

Instructional Technology Program

Guidelines for Terminal Masters Project (ED 7999)

INTRODUCTION

The Masters Project should reflect the knowledge and skills that you have acquired in the Instructional Technology Program. As you select a suitable topic, you should think of how that topic will demonstrate those skills. Consider the following questions as you get started:

- Are you going to choose a topic that will showcase your mastery of instructional design, needs assessment, or instructional product/process evaluation?
- Will your project demonstrate your ability to design and develop instruction via a new technology such as multimedia, web or video?
- Will your project highlight your ability to create instructional materials that support your learning goals?

THE IMPORTANCE OF AN EARLY START

You should begin thinking of the terminal project well before your final semester. The earlier you begin exploring topics, the easier your choice will be. Preliminary work on the project should begin prior to your final semester since that will ensure a timely completion. Narrow your potential project topics to three possibilities and discuss them with your advisor as soon as you are ready to begin.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Once you have decided on a project topic, you must submit a proposal (usually 2-5 pages) that includes the following information:

- ❖ A brief description or summary of the topic and a working project title
- ❖ The need for the project or the purpose of the project and a brief description of the target audience
- ❖ A brief rationale for selecting this topic and your learning objectives (what do you hope to learn from this project?)
- ❖ A detailed list of the project's deliverables. Some common deliverables are:
 - design document or course plan,
 - instructional materials (instructor guide, participant guides, job aids, etc),
 - evaluation instruments,
 - assessment tools (surveys, observation checklists, etc),
 - instructional aids (PowerPoint presentations, videos, simulations, etc),
 - CBT or Multimedia programs, WEB sites, user guides, installation guides, etc.
- ❖ Timeline for the project's completion with milestone dates and signoff points for advisor's review.

PROJECT ELEMENTS

Once your proposal has been approved, the fun begins. We suggest that you periodically send drafts to your advisor as you complete major portions of your project. Consider your advisor a client who signs off on major deliverables throughout the design process. For example, once you have the design document done; have your advisor review it rather than holding it until you also have the materials completed. Our goal is to avoid any surprises at the end of the term. Be sure and discuss with your advisor the number of reviews that he or she would like to see in your project.

Your final project should include four components. They are:

1. A Project Rationale
2. The Project Itself
3. A Student Reflection
4. An updated Vita

1. Project Rationale

In this first section, you should describe the reason(s) that you have chosen your particular topic. Reasons might include an opportunity to demonstrate your area of strength; an opportunity to apply your skills to a specific work situation; a desire to learn more about a specific area of IT knowledge or skill, etc. Be specific in your description of the project and your reasons for its selection.

2. The Main Project Itself

This is the major part of your terminal project. It will include all the elements of your chosen topic whether it is a design, development, evaluation or media creation area of IT. This section takes on various forms depending on your project's topic and includes all the deliverables that you outlined in your project proposal. It is the largest part of the final 7999 project.

Typically IT projects fall into one of three categories:

- application of a technology to facilitate learning (interactive technology focus) or
- application of text based materials to facilitate learning (design focus) or
- an organizational impact project (HPT focus)

The following chart highlights basic elements found in these types of projects. Your project is likely to contain these elements. There are subtle differences in the deliverables depending on the emphasis of your selected topic. Use this chart to help you narrow your project components, define your deliverables and ensure that your project is complete.

Technology Application	Design Application	Organizational Performance Application
Description of project (background, etc)	Description of project (background, etc)	Description of project (background, etc)
Target audience characteristics and user profile	Target audience characteristics	Organizational Characteristics
Instructional setting description	Instructional setting description	Setting description
Instructional goals and objectives	Instructional goals and objectives	Needs assessment and results
A high level design document outlining scope, treatment, rationale, overall look and feel, user profile, description of interactivity, navigation, learner control features, etc.	A macro design document outlining sequence, strategy selection, delivery formats.	Strategic plan/vision
A low level design document or prototype showing instructional strategies, navigation, interactions, etc.	Supporting materials at the micro level including applicable guides demonstrating sound message design principles, use of icons and detailed instructor prompts; job aids; instruments; etc.	Performance goals
Task time line		Task time line
Authoring system used and hardware and software requirements		
Evaluation plan (alpha and beta testing) and results if testing	Evaluation plan – both formative and summative (measuring at all appropriate levels)	Evaluation plan
Diffusion of innovation plan (if appropriate)	Diffusion of innovation plan (if appropriate)	Diffusion, innovation and/or change management plan
Commitment from stakeholders (if appropriate)	Commitment from stakeholders (if appropriate)	Commitment from stakeholders (if appropriate)
Users Guide to support the program including installation directions and troubleshooting assistance.		Process Flow Analyses; Process maps;
Technical specifications		

3. Student Reflection

This section is your opportunity to reflect not only on your experience in completing this project, but on your experiences throughout the IT program. Include your thoughts and opinions on your project. Comment on problems that you encountered along the way as well as areas where you learned the most. What, if anything, would you change or do differently now that it is done? What is your assessment of your time in the IT program and your skills as an Instructional Technologist?

4. Updated Vita

Now that you are done, submit current vita highlighting your skills and new credential.

SOME PRECAUTIONARY ISSUES

➤ Length/Scope of Project

This is often the most difficult part of the project. Sometime proposals are submitted that are “limited in scope.” For example, a file of PowerPoint slides to support a four-hour teacher in-service training is too limited. Such a project requires a needs assessment and design plan for the inservice as well as instructor and participant materials. On the other hand, some students propose to design and develop materials for a month long unit to use in their classroom or to plan, and to develop and test a CBT program for new employee orientation. These examples may be too extensive and require more time to complete than the current semester. ED 7999 is a three-credit section. We assume that the work students put into their projects will be comparable to the work that they put into previous IT courses of 3 credits. This is your terminal master’s project and should be comprehensive and significant work. But we do want you to finish it. Your advisor can help you determine how big is “big enough.”

➤ Using work related projects

Many students choose to select a work-related topic as the basis for their 7999 project. We encourage the relevance of such a project and encourage transfer of your IT skills. However, in the past, some students have unsuccessfully attempted to use materials created by their employer as their terminal project. **Please note that your project must be an original work of your creation.** It cannot be an instructional design and supporting materials used in a workplace-training program even if you were one of the designers assigned to the project.

Projects have been rejected based on authorship and plagiarism concerns. If you are at all unsure of how this rule affects your project, you must review the project with your advisor before you submit the proposal

➤ Using work from previous courses

Your terminal project should build on the skills developed throughout your IT program. While assignments completed in previous course can provide a foundation for your 7999 project, you cannot simply turn in a collection of these completed assignments and consider them your final project. The 7999 project must be a new document. For example, if you use the same instructional topic that you used as the basis for your design document in 6110, you already have a design document from 6110. However, the instructional strategies, delivery formats, scope and materials are likely to have changed given your exposure to more detailed and diverse applications in more advanced classes. In short, the design document for 7999 should be better than the one you completed in 6110 given your subsequent learning.

➤ When in Doubt . . .

Call us! That is why we are here. We would all much rather help you during the process than have to reject your project because it is insufficient and it is too late to make needed changes within the semester deadlines.

Advisors:

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IT Secretary Michele Norris	mnorris@wayne.edu	313-577-1728

NOTE: When emailing attachments to your advisor you must include your name in the file name. We may get 20 attachments entitled “project proposal.” You should name it “jsmith7999proposal” or “jsmith7999evaluation.”

Important Dates: Please visit the IT program website to find specific dates for the current term.

Activity	Date
7999 Orientation	First Saturday of the semester, 10:00 – 12:00 noon, Room 357 College of Education
Proposal due to advisor	Ten days after the Orientation
Periodic review by advisor	A minimum of two reviews is required prior to final draft. These reviews will require demonstration of progress on the project.
Cut-off date (if you have not submitted any drafts to your advisor by this date, you cannot complete 7999 this term)	About 6 weeks into the term.
Final draft due to advisor	Four weeks before the Poster session
Title, 3 line description, and equipment needs due to Michele (mnorris@wayne.edu).	Two weeks before the poster session
Poster Presentation	Saturday before exam week, 10:00a – 12:00 noon in the College of Education.