRB and other appropriate bodies for the purpose of obtaining approval(s) to conduct your study. Include a description of all steps that were followed including applications for pilot studies and requests for revisions. Include a copy of all IRB approval letters in the appendices of your Thesis Proposal. You must obtain IRB approval for either your pilot study or actual study prior to submitting your Thesis Proposal to the School of Graduate Studies.

**Instrumentation (if applicable)**
Provide a complete description of data gathering tools or instruments (questionnaires, surveys, focus group questions and protocols, interview guides, etc.) to be used in your study. Copies of these instruments should have been submitted with your IRB application and should be included in the appendices of your Thesis Proposal.

You should provide information on the reliability and validity of all data gathering tools or instruments that will be used in your study. If you have developed an instrument or adapted an existing instrument for your study it is expected that you provide information on the reliability and validity of these instruments as well. If appropriate, also include a description of how relevant theories or models, as described in your literature review were used to develop the research instrument. Your Thesis Advisor can provide guidance regarding appropriate reliability and validity testing procedures for your particular study.

**Intervention (if applicable)**
Provide a complete description of the intervention or treatment that will be used in your study. Include in your description the steps you have taken to insure that the intervention is delivered in a standardized manner that is consistent and replicable.

**Pilot Test (if applicable)**
Provide a complete description of any pilot testing that will be done (or has already been done if you already received IRB approval and completed this process) as part of your study. Describe how the information obtained in the pilot study will be/was utilized to modify your methods and create a new IRB
application for your actual study. If your research design includes a pilot study you are required to file an initial IRB application for the pilot study only, complete the pilot study, then submit a separate IRB application for your actual study. You may not begin data collection for your actual study until a second IRB application has been submitted and approved. You are encouraged to file the IRB application for your pilot study and complete their pilot study at the earliest possible date. A completed Thesis Proposal is not required in order to gain IRB approval for pilot testing.

Pilot testing may be necessary in order to establish validity or reliability of your instrument(s) or for the purpose of trying out your proposed data collection methods on a sample of participants to assess appropriateness and practicality. Pilot tests should be conducted with participants who are similar to the study population. Pilot tests can provide valuable information regarding cover letters, directions, content, cultural sensitivity, item appropriateness, format, return instructions, materials needed for instrument completion, readability, ease of administration, reliability and validity. The pilot test may reveal unanticipated problems at an early stage, thereby saving time and effort later.

**Data Collection Procedures (if applicable)**
Provide a complete description of specific strategies to be used and procedures to be followed for the purpose of gathering information, facts, data, etc. This should include specific procedures for information gathering such as administration of surveys, observations or interviews. Your description of data collection procedures should provide enough detail to allow the reader to accurately carry out your data collection plans.

**Data Analysis Procedures**
Provide a complete description of methods (including statistical tests and software) to be used to interpret study information and data. Examples of analysis procedures include t-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA), Chi-square test of significance, frequency distributions, correlation coefficient, univariate and multivariate tests, and regression analysis. Examples of statistical software include, SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), SAS (Statistical Analysis System), EpilInfo (available online from Centers of Disease Control and Prevention), and Atlas.ti.

**Schedule of Activities**
Provide a timeline of activities to be completed for your final Thesis. If the schedule of activities is presented as a table in the text of your document it must adhere to the guidelines provided in the current edition of the APA Publication Manual. If you elect to produce a table that does not adhere to APA format you may include it as an appendix and refer to the table under this heading. For your final Thesis document you should revise your timeline to reflect the actual dates of the activities you completed related to your entire Thesis process.

**Results**

**Introduction**
Provide a brief description of the manner of presentation of your study findings organized around the research hypotheses or questions.

**Data Analysis and Results**
Provide a comprehensive presentation of your study findings, organized into specific headings. For quantitative research, descriptive statistics should be presented first, followed by inferential statistics. Large amounts of data should be organized in tables or figures with a number and descriptive title and formatted to adhere to the current APA manual. Any table, chart or figure in your document must be referred to in your text.
Your results should include explicit and detailed descriptions of all findings of your study, including your conclusions related to question(s) and hypothesis(es). Detailed information can be presented in tables, with the text devoted to the main points and significant or especially meaningful results. Also, note if there were any unexpected findings.

**Discussion**

**Introduction**
Provide a description of the content for this chapter and manner in which it is organized. This chapter should not include new results that were not previously presented in chapter 4, nor should it provide a redundant summary of study findings.

**Discussion**
The discussion section should be organized with appropriate headings that provide structure for discussing the results of your study as they relate to previous literature, stated hypotheses, expectations and limitations. Include your impressions of the most significant findings and emphasize expected vs. unexpected findings, those that were consistent/inconsistent with your literature review, and offer possible explanations where appropriate. Describe study limitations, strengths and weaknesses, and where appropriate, disclose plans from the original proposal that did not work out. Describe the extent to which your findings are/are not generalizable to other populations and settings beyond your sample.

**Recommendations and Implications for Public Health Practice and Future Research**
Provide your perspective on the significance and implications of your findings for the practice of public health/community health education. You may wish to reflect on your original statement of the “significance of the study” from chapter 1 and share your ideas for new health promotion strategies, materials, content, or target audiences which you deem appropriate as a result of your findings. You may also wish to share any implementation plans you have for your findings.

Provide your recommendations and advice for future research on this topic. How can other researchers extend upon your work? What recommendations can you offer to future researchers looking to conduct a similar study?

**Conclusions**
Provide a brief summary of the key findings and major discussion points from your thesis.

**Appendices**
You will have appendices for both the Thesis Proposal and the final Thesis. In both cases, you must provide full, high-quality copies of all documents that were referenced in your chapters. In cases where the document is not available in an electronic form, it should be scanned to create and electronic file that can be inserted into your thesis document. Examples of appendices include but are not limited to: 1) IRB approval letters, 2) Data collection instruments or interview guides, 3) Schedule of activities. References must be made in the text of your document to the inclusion of these materials in the Appendices. Do not include letters of permission from organizations or agencies who have supported your recruitment efforts as this could potentially violate participant confidentiality. Appendices should be labeled (A, B, C, etc.) and listed in the order they appear within the document.

**References**
Provide a complete list of all sources cited in the text. All citations in the text and final reference list must adhere to the guidelines provided in the current edition of the APA Publication Manual. The final version of the Thesis Proposal and final Thesis should have one reference list that is presented in alphabetical order.
Procedures for Submitting Documents

Submission of the Thesis Proposal

- Upon completion of your Thesis Proposal, you will submit a Thesis Proposal Signature Sheet to the School of Graduate Studies for final approval. This document is available in the SCSU School of Graduate Studies - Revised Thesis Proposal Requirements and Guidelines. The following steps should be followed in order to complete your Thesis Proposal Signature Sheet:
  1. The Thesis Advisor serves as the gatekeeper for submitting documents to the School of Graduate Studies and therefore must thoroughly read the final draft of your Thesis Proposal prior to providing their signature on the Thesis Proposal Signature Sheet. It is essential that you allocate adequate time for their thorough review.
  2. Once your Thesis Advisor has approved your Thesis Proposal you should forward it to your Second Reader for review. Your Second Reader is also required to sign your Thesis Proposal Signature Sheet.
  3. As a final step, you must obtain the Department Chair’s signature on the Thesis Proposal Signature Sheet. This signature serves only to acknowledge that the Thesis Advisor has indicated that the Thesis Proposal is ready for submission to the School of Graduate Studies. A thesis transmittal form must be signed and included with the Thesis Proposal Signature Sheet when obtaining the Chairperson’s signature. This form is available on the MySCSU group site.
  4. Upon receipt of your Thesis Proposal Signature Sheet, the Graduate Dean will review and sign the sheet and forward a copy to the student and Thesis Advisor.
  5. Thesis Proposal Signature Sheets can be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies at any time however, your grade for PCH 590 is dependent on this submission and approval. If you do not submit your Thesis Proposal Signature Sheet to the School of Graduate Studies prior to the conclusion of the semester in which you are enrolled in PCH 590, you will be required to re-enroll in PCH 590 during a subsequent semester or intersession.
  6. Provide your Thesis Advisor with one print copy and one electronic copy (on CD) of your Thesis Proposal including all preliminaries and appendices. Also provide one electronic copy (on CD) of your Thesis Proposal to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Submission of the Final Thesis

The Thesis Advisor serves as the gatekeeper for submitting documents to the School of Graduate Studies and therefore must thoroughly read the final draft of your Thesis prior to providing their signature. It is essential that you allocate adequate time for your Thesis Advisor to provide a thorough review of your final Thesis. Your Second Reader is also required to sign off on the final Thesis so adequate time must be allotted to receive their feedback and review it with your Thesis Advisor prior to producing your final draft.

The Graduate School reviews each Thesis to see that the requirements of style specified in the Thesis Guidelines of the Graduate School have been met. The Graduate School has general oversight responsibility to assure that graduate Theses demonstrate high quality in content and literary style and will reflect positively on the academic department and the University. The Theses submitted to the Graduate School should be in perfect condition, signed, and ready to be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Dean. Theses judged unacceptable are returned to the student through the Thesis Advisor for correction by the student and re-approval by the Thesis Advisor, Second Reader, and Department Chairperson. The following protocol is to be used for submission of the Thesis.
• Produce a copy of your Thesis in accordance with the specific instructions provided in the most recent version of SCSU School of Graduate Studies - Guide to Formatting Your Thesis, Special Project Proposal, or Dissertation [http://southernct.edu/grad/research/thesisinformation/]

• Adhere to the published deadlines for submission and final approval of your thesis.

• If you do not submit your Thesis to the School of Graduate Studies prior to the conclusion of the semester in which you are enrolled in PCH 591, you will be required to re-enroll in PCH 591 during a subsequent semester or intersession. Your grade for PCH 591 is dependent on Graduate School approval of your final Thesis. If you are still under consideration for approval at the end of the semester your Thesis Advisor will submit an “Incomplete” grade and later submit a grade change form once approval has been obtained.

• When submitting your Thesis to the School of Graduate Studies for the first time, you will be required to complete paperwork and pay a fee to have your thesis published by a publishing agency. This fee includes the cost of producing one hard bound copy of your Thesis that will be kept by the School of Graduate Studies. The specific publishing forms and fees can be found on the School of Graduate Studies website. Please note that payment MUST be in the form of a cashier’s check or money order (personal checks or cash or not currently being accepted). If you wish to copyright your Thesis, the publishing agency identified by the School of Graduate Studies will act as your agent with the Library of Congress Copyright Office. This service is available for an additional fee and described in the publishing document available from the School of Graduate Studies.

• For each submission of your Thesis document to the School of Graduate Studies, you should provide 2 copies of your signature sheet. Include a note requesting that once your thesis is approved, the Dean return one signed copy to you so that you can include it if you elect to have additional thesis copies bound through an outside business.

Tips for converting your Thesis Proposal into your final Thesis

• The initial sections of your thesis proposal were originally written as a proposal for how your study would be conducted. In producing your final Thesis document it is necessary that you rigorously edit your document to update for any changes in methodology that occurred during your study and convert the narrative from future tense to past tense. Your literature review should be updated to include any new information that has become available since submitting your Thesis Proposal.

• If applicable, add pilot test results to the appropriate heading in your methodology chapter.

• Revise your final abstract into past tense, update your methods, and add a summary of your results and conclusions of your study.

• Add to your appendices any additional IRB approval letters that were received as part of your study, including responses related to requests for revisions.

• Precisely follow the format guidelines provided in the current version of the SCSU School of Graduate Studies - Guide to Formatting Your Thesis, Special Project Proposal, or Dissertation available at [http://southernct.edu/grad/research/thesisinformation/]

• Give special attention to the format requirement for preliminaries such as the title page, signature page, acknowledgements, abstract, and table of contents.

Department of Public Health Submission Requirements

Upon approval of your final Thesis from the School of Graduate Studies, you are required to provide your Thesis Advisor with: 1) a copy of your approval letter; and 2) One CD of your full thesis document (saved as one file including preliminaries and appendices). Providing print copies for your Thesis Advisor or Second Reader is left to your discretion.
Supplemental Information Sheet  
(Updated Annually)

Thesis and Special Project Dates for 2012-2013

For students wishing to have a May 2013 graduation date on their diploma:

April 8, 2013
The Graduate Dean has established this date for the initial submission of your final Thesis document to the School of Graduate Studies. If you meet this deadline should have adequate time to have your document reviewed by the School of Graduate Studies, receive feedback or approval, make corrections if they are necessary, and re-submit for approval.

For students wishing to have an August 2013 graduation date on their diploma:

July 8, 2013
The Graduate Dean has established this date for the initial submission of your final Thesis document to the School of Graduate Studies. If you meet this deadline should have adequate time to have your document reviewed by the School of Graduate Studies, receive feedback or approval, make corrections if they are necessary, and re-submit for approval.

Graduation Ceremony
Fall 2012, May 2013 and August 2013 graduates will be invited to participate in the Spring 2013 graduation ceremony.

Thesis Advisor Availability
The Department of Public Health requires you to complete your thesis prior to the end of the semester you are enrolled in PCH 591 or you must re-register for PCH 591 during a subsequent semester. Many Thesis Advisors are not available during the summer months and therefore, if you do not complete your work during the spring semester, you may have to wait until the fall semester to re-register for PCH 591.