



Project Advisor Agreement Form

I, _____, agree to advise _____
Project Advisor Master's Student

toward completion of the master's project for a period of two semesters from the date signed below. As such, I will fulfill the Advisor's responsibilities outlined in the TCSJ Master's Project Guidelines.

I _____ have read the TCSJ Master's Project Guidelines
Master's Student
and I understand and accept the responsibilities towards completing my master's project. I understand that if I choose to change advisors, I must provide written notice to the advisor (above) and the Director of Graduate Studies. I also understand that if I change advisors, I may need to repeat steps within the process.

Our signatures below confirm our agreement to the aforementioned conditions and attest to the advisor/advisee relationship that we are entering into on _____
Date

Advisor Printed Name Advisor's Signature

☐ I (student) have read and understand the information presented in the Master's Project Guidelines.

Student Printed Name Student's Signature



Master's Project Examples and Criteria

The table below provides some information regarding the most popular master's project options. It is possible that you may have an idea that is not on this list, so be sure to consult with your advisor for guidance in developing your project proposal. Remember that your project counts as a 4-unit course. Projects should reflect the rigor of a capstone project in a 4-unit course.

Project Category	Examples	Notes/Expectations
Curriculum Development	Project Based Learning (PBL) Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Curriculum is one semester (18 weeks), or 200 hours of lesson time.Curriculum is primarily designed by the master's candidate.Be sure to cite any sources used.Include assessments (pre, post, rubrics)Be sure to include a section in your final paper that explains how the curriculum is organized and implemented.
	Thematic Units	
	NGSS Storylines	
Research Studies	Case Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In general, studies are implemented over a 9-16 week period of time.Final paper is five chapters (see Format Guidelines)If you complete a research study, it is very likely you will need IRB approval.
	Action Research	
	Ethnography	
	Narrative	
	Phenomenology	
	Historical Study	
	Descriptive Study	
	Experimental Study	
	Correlational Study	
	Study of Causal Relationships	
Professional Development/ Family Engagement	Parent Nights/Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Workshops should include at least 14 hours with teachers/familiesConsider designing and implementing a needs assessment as part of your project.Include flyers, agendas, emails, and other materials used in your workshops.
	Parent Curriculum Implementation	
	Developing Teacher Resource Websites	
	Developing and/or Implementing a Series of Trainings	



Masters Project Proposal for _____

M.Ed Candidate Name

Please answer the following questions using 1-2 pages so that the project proposal committee can decide on the approval of your proposed project.

Rigor: *What research question will you be addressing? Describe your proposed project and/or the type of research you plan to conduct. What do you hope to learn or change as a result of this work?*

Relevance: *Explain how your proposed project connects to existing research, your coursework, and your degree concentration. How does this project build upon and extend the knowledge within your field of study?*

Relationships: *Describe how your project will affect academic constituents, including districts, schools, students, and the broader educational community. How do you plan to engage these stakeholders as a result of your project?*

Reflection: *Reflect on how your project will contribute to your continued professional growth. How will the process and outcomes support your development as an educational leader or practitioner?*

Graduate Studies Use	
Advisor Approval: _____	Date: _____
Scheduled for Committee Review: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmit by _____	
Committee Members: _____ _____	
Institutional Review Board (IRB) Requirements: <input type="checkbox"/> 1. No research conducted → No IRB <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Simple Survey Administration → No research, no IRB <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Teacher (Participatory) Action Research → Minimal Research (approved by IRB Chair) <input type="checkbox"/> 4. More than minimal risk → Need IRB Board approval For 3 and 4, students must submit a separate IRB form after receiving project approval.	



Master's Project Rubric

Student: _____

Advisor: _____

Students will design and execute a project that demonstrates inquiry, incorporates content from coursework, contributes to the body of knowledge for their focus topic, and makes a real-world difference to schools, PK-22 students, and/or the community. Project must be suitable for presentation and publication.

	1	2	3	4
Scholarship	Relates minimally to TCSJ coursework and mission. Fails to reflect graduate level work with minimal discussion of theory. Summary only - no analysis or synthesis of literature.	Relates somewhat to TCSJ coursework and mission. Rigor reflects some graduate level work with minimal discussion of theory. Offers minimal analysis of literature related to the topic.	Relates directly to TCSJ coursework and mission. Rigor reflects graduate level work with occasional interweaving of some theory throughout. Offers some analysis and synthesis of literature critical to the topic.	Relates directly to TCSJ coursework and mission. Rigor reflects graduate level work with effective interweaving of related theory throughout. Thorough analysis and synthesis of literature critical to the topic.
Academic Contribution	Findings are unclear. Content is not relevant to reform within the education community.	Some findings draw upon the current body of knowledge. Content is minimally relevant to reform within the education community.	Findings somewhat expand and draw upon the current body of knowledge. Content is somewhat relevant to reform within the education community.	Findings expand upon and draw heavily from the current body of knowledge. Content is relevant to reform within the education community. Appropriate for dissemination.
Impact	Little or no evidence of impact.	Findings are not reform oriented and do not tie to real world needs. Results of the project relate minimally to the needs of students and school communities.	Findings make a real-world difference. Results of the project relate somewhat to the needs of students and school communities.	Findings make a real-world difference. Results of the project relate directly to the needs of students and school communities.
Results	Summary/conclusion reflects errors related to the evidence. No implications discussed.	Summary/conclusion reflects minimal understanding of the evidence. Minimal implications to the wider educational community. Minimal understanding of the needs related to reform in education.	Summary/conclusion reflects some understanding of the evidence. Some implications to the individual's practice and/or wider educational community. Somewhat furthers understanding of the needs related to innovation and reform in education.	Summary/conclusion reflects clear understanding of the evidence. Powerful implications to the individual's practice and/or wider educational community. Clearly furthers understanding of the needs related to innovation and reform in education.
Presentation	The presentation was disjointed and confusing.	The presentation did not adequately inform two or more of the categories. The materials were somewhat confusing.	The presentation did not adequately address one of the categories for the audience to make an informed judgment. The materials were fairly organized and informative.	The presentation thoroughly informed each category of the guidelines: Scholarship, Academic Contribution, Impact, and Results. The materials were well organized and informative.



Master's Project Final Reflection

Master's Project Final Reflection for: _____

To receive a "4" for results, your summary and conclusion must reflect clear understanding of the evidence. Additionally, your project must have powerful implications to yourself and/or the wider educational community.

Please review your original proposal as well as your Master's Project to reflect on each of the following:

Goal: *Did you answer your research question and/or address your original purpose? Please discuss.*

Results: *What did you learn and how did you change as a result of this work?*

In what ways is your project related to innovation and reform in education? What did you find in your review of the literature that suggests your project is innovative and addresses needs regarding reform in education?

Have your findings and/or product already impacted the wider educational community? What are your plans for dissemination? What do you see as the potential influence of your project upon the wider community?



Research Format Guidelines

The master's project will be presented as a five-chapter manuscript. It will be written using the *American Psychological Association's Publication Manual, 7th Edition*. The manuscript will be double-spaced on a standard-sized paper with 1-inch margins on all sides. You may choose to use sans serif or serif fonts in either 11-point or 12-point according to the recommendations of the APA. Please include a running head for the project as it is our intention that you write this manuscript following the submission guidelines for publication. It is necessary that you refer to the *APA Publication Manual, 7th Edition*, on how to present tables, figures, charts, and graphs.

The following two formats are guides to prepare your manuscript to follow TCSJ's requirements. Please use the format that most closely aligns to your project – research study or non-research study.

Project Format (for research studies)

Please follow the correct levels of heading for your manuscript.

Preliminary Pages

Title Page

[Use the **Page Break** tool after each of the preliminary pages to start the next page at the top of a new page]

Dedication (optional)

Acknowledgments (optional)

Table of Contents

List of Tables/List of Figures (if applicable)

Abstract

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have "Chapter One" start at the top of a new page]

Chapter One: Introduction

Purpose of the Study

The first part of the introduction should clearly state the purpose of the study. There should be a concise statement of purpose provided in this section. It should encompass some part of TCSJ's mission, core values, or philosophy taught in the master's core courses – 21st century skills, growth mindset, Habits of Mind, rigor, relevance, relationships and reflection, communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity, etc.

Research Question(s) or Statement of the Hypothesis

A clear statement that identifies the precise research question(s) should be included. Each specific measurement to be conducted should be identified.

Significance of the Study

As part of the purpose of the study, there should be justification for conducting the project. This section should exhibit a clear understanding of what makes your study significant and why it should be conducted.

Definition of Terms

A simple list of definitions of terms that directly pertain to this study should be provided. The list should include definitions of terms that might be unclear to the reader and be written in alphabetical order.

Delimitations, Limitations, and Assumptions (if any)

A brief statement identifying the delimitations, limitations, and assumptions associated with your study should be provided.

Delimitations – Describe what factors were controlled by the researcher.

Limitations – State any limiting factors that were not under the control of the researcher.

Assumptions – Explain any assumptions made by the researcher regarding the study.

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have “Chapter Two” start at the top of a new page]

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature review provides the justification for your master’s project. This chapter is where you share information regarding previous research that has been conducted relating to the topic of your project. You should provide a breakdown of sub-topics influencing the processes of the research project. Each sub-topic should contain a thorough examination of the literature that influences or is representative of current research on that subtopic. The literature review should collectively support the process and purpose of the study. A theoretical framework as applicable to the field of study may be included here.

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have “Chapter Three” start at the top of a new page]

Chapter Three: Methods

The methods section is the section that should clearly present each aspect of the process by which the study will be completed. Every attempt should be made to leave no question as to the procedures used to complete the study. Clear justification of the type of study (qualitative, quantitative, mixed, teacher action research, or any other research) is provided.

Setting/Research Site

This section should explain where the research took place. Please ensure all identifying data is removed for the research site and replaced with pseudonyms.

Participants

This section should identify the process for selection, recruitment, and delineation of the participant pool used for your study. Describe who they are and how they were chosen. Please ensure all identifying data is removed for the participants and replaced with pseudonyms.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation section should identify the tool(s) used for collection of data. Explain how the instrument was acquired or created. Discuss the reliability and validity of the instrument (if adapted from research).

Procedures

All aspects pertaining to the entire process conducted should be described. Careful consideration should be paid to approval of methods and treatment of human subjects. All treatments should be carefully described as well as notification of risks for participation (as required with IRB proposal).

Statistical Analysis

Provide a clear description of the statistical process used for analysis of data. The type of statistical tests should be reflective of the research question(s) or hypothesis.

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have “Chapter Four” start at the top of a new page]

Chapter Four: Results

In this section you will only present the results and statistical analysis of the data you collected.

Order of Presentation

Offer your results in the order you presented your research questions or hypothesis.

Descriptive Data and/or Qualitative Data Analysis

Provide analysis of the descriptive data or qualitative data.

Results of Statistical Testing

Give the results of the statistical processes conducted for your study. Provide only the results and avoid offering conclusions or interpretations of the results.

Interpretations of Statistical Results

Offer a summary of the results with foundational interpretations of what the statistics provide.

[Use the **Page Break** function to have “Chapter Five” start at the top of a new page]

Chapter Five: Conclusions/Discussion

This chapter is where you, as the researcher, share your conclusions and discussion of the research.

Summary of Findings

Share inferences and implications that the finding of the study provides to the reader or others who may have interest in the results. This is a time to expound on your results and offer insight into what your study does or does not contribute to the body of information on your topic.

Conclusions Drawn by Results

Identify specific conclusions resulting from your study. Offer specific insight to what your findings reveal. This section should synthesize your findings with the current knowledge in your area of study.

Recommendations for Further Research

Provide recommendations to further research on this topic or how parts of your study could be improved upon. If, because of your study, you found that another topic should be researched to offer more insight into this topic, then suggest that at this time. It is important that this part of your conclusion chapter incorporates the implications of your findings in terms of other research in your area of study.

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have “References” start at the top of a new page]

References

Provide a list of *References* used for this paper. Cite them using the *APA Publication Manual, 7th Edition*.

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have “Appendix” start at the top of a new page]

Appendix (or Appendices, if plural) (if any)

Examples of items which can be provided in the appendix:

- Surveys
- Student assessments, student work
- Interview guidelines and questions
- Demographic data
- Lesson plans that were used for the research study
- Information regarding intervention strategies which may have been used for the research study

Project Format (for non-research studies)

Please follow the correct levels of heading for your manuscript.

Preliminary Pages

Title Page

[Use the **Page Break** tool after each of the preliminary pages to start the next page at the top of a new page]

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List of Tables/List of Figures (if applicable)

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[Use the **Page Break** tool to have “Chapter One” start at the top of a new page]

Chapter One: Introduction

Purpose

The first part of the introduction should clearly state the purpose of your project. It should be a concise statement in this section. Explain what part of your curriculum, professional development, or another non-research project addresses TCSJ’s mission, core values, or philosophy taught in the master’s core courses – 21st century skills, growth mindset, Habits of Mind, rigor, relevance, relationships and reflection, communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity, etc.

Research Question(s)

Clearly state what research questions you have about education which requires you to create curriculum, professional development, or another non-research project.

Significance of the Project

As part of the purpose of the curriculum, share information and research regarding what makes your curriculum, professional development, or another non-research project significant and why it should be built.

Definition of Terms

A simple list of definitions of terms that directly pertain to the curriculum should be provided. The list should include definitions of terms that might be unclear to the reader and be written in alphabetical order.

Assumptions (if any)

Assumptions – Explain what assumptions were made regarding the development of the project.

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have “Chapter Two” start at the top of a new page]

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature review provides the justification for your master’s project. This chapter is where you share information regarding previous research that has been conducted relating to the topic of your project. You should provide a breakdown of sub-topics influencing the processes of the master’s project. Each sub-topic should contain a thorough examination of the literature that influences or is representative of current research on that subtopic. The literature review should collectively support the process and purpose of the project. A theoretical framework may be included here.

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have “Chapter Three” start at the top of a new page]

Chapter Three: Methods

The methods section for this type of project should clearly present the process by which the project was developed.

Participants

This section should identify the specific population for whom the project was created. Identify the age or grade level and demographic group (students who are learning English, students with exceptional needs, teachers, parents, paraprofessionals, etc.) who will use this project. Describe who they are and why they need the contents of the project.

Instrumentation (if any)

Describe any tools that are used to create your project. Did you use a survey to gather some preliminary information? Did you use a platform to create your project? Explain these tools so that anyone who wants to replicate your project may have all the information necessary to succeed.

Procedures

Describe all aspects pertaining to the entire process of creating this project. Explain in clear details the steps you undertook to cultivate your curriculum, professional development, or another non-research project.

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have “Chapter Four” start at the top of a new page]

Chapter Four: Your Product (see description below)

In this section you will only present the product you created. If you created a curriculum, professional development, trainings, or another non-research product, insert it here. The title of chapter four will include the name of your product.

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have “Chapter Five” start at the top of a new page]

Chapter Five: Reflection/Conclusions/Discussion

This chapter is where you share your conclusions and discussion of the project.

Reflection on the Process

Describe your reflection on the process of creating curriculum, professional development, trainings, or another non-research product. What did you learn? How did you grow as an educator? How did you grow as a student?

Conclusions

Identify specific conclusions resulting from the product that was created. Were there any questions that arose from the literature review? Is there any specific insight regarding the development of the project? Can you tie your project back to the literature? Does it answer your research question(s)?

Recommendations for Further Research

Provide recommendations to further research on this topic or how parts of your project could be improved upon. If you found that another project should be done or product developed to offer more insight into this topic, then suggest that at this time. It is important that this part of your conclusion chapter incorporates the implications of the implementation of your project on other research in your area of study.

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have “References” start at the top of a new page]

References

Provide a list of *References* used for this paper. Cite them using the *APA Publication Manual, 7th Edition*.

[Use the **Page Break** tool to have "Appendix" start at the top of a new page]

Appendix (or Appendices, if plural) (if any)

Examples of items which can be provided in the appendix:

- Surveys
- Student assessments, student work
- Interview guidelines and questions
- Demographic data
- Other relevant artifacts
- Supplemental materials



Directions for Project Presentation

You will have a **MAXIMUM of 20 minutes** for the presentation of your project. Please keep that in mind as you thoughtfully prepare and carefully choose what critical information to share. There will be a chance for questions and comments after your presentation. Finally, there will be time allotted for the committee to discuss your project for a final decision of approval. The total time allocated for these tasks is approximately equivalent to one hour. Your presentation may be conducted in person or virtual. You may invite as many people as possible to your presentation – this list **must** include your project advisor, program advisor, a colleague (peer from TCSJ), and a community member.

Please follow these guidelines:

- Prepare a professional presentation. Ensure the text is without spelling or grammatical errors, is correctly formatted to the *APA Publication Manual, 7th Edition*, and the information is comprehensible.
- A creative presentation is highly engaging; however, you can also create a simple one. You may include graphics, pictures, use slide templates, and designs to engage your audience. If you are using graphics from the internet, remember to give credit for the images.
- Minimize wording on slides. Avoid including paragraphs. Use key points, bulleted statements, or short summary sentences.
- Slides should include:
 - A. **Title of Project**
 - B. **Purpose Statement** – What was the purpose of your project? Why is it relevant?
 - C. **Research** – Share key points of the research you reviewed and synthesized (from your literature review). Cite the author(s) in APA format and use no more than 4 slides.
 - D. **Research Question (if available)** – State your overarching question(s) and all sub-questions.
 - E. **Description of Project** – Keep these slides simple and brief!
 - a. **Research** - Describe who were the participants, what did you study and what methods did you use, where did the research take place, when, and how you conducted the research.
 - b. **Non-research** - Describe for whom the project was created, what was developed, and how it is to be used. Share your product (curriculum, professional development, etc.).
 - F. **Results (for research studies)** – Describe your analysis of data and present your results by using tables, charts, and/or graphs.
 - G. **Conclusion** – Summarize your conclusions. Answer your research question(s). How does your project contribute to the literature you reviewed? Are there any implications of your work or your findings? What are your recommendations?
 - H. **Reflection** – Include each bullet below on your last slide(s):
 - a. **What's next ...** *for this study, for you as an educator, and as a graduate student;*
 - b. **Important Lessons...** *from your experiences in your graduate studies at TCSJ*
 - I. **References** – Cite only the references you used within your presentation. Include all research references and image credits.



Sample Title Page

Running head: Abbreviated Title of the Project

The Title of Your Project

Student Name

In partial fulfillment of the
Master of Education Degree
in Concentration
Teachers College of San Joaquin

Advisor's Name

Month Year of Presentation



Sample Abstract and Directions

Directions for development of Abstracts: (250 words maximum)

1. Identify your purpose.
2. Explain the problem.
3. Explain the methods.
4. Describe your results.
5. State your conclusion.

Sample:

Subtype of Autism: Developmental Verbal Dyspraxia

The purpose of this research is to identify a subtype of autism called Developmental Verbal Dyspraxia (DVD). DVD is a motor-speech problem, disabling oral-motor movements needed for speaking. The first phase of the project involves a screening interview where we identify DVD and Non-DVD kids. We also use home videos to validate answers on the screening interview. The final phase involves home visits where we use several assessments to confirm the child's diagnosis and examine the connection between manual and oral motor challenges. By identifying DVD as a subtype of Autism, we will eliminate the assumption that all Autistics have the same characteristics. This will allow for more individual consideration of Autistic people and may direct future research on the genetic factors in autism.