

Warner Graduate School of Education & Human Development

Educational Leadership: Higher Education Program

Guidelines for Completing a Higher Education Master's Degree Paper

Master's students in the Higher Education program have the option of completing a Master's paper in lieu of the culminating case study. This document provides general guidelines for doing so.

Registration: Students must register for ED 493 (3 credits) which will count toward the total 36 credit degree requirement. The paper is intended to be completed in one semester, generally during the final semester of the program unless otherwise approved by the student's faculty advisor.

Master's Paper Advisor: The student is responsible for finding a Master's paper advisor who is a member of the Warner School Education Leadership Higher Education faculty. The Master's paper advisor will work with the student to develop the project and to conduct the evaluation of the project upon completion. The advisor is responsible for reporting the student's successful completion to the Office of Academic Services of the Warner School.

Content: The paper generally will be a review and critique of a body of literature; a sustained well-supported argument for a position or proposition relating to a current or emerging issue in higher education (e.g. a matter of educational policy), a historical analysis, or other relevant topic. Students may undertake a research-based study if the student has appropriate research skills, project support, and the project fits the necessary timeframe.

Format: The intent of the paper is for the student to provide the quality content necessary to support the topic, thus there is not a fixed length requirement for the paper. Typically papers are 25-40 pages in length. The paper must use proper APA master's paper format (double spaced, citation and reference list format, etc.). The paper's general structure must include a title page, abstract, introduction, literature review, conclusions and reference list. Additional APA sections may be included as appropriate to the topic (e.g. table of contents, table or list of figures, appendix).

Evaluation: The Master's paper will be assessed for content, logic of the argument, the use of appropriate evidence, writing style, grammar, punctuation and appropriate use of APA style. The final grade for the Master's paper will be either an "S" (pass) or "E" (fail).

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