

Master's Thesis Processes for NP Psychological Science MS

(by Glenn Geher; 10/1/2025)

- Meet with potential advisor about idea. **(timeline: ideally spring of your first year)**
- Put together a 2-3 page prospectus and go through revisions with advisor.
- Once advisor approves it, talk to advisor (ALWAYS FIRST) about potential readers.
- After agreement is achieved, send prospectus to readers—give them two weeks and meet with them and address questions as needed.
- Expand prospectus into a full-blown, APA-stype proposal document (usually about 12-20 total pages with about 20-ish references)
- Review with advisor until it is cleared for dissemination.
- Send approved version to readers—ask them if it is OK to set up preliminary defense. **(timeline: ideally near end of spring of first year or early in Fall of second year)**
- After they give green light, book a 90-minute slot for a preliminary defense meeting (book WH 360 via the Psych admin assistant)--give people 2 weeks for this process (so book the meeting two weeks out or more).
- At meeting, have a 10-15 slide presentation ready (it will essentially repeat your proposal).
- You will be asked questions of full committee and then asked to (somewhat awkwardly) leave the room. They will discuss the project behind your back and then invite you back.
- Revisions will be suggested.
- Work with your advisor on the revisions and then you can start to fill out appropriate HREB form.
- Clear that work with advisor before submitting.
- When HREB approves it, congrats, you can start to collect data (usually via Qualtrics). **(timeline: Ideally by about November of your second year)**
- Once data are fully collected, meet with advisor and work on data-cleaning process.
- Conduct analyses (under guidance of advisor).
- Write Results section draft. **(timeline: Ideally by about early February of second year)**
- Get feedback from advisor.
- Integrate Results into draft of final report (build a full APA draft—using some content from Proposal).
- When draft is given green light by advisor, disseminate to readers.
- Meet with them if there are questions, etc.
- When you get green light from all, book final defense meeting (two weeks at minimum out). **(timeline: ideally by about late March or early April of second year)**
- Prepare slides as you did for preliminary meeting (which should be booked for 90 minutes).
- Most students will get a “minor revision” which means that you’ll need to make changes with advisor.
- Once changes are made, then do all the paperwork to submit that, get signatures, get thesis grade changed, submit to library, and anything else required from the program

and university. **(timeline: Ideally before the end of spring semester of your second year)**

Note that these tips, guidelines, and timelines are specifically from Glenn Geher and may differ in minor ways from other sources—these are all just guidelines and not obligatory rules per se.