

Detailed Contents

List of Students' Master's Theses	xv
Preface	xvii
About the Author	xxi
Chapter 1 Overview of the Master's Degree and Thesis	1
The Master's Degree	2
What Is a Master's Thesis?	3
The Benefits of Writing a Master's Thesis	4
The Difference Between a Master's Thesis and a Term Paper	4
The Difference Between a Master's Thesis and a Doctoral Dissertation	5
Selecting a Thesis Chairperson and Committee	6
How to Read and Use This Book	7
Components of a Master's Thesis	8
Chapter One, Introduction	9
Chapter Two, Literature Review	9
Chapter Three, Methods	10
Chapter Four, Results and Findings	11
Chapter Five, Discussion	11
Quantitative, Qualitative, or Mixed Methods Research?	12
Quantitative Research	12
Qualitative Research	14
Mixed Methods Research	15
Style Form	16
Summary	17
Resources	18
Common Obstacles and Practical Solutions	18
Reflection/Discussion Questions	18
Try It Exercises	18
Key Terms	20
Suggested Readings	20
Web Links	21

Chapter 2	Selecting a Research Topic	23
Important Factors to Consider When Selecting a Topic		24
Personal Significance		24
Critical Issues in the Field		25
Existing Research Literature		26
<i>Search Engines</i>		27
<i>Electronic Databases</i>		30
Ethical Considerations		30
How to Narrow and Refocus Your Topic		31
Feasibility		32
Accessibility		33
Time and Resources		34
Developing Answerable Research Questions		35
Answerable Questions		35
Defining Terms		36
Creating a Realistic Timeline		38
Time Management		41
Reserving Time		41
Chunking Method		42
Summary		43
Resources		44
Common Obstacles and Practical Solutions		44
Reflection/Discussion Questions		44
Try It Exercises		45
Key Terms		46
Suggested Readings		46
Web Links		46
Chapter 3	Using the Literature to Research Your Problem	47
Benefits of Conducting a Literature Review		48
Meeting With a Reference Librarian		49
Sources of Data: Primary Versus Secondary		50
Primary Sources		50
Secondary Sources		51

Selecting Keywords	52
Conducting Searches in Electronic Databases	54
Basic Search	57
<i>Search Modes</i>	57
<i>Limiters</i>	60
<i>Expanders</i>	61
Advanced Search	63
Using Subject Terms (Thesaurus)	63
Conducting Searches on the Internet	66
Different Types of Articles	67
Refereed Versus Non-Refereed	67
Staying Organized	68
Summary	70
Resources	71
Common Obstacles and Practical Solutions	71
Reflection/Discussion Questions	71
Try It Exercises	72
Key Terms	73
Suggested Readings	73
Web Links	74
Chapter 4 Conducting Ethical Research	75
Legal Regulations and Ethical Standards	76
Institutional Review Board (IRB)	80
IRB Protocol Review Process	81
Ethical Behavior	83
Plagiarism and Paraphrasing	84
Summary	86
Resources	87
Common Obstacles and Practical Solutions	87
Reflection/Discussion Question	88
Try It Exercises	88
Key Terms	89
Suggested Readings	89
Web Links	90

Chapter 5 How to Write Chapter One, Introduction	91
Writing Style	92
Chapter One Sections	93
Introduction	94
Statement of the Problem	99
Background and Need	102
<i>Three Parallel Ladders Strategy</i>	102
Purpose of the Study	106
Research Questions	108
Significance to the Field	109
Definitions	110
Limitations	111
Ethical Considerations	111
Summary	112
Resources	113
Common Obstacles and Practical Solutions	113
Reflection/Discussion Questions	113
Try It Exercises	114
Key Terms	115
Suggested Readings	115
Web Links	116
 Chapter 6 How to Write Chapter Two, Literature Review	 117
Preparation and Organization	119
Chapter Two Sections	122
Introduction	122
<i>Advance Organizer</i>	123
Body of the Review	124
<i>Research Synthesis</i>	124
<i>Section Summary</i>	130
Chapter Summary	131
Summary	132
Resources	133
Common Obstacles and Practical Solutions	133
Reflection/Discussion Questions	134
Try It Exercises	134
Key Terms	135
Suggested Readings	135
Web Links	135

Chapter 7 How to Write Chapter Three, Methods	137
Research Designs and Research Methods	138
Preparation and Organization	139
Chapter Three Sections	140
Introduction	141
Setting	144
Participants	145
Intervention and Materials	147
Measurement Instruments	149
<i>Validity and Reliability</i>	153
Procedure	155
Data Analysis	158
Summary	161
Resources	162
Common Obstacles and Practical Solutions	162
Reflection/Discussion Questions	164
Try It Exercises	164
Key Terms	165
Suggested Readings	165
Web Links	166
 Chapter 8 How to Write Chapter Four, Results and Findings	 167
Preparation and Organization	168
Chapter Four Sections	169
Quantitative Data	169
Descriptive Statistics	171
<i>Measures of Central Tendency</i>	171
<i>Measures of Variability</i>	173
<i>Additional Ways to Report Data Descriptively</i>	176
Inferential Statistics	178
<i>Tests of Significance</i>	178
<i>Independent-Samples t Test</i>	178
<i>Paired-Samples t Test</i>	181
Qualitative Data	183
Major Themes and Patterns	183
Research Questions	186
Validity of Findings	189

Mixed Methods Data	190
Summary	191
Resources	192
Common Obstacles and Practical Solutions	192
Reflection/Discussion Questions	192
Try It Exercises	193
Key Terms	194
Suggested Readings	194
Web Links	195
Chapter 9 How to Write Chapter Five, Discussion	197
Preparation and Organization	198
Chapter Five Sections	199
Introduction	199
Discussion	200
Limitations	204
Recommendations for Future Research	206
Conclusion	207
Summary	211
Resources	212
Common Obstacles and Practical Solutions	212
Reflection/Discussion Questions	213
Try It Exercises	213
Suggested Readings	214
Web Links	214
Chapter 10 Wrapping It All Up	215
Preparation and Organization	217
APA Style	217
Levels of Heading	218
Citations in Text	221
<i>Direct Quotes</i>	222
<i>Paraphrasing</i>	222
<i>One Work, One Author</i>	222
<i>One Work, Multiple Authors</i>	223
<i>Two or More Works</i>	223
Reference List	224
<i>Order and Format</i>	224
Tables	226

<i>Tables in Text</i>	229
<i>Placement and Spacing</i>	229
<i>Title</i>	231
<i>Headings and Body</i>	231
<i>Notes</i>	232
Figures	232
<i>Figures in Text</i>	233
<i>Placement, Size, and Font</i>	233
<i>Captions and Legends</i>	233
<i>Graphs</i>	234
Final Formatting	235
Appendixes	235
<i>Appendixes in Text</i>	235
<i>Placement and Cover Pages</i>	235
Front Pages	236
<i>Title Page</i>	236
<i>Signature Page</i>	237
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	237
<i>Abstract</i>	237
<i>Table of Contents</i>	239
<i>Lists of Tables and Figures</i>	239
Final Tips and Checklist	239
Copying and Binding	241
 Next Steps: Presenting at Conferences and Getting Published	 241
Summary	243
Resources	244
Common Obstacles and Practical Solutions	244
Reflection/Discussion Questions	244
Try It Exercises	245
Key Terms	245
Suggested Readings	245
Web Links	246
 Appendices	 247
Glossary	275
References	282
Author Index	286
Subject Index	288