# Creative Project Handbook

Master of Arts (MA)

Master of Education (MEd)

Master of Learning Technology and Instructional Design (MLTID)

Department of Instructional Technology & Learning Sciences
Utah State University

# CREATIVE PROJECT REQUIREMENTS
## FOR
## INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY & LEARNING SCIENCES (ITLS)

(A guide for writing the proposal and summary)

The MA, MEd and MLTID degree options allow you to produce a creative project in lieu of a formal thesis. Your Chairperson is responsible for approving, monitoring, and signing off the work completed for the requirement. The process begins with writing your proposal, as outlined and described below. Note: if you are taking ITLS 6960 as a cohort based class experience, the instructor will take on the role of Chairperson for the purposes of this document and act as a mentor for your Creative Project. All of the steps described below will be built in as a part of the course experiences.

1. Select a project that will permit you to demonstrate a broad variety of skills and knowledge developed during the course work phase of your master's degree program. The scope of the project must include the ability to demonstrate mastery of pertinent theoretical foundations and relevant literature. Your project can include the full range of design efforts, including design models, analyses and all the way through development skills, implementation, and evaluation.

2. Conduct a review of literature in areas that support your selected creative project. In addition to the context areas, include the theoretical (broadly defined to encompass both learning theory and instructional design theory) as well as the empirical (any research that incorporates broadly defined data collection and analysis, including quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, and design based research).

3. Prepare a proposal that meets the requirements outlined in this handbook. If completing your project in the cohort based class, this will be completed as class assignments.

4. Submit the proposal for approval to your Chairperson allowing a **minimum** of one week for review.

5. Schedule a meeting with your Chairperson for discussion and approval of the proposal. Meetings can be face to face or at a distance, and take place synchronously or asynchronously. You must have an approved proposal before proceeding with your project.

6. Carry out the approved proposed project with the highest level of professionalism. A log of activities, insights, costs, resources, and time should be maintained. This record should be used in the preparation of the summary.

7. During the process, consult with your Chairperson as needed.

8. Upon completion of the creative project, prepare a 4 to 7 page summary following the outline provided in this handbook. Submit the summary for approval to your Chairperson. An alternate to the summary is a manuscript for an article about your project to be submitted to a professional journal. You should discuss these two options with your Chairperson.

# CONTENT OUTLINE FOR

# CREATIVE PROJECT PROPOSAL

| Sections | Appropriate Length |
|---|---|
| Cover Sheet (Title Page) | See example page below |
| 1. Introduction | ½ - 1 page |
| 2. Problem Statement | 1 - 2 pages |
| 2.1. Statement of problem | |
| 2.2. Definitions (when appropriate) | |
| 2.3. Needs Assessment | |
| 2.4. Assumptions | |
| 2.5. Limitations | |
| 3. Purpose and Objectives | 1 page |
| 4. Theoretical Foundation(s) | 1 page |
| 5. Review of Literature | 2 - 3 pages |
| 6. Procedures and/or Methodology | 1 - 2 pages |
| 6.1. Procedures/Methodology | |
| 6.2. Timeline with milestones | |
| 7. Reporting/Implementation Process | ½ - 1 page |
| 8. References | 1 - 2 pages |

Total length 8 – 13 pages

## FORMAT

The proposal should follow the writing standards outlined in the current *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA). The APA manual describes and provides examples of current forms for citing references in text, listing references, headings, etc.

Margins, pagination, and typing standards should follow those outlined by the Utah State University School of Graduate Studies Publication Guide. It is available online at:
http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/thesis-dissertation-requirements/

# WRITING THE PROPOSAL

The purpose of the creative project is to provide an opportunity for you to make a practical application of knowledge to the improvement of a teaching/training skill or other interest for professional improvement. You should develop the proposal in cooperation and consultation with your Chairperson.

A written proposal for the creative project is necessary to avoid misunderstandings and to protect your best interests, the ITLS department, and the University. In effect, the proposal has many of the attributes of any good contract. It should specify in adequate detail all of the important facets to be completed. The proposal provides a record for both you and the Chairperson of the specific nature and extent of the experience agreed upon.

In general, the proposal should include the following types of information. It is appropriate to include headings that identify each of these sections. Note: if you are taking ITLS 6960 as a cohort based class experience, the instructor will take on the role of Chairperson for the purposes of this document and act as a mentor for your Creative Project. All of the aspects described below will be built in as a part of the course experiences.

## Problem Statement
The purpose of this section is to present the problem to be addressed by the creative project. Problem statements are usually derived from concerns for professional improvement of a program or system, based on your own experience. An overview of pertinent literature on the topic, in which you identify professional knowledge in the area of concern, is also vital. Identification of desired <u>and</u> existing conditions and the knowledge available should lead to a clear problem statement often expressed in terms of a "lack." It is frequently a good practice to consult secondary sources of information such as *Review of Educational Research, Encyclopedia of Educational Research,* or *Review of Research in Education.* Reading secondary sources not only provides a good overview of topics that might be of interest, but also can aid you in becoming more clear about the problem outlined in your proposal.

## Purpose, Objectives, Questions
Once a problem has been clearly stated, you should explain the purpose of your project and the manner in which the problem will be addressed (ameliorated) by the proposed experience. The purpose is stated as a global goal. **The rest of the section is optional.** Objectives may be used to subdivide the purpose into meaningful units or processes. Objectives might also be stated as intended outcomes of the experience, providing a basis for evaluation. Questions to be answered during implementation activities may be included in place of *or* in addition to the objectives.

## Theoretical Foundation(s)
You should align your work with 1-2 theories that will inform your efforts. These can be instructional design theories (such as Roger Schank's Case Based Reasoning) or they can be learning theories such as behaviorism, cognitivism, situated cognition, constructivism or constructionism to name but a few. Carefully justify your choice of theory based on your problem statement and purpose.

**Review of Literature**
The purpose of the review of literature is to support the problem and purpose sections with relevant information. The review of literature should be comprehensive enough to demonstrate your familiarity with major related research. Begin with a plan of where you plan to search, what key words you intend and what you want to discover, then conduct a brief synthesis of the literature you found. You might investigate research related to your target population, learning outcomes related to your chosen learning or instructional design theory, interventions that align with your own ideas, or any other pertinent articles. Some of your literature review can be devoted to literature review articles but the bulk of your efforts should be focused on empirical (quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, or design-based research) articles which collect data, perform analysis and present findings or results.

**Procedures and/or Methodology**
In this section of the proposal, you should describe the steps to be taken in completion of the project. An attempt should be made to be specific enough to communicate to the Chairperson the extent of the work to be done in completing each step. An adequate description of the procedures to be followed will anticipate most of the questions that your Chairperson might raise about the sequence of activity, populations, and/or materials involved in development and evaluation of the project.

A time line specifying the projected sequence and date of completion of the various steps is helpful to both the Chairperson and to you during the completion of the project. A Gantt chart is recommended, but not required.

Judging the value of the completed project is critical to decision-making about ways in which the process could be improved and whether it merits continued use. A description of the procedures to be used in evaluating the project should be included. The evaluation should be structured to measure the success of the project and to identify areas in which it might be improved. If the experience adequately completes the steps outlined in the approved proposal, it will be judged a success even though major unanticipated flaws are identified as a result of the evaluation.

**Reporting/Implementation Process**
The project will be reported in written form. It can be in the form of a brief summary (4-7 pages) indicating the results of the project/experience. A second written option is to prepare a manuscript for submission to a professional journal for publication. Your proposal should include a brief description as to how the results will be reported (summary paper or manuscript).

**References**
There should be "one-to-one correspondence" between the articles cited in the body of the proposal and those listed in the reference section. Supplemental reference lists may be included if you wish to identify other sources you have found to have value for the project/experience, but which were not cited in the proposal.

(Sample **PROPOSAL** Cover Sheet/Title Page)

A MULTIMEDIA MODULE ON COMPUTER LITERACY

by

John Q. Student

A proposal for a project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
(or MASTER OF EDUCTATION or MASTER OF LEARNING TECHNOLOGY AND
INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY)

in

Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences

Approved:

_____
Chairperson
(Type name here)

_____
Head, Department of Instructional Technology & Learning Sciences
(Type name here)

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah
(type year here)

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**CONTENT OUTLINE FOR**

**CREATIVE PROJECT WRITTEN SUMMARY REPORT**

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| Sections | Appropriate Length |
|---|---|
| Cover Sheet (Title Page) | See example page below |
| 1. Introduction | 1 page |
| 2. Description of project | 1 - 3 pages |
| 3. Conclusions | 1 – 1 ½ pages |
| 4. Recommendations | 1 – 1 ½ pages |
| | Total length 4 – 7 pages |

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**FORMAT**

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The proposal should follow the writing standards outlined in the current *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA). The APA manual describes and provides examples of current forms for citing references in text, listing references, headings, etc.

Margins, pagination, and typing standards should follow those outlined by the Utah State University School of Graduate Studies Publication Guide. It is available online at: https://qcnr.usu.edu/envs/graduate/files/pdfs/Publication-Guide-2.pdf

# WRITING THE SUMMARY

The purpose of the creative project is to provide an opportunity for you to make a practical application of knowledge to the improvement of a teaching/training skill or other interest for professional improvement. The written report summarizes your project and is the final requirement for Creative Project approval.

In general, the written summary should include the following types of information. It is appropriate to include headings that identify each of these sections. Note: if you are taking ITLS 6960 as a cohort based class experience, all of the aspects described below will be built in as a part of the course experiences.

## Introduction
States the purpose of the project and specific, relevant background information on the project and the candidate.

## Description of Project
Describes the project with emphasis on the candidate's involvement during all phases of the project.

## Conclusions
Candidate shares what was learned during the project about the organization, the project, and herself or himself.

## Recommendations
Based on the above conclusions, states recommendations the candidate would make to future candidates about the project involved, the process used, or both.

(Sample Creative Project **SUMMARY** Cover Sheet/Title Page)

A MULTIMEDIA MODULE ON COMPUTER LITERACY

by

John Q. Student

A project summary submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

of

MASTER OF ARTS
(or MASTER OF EDUCTATION or MASTER OF LEARNING TECHNOLOGY AND
INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY)

in

Instructional Technology & Learning Sciences

Approved:

_____
Chairperson
(Type name here)


_____
Head, Department of Instructional Technology & Learning Sciences
(Type name here)


UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah
(type year here)