**SPS Research Thesis**

A master level research thesis is a written body of work based on original research in a particular academic area. The goal of a research thesis is the production of an academic work that is thorough and carefully written to enhance the existing body of knowledge on the chosen subject. SPS graduate students desiring to undertake a research thesis must adhere to Clark’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) when engaging in research activities (interviews, surveys, etc.) involving the use of human subjects. Prior approval the research project must be obtained from the IRB which is responsible for safeguarding the rights and welfare of persons participating in research projects. All capstone students undertaking a research thesis are required to submit a project charter to Capstone advisor for approval prior to beginning their capstone work.

The citation style for the research thesis is APA format. A good online resource can be found at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

The following outline is suggested for the Research Thesis.

* Title/Cover page – Capstone Project
* Acknowledgement – your client, stakeholders, advisor, team members
* Table of Contents – identify the pages where the reader can find the information
* Abstract/Executive Summary

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

1.a General Introduction of the Research Project

1.b Research Problem

1.c Rational for Research Project

1.d Definition and Explanation of Key Terminology

**Chapter 2: Hypothesis (Theory)**

2.a Brief Overview of Theoretical Foundations Utilized in the Research Study

2.b Brief Overview of Literature Reviewed, Discussed and Applied

**Chapter 3: Methods**

3.a Study Method and Study Design

3. b Explanation of Sample to Be Used in the Study

3.c Explanation of Measurements, Definitions, Indexes, etc. and Reliability and Validity of Study Method and Study Design

3.d Description and Justification of Analytical Techniques Applied

3.e Reliability and Validity of Internal/External Design and Related Subtypes

3.f Assumptions and Implied Limitations of Study Method and Design

**Chapter 4: Findings**

4.a Brief Overview of Research Project

4.b Results of the Method of Study and Any Unplanned or Unexpected Situations that Occurred

4.c Brief Descriptive Analysis

4.d Reliability and Validity of the Analysis

4. e Explanation of the Hypothesis and Precise and Exact Data

**Chapter 5: Discussion**

5.a Brief Overview of Material

5. b Full Discussion of Findings (Results) and Implications

5.c Full Discussion of Research Analysis of Findings

5.d Full Discussion of Hypothesis and of Findings

5.f Post Analysis and Implications of Hypothesis and of Findings

**Chapter 6: Conclusion**

6.a Summary of Academic Study

6.b Reference to Literature Review

6.c Implications of Academic Study

6.d Limitations of the Theory or Method of Research

6.e Recommendations or Suggestions of Future Academic Study

**Chapter 7: Bibliography**

7.a Complete List of all Sources Used Regardless of Citation or Inclusion