

APLNG MA TESL Students

MA Paper Guidelines

(rev. Nov. 2014)

MA Paper

The MA paper is required of all MA TESL students. It represents your research interests and is usually developed from work you have done in one or more courses. Examples of MA papers completed by former students are kept on file in the Department office, and you are encouraged to review these.

MA Paper Topic

Choosing a topic for your MA paper may take some time and thought, so plan to consult with your MA Paper advisor during your second semester of study. There are several options for this project:

1. *Critical Literature Review*: Select a contemporary academic topic that is of particular interest to you. Review the pertinent literature (primary and secondary sources) that lay out the central issues and claims about this topic. Conclude your paper with your stance on the topic and implications this has for the field of TESOL/APLNG.
2. *Curriculum Development*: Develop a *curriculum* for a particular group of language learners or language teaching context. Your curriculum must include a literature-based rationale for both the content and the skills covered in the course, a complete course syllabus, as well as all curriculum materials necessary to teach the course.
3. *Data-driven Project*: Develop an analytic empirical research paper based on oral, written, and/or computer mediated discourse. Ground your research in a relevant theoretical perspective, provide a critical review of the most relevant literature, and apply relevant methodologies in working through the data. Your paper must involve some level of analysis and not simply line-by-line descriptions or paraphrased accounts of the data.

Overview of the Process

1. Choose your topic.
2. Request advisor's approval.
3. Conduct your research, if applicable.
4. Write your first draft.
5. Submit your first draft to your advisor.
6. Submit your draft to your committee member upon advisor's approval.
7. Revise and resubmit your final draft to your committee for approval.
8. Make three signed and bound copies of your final paper (for advisor, committee member, department).

Plan Ahead

1. Create a timeline.
2. You may want to consider using PSU Libraries *Research Project Calculator*

<http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psu/home.html>

Research - More research - Tools and Widgets - Research Project Calculator

Main Sections of the MA Paper

Your MA Paper will include the following sections:

- a. Title Page & Signature Page (see attached template)
- b. Acknowledgements (optional)
- c. Abstract (see attached template)
- d. Table of Contents (see attached template)
- e. The Paper (lengths vary)
- f. References & In-Text Citations (follow APA format*)

*APA guidelines can be found in the APA manual/website and on the Purdue OWL website. Both resources are listed at the end of this handout.

Writing Conventions

- 12-point, *Times New Roman* font
- double-spaced
- 1” margins on all sides of document
- page numbers – centered, bottom of page
- running head – typed as header – ex. WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER
- use APA format for all section headings, subheadings, paragraph format, figures, tables, etc.

Revision Process

- Please pay attention to the details.
- You may want to consider using Purdue OWL’s *Steps to Revising Your Paper* as a resource:
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/561/05/>

Timeline for Final Paper

- By end of your third semester in the program
 - decide on a topic and timeline for completing the paper in consultation with your advisor
- At least six weeks before the end of semester in which you are to graduate
 - submit draft to MA Paper advisor
 - advisor will provide feedback within one week
- At least four weeks before the end of the semester in which you are to graduate
 - submit revised draft to MA Paper advisor and committee member
 - committee will provide feedback within two weeks
- At least one week before the end of the semester in which you are to graduate
 - make final revisions, construct title and signature pages, collect committee members’ signatures
- Upon completion
 - submit a bound, signed copy of your final MA paper to each of the following:
 - MA Paper advisor
 - committee member
 - APLNG Department (Sally Arnold)

Poster Session - APLNG Open House

- All MA TESL students are expected to prepare and present a poster of their MA paper at the APLNG Open House held the last week of classes.
- The purchase of a three-panel display board for the Open House is recommended so the poster will be self-standing.

Resources

Penn State Libraries: <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/home.html>

Tutorials (Ask a Librarian) & Citation Guides (Research)

Plagiarism: <http://tlt.psu.edu/plagiarism/student-tutorial/>

Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed.). Washington, DC:

American Psychological Association.

Website: <http://www.apastyle.org/>

Purdue OWL: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

TEMPLATE: MA PAPER TITLE PAGE

(adapted from PSU Thesis formatting requirements)

The Pennsylvania State University

College of the Liberal Arts

Department of Applied Linguistics

THE TITLE OF YOUR PAPER

A paper in

Teaching English as a Second Language

By

Your Full Name

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Month Year

The following faculty members approve the MA paper entitled, *The Title of Your Paper, by Your Full Name*:

Name of Advisor
Full Title of Advisor

Date

Name of Committee Member
Full Title of Committee Member

Date

TEMPLATE: TABLE OF CONTENTS

(adapted from PSU Thesis formatting requirements: <http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/index.cfm/current-students/etd/thesisdissertationguidepdf/>)

RUNNING HEAD

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Abstract

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TEMPLATE: Abstract

(adapted from Purdue OWL APA Style: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/media/pdf/20090212013008_560.pdf)

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Abstract

This paper explores four published articles that report on results from research conducted on online (Internet) and offline (non-Internet) relationships and their relationship to computer-mediated communication (CMC). The articles, however, vary in their definitions and uses of CMC. Butler and Kraut (2002) suggest that face-to-face (FtF) interactions are more effective than CMC, defined and used as “email,” in creating feelings of closeness or intimacy. Other articles define CMC differently and, therefore, offer different results. This paper examines Cummings, Butler, and Kraut’s (2002) research in relation to three other research articles to suggest that all forms of CMC should be studied in order to fully understand how CMC influences online and offline relationships.

Keywords: computer-mediated communication, face-to-face communication