



**Master of Arts in Criminal Justice (MA CRJ)  
Master's Thesis Guidelines**

**Fall 2014**

**The Criminal Justice Master's Program  
John Jay College of Criminal Justice  
The City University of New York**

**Note. These guidelines will be made available to all Criminal Justice Master's students and faculty on the college's website and will be published in the next edition of the John Jay College Graduate Bulletin.**

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These thesis guidelines are specific to the Master of Arts in Criminal Justice and replace the previous Master's Thesis Guidelines issued by the Office of Graduate Studies. This document does not replace, but is meant to supplement, the official college document: the Graduate Students Bulletin; the aim of this document is to guide students pursuing the Master's thesis option toward completion.

The following are important changes to the former guidelines:

1. The final approval of a thesis will now be signed by the program director for the CRJ program after approval by the Advisor and Second Reader.
2. John Jay College now limits the time for graduate students to complete and submit a thesis to within one year of completing all other coursework.
3. The Criminal Justice program requires all students pursuing the thesis option to register for CRJ 717. Students admitted prior to fall 2013 are exempt from this requirement.
4. The deadlines for the submission of a thesis in the fall is December 1<sup>st</sup>, spring May 1<sup>st</sup>, and summer July 31<sup>st</sup>; however, students must give their two readers sufficient time to read and approve the thesis before these dates.

## **I. The Thesis Option**

The primary purpose of a master's thesis is to demonstrate the student's capacity to conduct research in their specific field of study. Those students who select the option to complete a thesis are expected through their research to contribute to the body of knowledge in the field. Therefore, students are expected to show a mastery of the subject researched as well as of the methods utilized.

Students choosing the thesis option will complete a total of 30 credits (ten courses) for the master's degree, six credits (two courses) fewer than those students who do not take the thesis option. Instead of taking four free elective courses, thesis option students take CRJ 717 and 791. While the thesis option is six credits fewer, writing a thesis is a substantial undertaking usually requiring more work than two additional courses.

The thesis option is only available to students who complete CRJ 715 and 716 with an A- average or better. After completing CRJ 715 and 716, students choosing the thesis option must take CRJ 717 Reading in Research and receive an A- or better. At the completion of CRJ 717, if the student decides to continue with the thesis, the GRADUATE THESIS PROSPECTUS FORM and a GRADUATE INDEPENDENT STUDY PROSPECTUS FORM for CRJ 791 must be completed by the student in close discussion with the thesis advisor. The thesis advisor must approve these forms before they are and submitted to the Program Director. The professor for CRJ 717 will support this effort. If permission is granted, the student must complete their project within the framework described in these forms.

John Jay College requires all students to submit their completed thesis within one year of completing all other coursework required for graduation. Only in exceptional circumstances may the student request an extension by written petition to the Dean. If the request is approved, the student will be granted a limited time period to complete the thesis.

## **II. Thesis Advisor & Second Reader**

A thesis advisor must be a full-time graduate faculty member in the CRJ program. Alternate arrangements may be made only if approved by the Program Director and the Graduate Dean. The thesis advisor supervises the advisee within the framework of the thesis prospectus and the CRJ 791 agreements. A thesis must also be approved by a Second Reader who must be a member of a graduate faculty at John Jay and may be either full-time or part-time. The student should choose the Second Reader in consultation with the advisor. The advisor should communicate with the Second Reader and provide feedback to the student in a timely fashion to ensure steady progress of the planned work. When the thesis is complete, the advisor and Second Reader sign two copies of the approval page (on bond or thesis paper). The signatures indicate that they have reviewed the thesis in detail, approved its substance, and as far as possible, ensured

that the student wrote the thesis clearly and correctly. After the thesis is deposited, the advisor must submit the final grade for CRJ 791.

### **III. Human Research Protection**

Any thesis research involving surveys or other research on human subjects requires a review and approval by CUNY's Human Research Protection Program (HRRP). This also applies to studies involving samples having been subject to HRRP approval from another institution. Do not make any assumption about being exempt. Students should contact the HRRP for information regarding how to submit their proposed research to the HRRP committee at (212) 237-8961 or [jj-irb@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:jj-irb@jjay.cuny.edu). More information is available at <http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/academics/1440.php> The student's advisor is required to approve of the HRPP application as part of the application process.

### **IV. Thesis Submission**

After receiving final approval from the advisor and the Second Reader, indicated by their signature on two copies of the approval page on bond or thesis paper, a hard copy of the thesis on regular paper should be submitted for approval by the Program Director, by the following dates (although students are encouraged to submit their thesis before the deadline):

Spring Semester May 1<sup>st</sup>

Summer July 31<sup>st</sup>

Fall Semester December 1<sup>st</sup>

### **V. Depositing the Thesis and Clearance**

Once the approval pages on bond or thesis paper have been signed by the Program Director, the student must do the following:

1. Show the original signed approval page to the Associate Registrar, (Room 1280N). Students will then be provided with the Clearance Form. Also bring and submit a copy of the signed approval page.
2. Submit the binding fee (cash only) to the Office of the Bursar and have them sign the Clearance Form.
3. Submit the Clearance Form with two copies on bond paper of the approved thesis and two signed approval pages to the library reference desk.
4. After the Clearance Form has been signed by the Office of the Bursar and the Library, it must be returned to the Office of the Registrar.

## VI. Library Record

After the library receives a thesis, it is microfilmed, bound, and cataloged by the library. After a few months, a record of the thesis will appear in the CUNY+ and WorldCat international database. One copy of your thesis will become available to CUNY borrowers and by interlibrary loan and the microfilm and second copy will be available for library use only.

## VII. Thesis Formatting

Strict adherence to the format will prevent delays caused by library submission issues.

1. Paper: While thesis drafts should be printed on regular paper, two final copies must be printed on bond paper (also called fine business paper--24 lb., 25% cotton watermarked) or Thesis paper (available at Staples).
2. Spacing: The thesis, including the reference pages, title page, approval page, acknowledgement page, abstract and the table of contents (if included) must be double spaced.
3. Margins: The left margin must be one and a half inches (1-1/2") for all drafts and final copies. The right, top and bottom margins must be one inch (1").
4. Pagination: Thesis page numbers should be in Arabic numerals and should be placed in the upper right-hand corner or top center of the page; introductory pages should have lower case Roman numerals. The abstract, title page and approval pages should not be numbered, nor should they be counted in the pagination.
5. Citation: The APA style of documentation requires the author-date method of documentation. The surname of the author and the year of publication are inserted in the text at the appropriate point. All references cited must be included in the reference list at the end of the thesis. Consult the Publication Manual (6<sup>th</sup> edition) for additional details. The word References should be used as a header on the list of references.
6. Quotations: The Fair Use Clause of the Copyright Act must be observed in quoting copyrighted materials. It is advisable to request the copyright owner's permission for any quotation exceeding 150 words. It is wise to consult the individual publisher, because as an author you are liable for copyright violations on the basis of the particular use. Unpublished material may be protected under copyright law. Students are advised to contact the Library of Congress to request information regarding how to register unpublished material: The Register of Copyrights Library of Congress Washington, D.C. 20559
7. Footnotes: Content footnotes are numbered consecutively throughout the thesis using superscript Arabic numerals, and are placed at the bottom of the page on which they are referenced.

## **VIII. Thesis Title Page**

The thesis title page must contain the following information (centered left to right and top to bottom):

1. The full title of the thesis.
2. A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Criminal Justice, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York
3. The author's full legal name.
4. The month and year of graduation, *e.g. May, 2014.*

## **IX. Thesis Approval Page**

The thesis approval page must be bound into the thesis directly after the title page and it must be typed or printed on the same bond paper used for the thesis. The approval page should not be numbered and it should not be counted in the pagination of the thesis. The approval page must have the following information (centered left to right and top to bottom):

1. The full title of the thesis.
2. The author's name beneath the title.
3. The approval page statement that must read as follows:

This thesis has been presented to and accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies,  
John Jay College of Criminal Justice in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Master of Arts in Criminal Justice.

4. The three signatures above the typed names and titles of:
  - a) the thesis advisor
  - b) the second reader
  - c) the Program Director

The Program Director will receive, approve, and sign this page after the other requisite signatures have been obtained.

## **X. Abstract**

An abstract summarizes the thesis and should not exceed 250 words. The abstract page should be titled "Abstract" and must be submitted with the thesis. The abstract must be bound into the thesis directly after the thesis approval page and should not be numbered and it should not be counted in the pagination of the thesis.