

Volume 5

Annex 5.48a: The MUSOM Academic Operating
Development Implementation
Guidelines -2019, GRP Manual
(213-222)

Appendix 11.1 Graduate Research Project (GRP) Manual

**Mid-West University, School of Management (MUSOM)
Birendranagar, Surkhet, Nepal**



**Master's Degree and Bachelor
Graduate Research Project (GRP/UGRP) Manual 2019**

**Mid-West University School of Management (MUSOM)
Birendranagar, Surkhet, Nepal**

**Applicable from
September, 2019**

A. PREAMBLE

Graduate Research Project (GRP) is an integral component of Master of Business Administration (MBA) program at Mid-Western University School of Management (MUSOM).

As a mandatory provision, each student pursuing an MBA degree at MUSOM has to design and undertake a systematic and scientific inquiry-based research project with approval of the Research Committee. Graduate research writing; being a part of purely academic work, it needs to be accomplished by applying a uniform standard across the projects. This manual intends to provide broad guidelines to the MBA students as well as research supervisors to continue with a systematic approach to GRP.

The GRP involves conceptualizing and designing a research, obtaining departmental approval, fielding the research, performing data reduction and analyses, writing a report and making a formal presentation to the respective Research Committee.

Thus, the Thesis Research project as a whole, aims to develop knowledge, skill competence and attitude (KSA) necessary to initiate individual research and gain a mastery of problem identification, designing instruments for collecting data, performing data reduction and information analyses, producing policy level and managerial implications for evidence-based, effective decision-making.

A GRP Report work should involve depth analyses of the problem or issue, followed by extensive research or investigation on it before producing grounded evidence-based conclusions and implications for continued action. For this, it requires researcher's continuity of purpose, patience, positive attitude to conduct a systematic inquiry for uncovering the realities facing a problem or issue. More importantly, an independent researcher must be versatile in using technologies in data generation, reduction and analyses.

Each graduating student, at this level, is expected to demonstrate a blend of KSA to undertake a systematic and scientific inquiry using relevant technologies to explore grounded reality and transform into effective information as a pre-requisite to organizational decision-making.

This manual provides with needful guidance on procedural requirements, proficiency of research presentation and research writing to be fulfilled during your journey to successful Graduate Research Project accomplishment towards the end of master's degree study at Faculty of Management, Mid-Western University.



B. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. The MBA program Mid-Western University School of Management (MUSOM) has been crafted on a philosophy of blending your study and learning for professional life with a balance of knowledge, skill competence and attitude (KSA) in management sciences. For this, it requires you to be practical on working with research-based evidences to generate alternatives for professional decision-making. Therefore, you are advised to take this project more seriously, and at the same time, with joyful learning by experiencing with the grounded reality.
2. Before commencing your journey to intended research project, please study, analyze and understand properly each item presented in this Manual. If any confusion arises, or there is limitation of instructions pertaining to any matter of paper documentation, please follow the latest edition of the Academic Writing Manual of American Psychological Association (APA).
3. Please do not proceed your research project until receiving respective departmental approval. The respective department follows a specific process and there are strict requirements to accomplish such a process. Therefore, please pay patience to move along the institutionalized system of this systematic inquiry.
4. It is an integral component of your academic requirements to be accomplished as an independent study. Any misappropriations, copy and submission of a part or whole of the work 'of others' may result in your disqualification from the program. Please be careful, perform reviews with citations of scholarly works; be wise to original contributors by giving them the credit of their works by performing appropriate citation and referencing.
5. Please also make sure that you do not have any family, friendship and other close affairs related relationships with your Research Supervisor; if found so in future before you inform, both the Supervisor as well as Researcher will be asked to drop the project at any stage. By chance, if such relationship takes place in future, both the Supervisor and Researcher must inform to the Program Director/Campus Chief in separately written form, and the Program Director or Campus Chief will take alternative measure to arrange a substitute Supervisor at the earliest.
6. As part of professional ethics, we encourage both the Researcher and Research Supervisor to arrange multiple discussion and consultation meetings using the resources and space available at the Research Management Cell of MUSOM or at the working office of the Research Supervisor. We strongly discourage personal meetings outside the Campus premises, including the residence of Researcher, Supervisor or anywhere else without prior approval from the Program Director or Campus Chief in exceptional cases.
7. Time and again, MUSOM and Mid-Western University Faculty of Management organize a series of talk programs, workshops and conferences on research methodology. You are advised to make up your time with active participation in such programs to empower yourself with knowledge, skill competence and attitude on systematic inquiry-based decision making skill development.
8. You are advised to work closely in consultation with your designated Research Supervisor, collectively develop a plan of action and always try to work in line with the milestones proposed in the plan of action so as to make yourself accomplish the project within stipulated time.

9. Please keep all physical and electronic materials reviewed and data collection forms safe for future evidence; the Research Committee, if found necessary, may ask you to submit such materials at the time of your Viva-Voce towards the end of your project.
10. Generally, once a research topic is determined and Research Supervisor is appointed, we do not allow students switch over the area of research. However, in case you have convincing reason to do so, please inform in written to the designated Research Supervisor for obtaining departmental permission. Such changes may be considered, if reported within a month of formalization of research.
11. Similarly, in case of delay in research due to reasons related to family, health or professional matters should be timely reported in written via Research Supervisor. And the designated Supervisor and respective department will try their level best to consider the issue and extend time for the completion of your project. However, other rules of the University cannot be countered in doing so.
12. Finally, you are advised to develop a habit of improving your critic-analytical thinking, communication and presentation skills by performing multiple editing and updating of your manuscript.



C. WORKING PROCEDURES

A finely designed and executed project for GRP may require 3-4 months of quality time involvement of the researcher and mentors. Table 1 below provides with detailed information pertaining to various steps of intended tasks, details of activities to be performed, pre-requisites, corresponding timelines and length of paper work for expected task accomplishment.

Table 1: Working procedure on GRP

Steps	Description of activities to be performed	Timelines and length of paper work
I	<p><u>Submit the Synopsis of Research Proposal</u> Expected Components: Preamble, Preliminary Review Works, Analyses of Research Gaps, Statement of Problem, Research Objectives, Research Questions, Working Hypotheses, Significance and Expected Outcomes of Study, Scope of Works, Definition of Key Terms, Sources of Information, Method of Data Collection, Population of Study, Units of Analyses, Sampling Techniques, Socio-Ethical Compliances; Tentative Plan of Action. Pre-requisites: Successful completion of all course requirements of the program till 3rd semester; no results awaiting students will be entertained for synopsis submission; evidence of full payment of program fee. Process: Call for synopsis (within 5 days of the call); preliminary interview by the Deputy Director or Program Director or Director, followed by needful revision works (within 10th day of the call); ethical clearance by Research Committee (within 12th day of the call); formal research consent by the Director with appointment of GRP Supervisor (within 14th day of the call for synopsis).</p>	<p>2 weeks 3000-5000 words</p>
II	<p><u>Perform Review of Literature</u> Expected Components: Review of Conceptual Perspectives, Review of Related Policy Documents, Review of Related Studies, Development of Conceptual or Theoretical Framework of Study. Pre-requisites: Formal approval of the Program Director or Campus Chief. Process: Write the first two chapters of the proposal, get feedback from the GRP Supervisor and modify the document. Chapter 1: Introduction [Preamble, Preliminary Review Works, Analyses of Research Gaps, Statement of Problem, Research Objectives, Research Questions, Working Hypotheses, Significance and Expected Outcomes of Study, Scope of Works, Definition of Key Terms; Organization of Proposed Research Report] Chapter 2: Review of Literature [Introduction, Review of Conceptual Perspectives, Review of Related Policy Documents, Review of Related Studies, Development of Conceptual or Theoretical Framework of Study; Chapter Summary]</p>	<p>2+3 weeks 7,000-10,000 words in cumulative document</p>

III	<p><u>Develop Full Proposal for Research</u> <i>Expected Components:</i> Chapter 1: Introduction Chapter 2: Review of Literature Chapter 3: Proposed Research Methodology [Introduction, Method of Study, Research Designs, Sources of Information, Population of the Study, Sampling Techniques, Units of Analyses, Instrumentation, Tests of Validity and Reliability, Data Modeling, Bases of Analyses, Plan of Action; Socio-ethical Compliances] <i>Pre-requisite:</i> Acceptance of review of literature and development of conceptual framework by the Thesis Research Supervisor. <i>Process:</i> Write the third chapter of the proposal in tune with the theoretical and conceptual direction set by the conceptual framework of the study, design and test the validity and reliability of data collection instruments, get feedback from the Research Supervisor, modify the document; place data collection instruments in the Appendix.</p>	5+2 weeks 12,000-15,000 words in cumulative document
IV	<p><u>Make a Presentation of Full Proposal</u> <i>Expected Components:</i> Design a 20-25 minute presentation using MS Powerpoint on: Introduction [general situation and research gap, statements of problem; significance of the study] Review of Literature [matrix of literature; conceptual framework of study] Research Methodology [Introduction, Method of Study, Research Designs, Sources of Information, Population of the Study, Sampling Techniques, Units of Analyses, Instrumentation, Tests of Validity and Reliability, Data Modeling, Bases of Analyses, Plan of Action; Socio-ethical Compliances] <i>Pre-requisite:</i> Approval by the Program Director or Campus Chief on recommendation of the Research Supervisor. <i>Process:</i> Develop a presentation document, give presentation to the supervisory team representing program Director or Campus Chief, GRP Supervisor, HODs and fellow researchers, solicit feedback, adapt ideas and methods; obtain GRP Supervisor consent to administer the research.</p>	7+1 weeks
V	<p><u>Perform Field Work</u> <i>Required Preparations:</i> Letter of Approval from the Director, copies of data collection instruments (electronic/hard), sampling frames, location maps, plan of travel and other logistics. <i>Pre-requisite:</i> Approval by the Director on recommendation of Research Supervisor. <i>Process:</i> Researcher administers data collection; Research Supervisor, Director opt suitable mechanism to facilitate and control field research.</p>	8+2 weeks
VI	<p><u>Perform Data Reduction and Analyses</u> <i>Data Reduction:</i> Coding, field controls, editing, data</p>	10+2 weeks 17,000-19,000 words in

	<p>entry, cross-tabulation, transformation; transcribing qualitative information into quantitative measures.</p> <p>Data Analyses: Performing information production, analyses and testing.</p> <p>Documentation</p> <p>Chapter 3: Respondent Information to be added before Plan of Action section of Chapter 3.</p> <p>Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analyses [Introduction, research question-based, theme-wise display and discussion of information in different sections, summary of findings; Chapter Summary]</p> <p>Pre-requisite: Accomplishment of data collection task</p>	cumulative document
VII	<p><u>Develop Report, Make a Presentation and Submit</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transform chapters 1 through 3 from proposal to accomplished form of language. 2. Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analyses [as outlined in previous step] 3. Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusions [Summary, Discussions, Lessons Learnt, Recommendations for Policy Implications, Recommendations for Managerial Decision Implications, Suggestions for Continued Research; Conclusions] 4. Update References and Appendices 5. Design presentation materials 6. Accomplish defense of Thesis/GRP 7. Solicit feedback and submit for final consideration 	<p>12+2 weeks</p> <p>18,000-20,000 words in cumulative document</p>
VIII	<p><u>MUSOM Graduate Research Project Committee</u></p> <p>Director - Chair</p> <p>Senior Faculty Member- Expert Member</p> <p>External Evaluator-Expert Member</p> <p>Internal Supervisor-Expert Member</p> <p>Administrative Staff- Member Secretary</p>	

Appendix 11.2 Examiners' Recommendation Form



MID WEST UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT (MUSOM)
Birendra Nagar, Bhubaneswar



D: Examiners' Recommendation Form
Master of Business Administration

The GRP must be a substantial work based on independent study which shows a sound knowledge of the subject of the research, evidence of practice of some independence of thought and clear and concise communication abilities.

Candidate:	
Examiner:	

Recommendation for Classification

Please mark one box only and refer page 2 for the required Merit Criteria Scores-

Pass	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The thesis be passed with no requirement for correction/amendments and the student be awarded the degree of MBA.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The thesis be passed, subject to minor revision as indicated in my report.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The thesis be passed, subject to substantive amendment along the lines as indicated in my report. -The student will be instructed to submit a detailed report to the MUSOM GRP Committee outlining the amendment to the thesis. The committee will consider the report and the revisions in determining the final classification, without further reference to the examiners.
If applicable -I believe this to be in the top 5% of GRP I have examined.	

OR

Re-Submit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The GRP be returned to me for re-examination after completing the required extra work and revision as indicated in my report. A GRP which must be re-submitted requires alterations of such scale, complexity and or conceptual significance should be appraised again.

OR

Master of Business Administration -Consider submission for examination for the degree of Master of Business Administration	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Because this GRP is of high standard, I recommend that it be re-examined for degree of MBA. The GRP shall be a substantial and original contribution to scholarship for the discovery of new knowledge and innovative re-interpretation of known and established ideas.

OR

Fail	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The GRP be failed and the student not be awarded the degree of MBA

-Please also complete and return the following page with the merit criteria scores-

Appendix 11.3 Examiners' Recommendation Form



MID WEST UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT (MUSOM)
 Biratnagar, Nepal



E: Examiners' Recommendation Form
 Master of Business Administration

Student:	
Examiner:	

Please provide a merit criterion score for each of the six criteria below, according to the key at the bottom of the page. The GRP you are examining submitted in part, or as whole fulfillment of the requirements for the award of MBA is a substantial work generally based on independent research:

Score	Criteria for the award of Master of Business Administration
	The GRP as whole is a significant and original contribution to knowledge of the subject with which it deals.
	The student shows understanding of the relevant literature, methods and research process.
	The GRP provides a focused and analytical study of the topic.
	The techniques adopted are appropriate to the issues and are properly applied.
	The results and discussions are set out logically.
	The quality of communication and overall presentation are of a standard for publication.

Please attach your report (minimum length of one long paragraph).

-I confirm that there is no actual or perceived conflict of interest arising from my examination of this GRP.

Signature:..... Date:.....

Merit Criteria Score Key

Score	Merit Criteria	Description
1	Distinction	Of the highest merit, at the forefront of international master in the field. Only fewer students worldwide would fall in this band.
2	Excellent	Strongly competitive at international level. Fewer than 20% students would fall in thus band.
3	Very Good	An interesting and sound GRP. Fewer than 30% students would fall in this band.
4	Good	A sound GRP, but lacks a compelling element.
5	Fair	The GRP has potential, but requires major revisions.
6	Flawed	The GRP does not meet the required standard for this criterion.

Appendix 11.4: MBA GRP Viva Voce Report



MID WEST UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT (MUSOM)
Birendranagar, Surkhet

F: MBA GRP Viva Voce Report

Name of Student	
Program	
Registration N:	
Batch	
Symbol N:	
GRP Title	
Venue	
Date of Viva Voce	
Chair of GRP Evaluation Committee	
Viva Expert	
External Evaluator	
GRP Supervisor	

Please rate the candidate's performance at the Viva

SN	Criteria	External Evaluator/GRP Supervisor				Total	
		FM	MO	FM	MO	FM	MO
1.	<i>Problem Definitions</i> [Analyses of gaps, statement of problem, objectives, research questions, working hypotheses, significance of study]	7		3		10	
2.	<i>Review of Literature</i> [diversity and intensity of reviews from the perspectives of concepts, theories, policies, related studies and best practices, and development of conceptual framework of study]	10		5		15	
3.	<i>Research Methodology</i> [approach and designs, instrumentation and modeling, sampling and sample size, field administration, data reduction and analyses, socio-ethical compliances]	10		5		15	

4.	<i>Data Presentation and Analyses</i> [pattern and sequencing in order of objectives, research questions and hypotheses, tabular and graphical portrays, statistical testing, discussions and interpretation]	7		3		10	
5.	<i>Summary and Conclusions</i> [summary, discussions, lessons learnt, conclusions and recommendations]	5		2		7	
6.	<i>Academic Writing</i> [quality of language, paper structure and design, citations, referencing]	7		3		10	
7.	<i>Overall Impression</i> [personality disposition, vision and commitment on respective field of specialization; exhibited knowledge, skill competence and attitude towards chosen area of study]	4		4		8	
8	<i>Presentation</i> [opening of subject matter, spontaneity and clarity of communication and explanation, receiving and responding to panel members' concerns, satisfactory evidence of self-accomplishment of research process and closing effectiveness]	25				25	
<i>Total</i>		75		25		100	

GRP Expert Panel	Name	Signature	Date
GRP Supervisor			
External Evaluator			
Viva Expert			
Director of MUSOM			

Notes: For successful candidates, the results will be announced no later than 15 minutes after the presentation is over. The Research Committee reserves its decision to ask the researcher for further slight or major modification, complete rework, or even rejection of report – all based on candidate's performance during defense and documentary evidence of quality and significance of the work. The Committee Chair would facilitate the presentation and hence, would not engage grading of performance.

