Research Report Guidelines

The Research Report is a written document that provides an analysis to address an environmental problem. The student is expected to demonstrate ability to apply environmental science principles in an actual decision-making situation in a manner that is satisfactory to the student's graduate committee. In addition, the research must reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the program by addressing an environmental problem from multiple perspectives, which may include a social and/or economic perspective.

MS students may choose the Research Report option for their research only upon approval by their Advisory Committee. Students choosing the Report option are required to complete 3 hours of ENVR 5000: Thesis. Similar to a thesis, the student will present a Report Proposal to their committee; a signed Report Proposal Form is to be submitted to the ESGP Coordinator to place in the student’s file. The student also defends the final Report findings and conclusions to their committee in an oral presentation. Following this presentation, the Formal Report Approval Form is submitted to the ESGP Coordinator and the Graduate College.

The report must be written as a professional document, using concise and precise vocabulary, correct spelling and grammar, and the third person narrative voice. If the student is not comfortable with professional writing, s/he should seek editorial advice, such as from the OSU Writing Center. Style should follow American Psychological Association (APA, 6th edition); anticipated length is 20-30 pages, excluding appendices.

Organization & Content of the Report

Executive Summary
A brief summary (no more than one page) of the report organization, problem addressed, solution selected, and assessment of solution success.

Acknowledgments
Thank you to those who helped the author.

Table of Contents

List of Tables (if applicable)
List of Figures (if applicable)

Chapter 1: Description of the Environmental Problem
- Explain the reason for the report.
- Define the environmental problem that was solved by this report
- State the importance of the problem and explain why solving this problem is important to the organization and to the larger community
- List the objectives of the report
- Describe the general approach used in solving the problem
- Explain the major outcomes to be achieved.

Chapter 2: Description of the Report Arrangement, Methodologies, and Tasks
- Describe the data collection and analysis methodologies that were used in analyzing the problem, identifying and screening potential solutions, evaluating solution candidates, selecting the best solution, and implementing the solution.
- Describe the tasks performed during the report, with associated timelines.

Chapter 3: Presentation and Discussion of the Solution to the Problem
- This chapter is the most important part of the report; care should be taken to develop an articulate and convincing discussion.
The presentation of results includes the products of the investigation, analysis, evaluation, or other methods used to solve the problem.

The text may be augmented with various graphics, including tables, charts, graphs, drawings, photographs, plans, protocols, computer software, etc. The student should consult their research advisor on the level of detail that should be included.

Findings and Conclusions: Findings are discussions that interpret the results and apply them to solving the problem; conclusions are the student’s discussion about whether the problem was in fact solved. This section should defend and justify the solution selected and include an assessment of the solution’s success.

Appendices
- Manuals, procedures, etc.