Manuscript-Based Thesis Guidelines

The following guidelines provide general direction regarding the expected content and format of manuscript-based theses in the Faculty of Health Sciences. The guidelines were approved by the FHS Graduate Studies Committee in April 2018. The supervisor and supervisory committee are responsible for guiding MSc and PhD students through the thesis development and writing process, and students are expected to consult with their supervisor and supervisory committee to confirm the specific content and requirements of their thesis, particularly given differences in disciplinary norms and expectations.

PhD Thesis

A manuscript based thesis normally consists of a minimum of five chapters including an introduction, one literature review chapter, no less than two research manuscript chapters (minimum established according to disciplinary standards), and a concluding chapter. The introductory chapter should give an overview of the thesis and describe the goals and objectives. The literature review chapter should be a comprehensive review that establishes the significance of the research in relation to the scholarly literature. There must be a minimum of two research manuscript chapters, whose contents are deemed by the supervisory committee to be of publishable quality. The thesis must conclude with a final chapter that describes 1) a synthesis of findings and common themes across the chapters of the thesis, 2) a discussion of novel contributions of the work, and 3) implications for research or policy. The thesis can include additional methods or bridging chapters.

MSc Thesis

A manuscript based thesis normally consists of a minimum of four chapters including an introduction, one literature review chapter, no less than one research manuscript chapter (minimum established according to disciplinary standards), and a concluding chapter. The introductory chapter should give an overview of the thesis and describe the goals and objectives. The literature review chapter should be a comprehensive review that establishes the significance of the research in relation to the scholarly literature. There must be a minimum of one research manuscript chapter, whose contents are deemed by the supervisory committee to be of publishable quality. The thesis must conclude with a final chapter that describes 1) a synthesis of findings and common themes across the chapters of the thesis, 2) a discussion of novel contributions and the significance of the work, and 3) implications for research or policy. The thesis can include additional methods or bridging chapters.
General Guidelines for Both PhD and MSc Manuscript-Based Thesis

The thesis must follow the formatting and organization standards of the SFU library. Additionally, the manuscript-based thesis must have a common table of contents, continuous pagination, and must be prepared using a word-processing software. References may appear as a single integrated reference list or at the end of each chapter. The contents within the thesis must be the student’s original work. If any of the material within the thesis has been published, information should be included describing where the works have been published. The thesis must describe the student’s specific contributions to multi-authored publications, and the student should be listed as the first author or co-first author on all manuscripts included in the thesis. In the case of laboratory, ethnographic, and data collaborations, the student must identify how data was collected and analyzed, and who did what for which publications. In cases where data collection, coding, and analysis was collective, the student must detail and show the extent of her/his/their own understanding of collection, coding, and analysis such that their final defense committee can ascertain student learning and individual research skills acquisition.