



## Thesis/Dissertation: Procedures and Suggested Guidelines

### Section I- Student Considerations

1. Spend some time looking at other theses/dissertations, especially those in your topic area. There is a list of all College of Criminal Justice theses/dissertations in the College Advisement Office (214).  
<http://library.shsu.edu/research/guides/thesis/>
2. Get a copy of the University Thesis/Dissertation guidelines.
3. Choose a topic area, research your topic, develop an outline of the literature and methodology you are considering. Remember you want to have a well thought out proposal before you visit with potential chair of your committee.
4. a) You may have to discuss your thesis/dissertation idea with several faculty members before selecting a chair.  
b) Once you have decided on your chair, speak with him/her about whom should be on the committee as members.
5. Discuss your topic with potential committee members and ask them if they would be willing to serve on your thesis/dissertation committee. The Thesis/Dissertation Committee should be composed of: a faculty member who has substantive expertise and knowledge of the topic and two readers from the College of Criminal Justice— all of whom are voting members. Outside readers may be on committee if appropriate but are not voting members.
6. After speaking with your chair and committee members, arrange an appointment with the chair and present your proposal. Remember they will be more willing work with you if you provide them with a well developed topic. Do NOT go to a professor and say, "do you have any data want to do a thesis/dissertation."
7. Develop an abstract and outline of topic as necessary to complete the committee approval form located on the website
8. Arrange a meeting with the College of Criminal Justice Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies so he/she can approve the committee.
9. Prepare for the prospectus defense. A prospectus is your formal

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### Section III – Graduate Office Considerations

1. Provide students with general directions about the dissertation process.
2. Assist in the registration of students for dissertation courses.
3. Provide

Graduate Office  
College of Criminal Justice  
Sam Houston State University  
Declaration of Thesis/Dissertation Defense\*



As chair of thesis/dissertation committee for \_\_\_\_\_ I certify that the committee has carefully reviewed thesis/dissertation document and that the comments and edits from all the committee members have been included in the defense document and that the student is ready to defend the:  
(please select one)

\_\_\_\_\_ thesis prospectus

\_\_\_\_\_ dissertation prospectus

\_\_\_\_\_ thesis final defense

\_\_\_\_\_ dissertation final defense

Please arrange a room for the prospectus/defense on \_\_\_\_\_ at  
(date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(time)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\* This form should be used for both prospectus and final defenses.