

Integrative Project Guidelines

An Integrative Project (IP) is required for the completion of the master's degree (both M.A. and Ed.M.), and represents an extraordinary opportunity for students to apply the knowledge base they have developed during their time within the program. The IP allows students to deepen their research skills, and advance knowledge in their area of study and interest.

Students typically take one of the following four approaches for completing their IP:

- (1) Empirical research paper or proposal:** Empirical research provides an opportunity for students to design and conduct a small, original study that relates both to International and Comparative Education but also to each student's concentration. The IP will include a clearly stated purpose of the study (including critical research questions, aims of the study, and why this study matters to the field of CIE); a literature review; the methodological framework (clearly justifying why these have been chosen and are best suited for the study); an analysis of empirical data (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods) in relation to the research question and methodology; and a discussion of the data analysis in relation to the scholarship the study draws on and to which it contributes. Data can be derived from primary or secondary sources. The IP will make concluding remarks and suggest future research in relation to International and Comparative Education and the student's concentration. Length: 8,000 words.
- (2) Theoretical exploration:** Critical theories provide starting points for rethinking what constitutes knowledge and how this knowledge is connected to the educational realities we seek to understand. Draw on existing critical theories and perspectives to assess, highlight, or rethink the knowledge produced within the field of international and comparative education. For example, a paper might provide a critical assessment of education privatization by applying a critical perspective that questions the tenets of neoliberal school reform policies. Or, a paper might critique practices and pedagogies of an educational program that privileges Eurocentric middle-class values over the funds of knowledge held by migrant or culturally marginalized youth. Finally, a paper might use postcolonial theory to break down the myths of internal homogeneity that nation-states use to legitimize one group's cultural and linguistic practices over others. Length: 8,000 words.
- (3) Policy study:** A policy study will provide an opportunity for students to engage in a key policy space in the field of International and Comparative Education. The IP will include background on a well-defined problem, analyze existing research (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods), present various policy options and their implications, and identify key policy actors and stakeholders that are involved in the policy debate or reform. The social, political, economic, and cultural dimensions of a policy should also be discussed. The Policy IP should contain an Executive Summary and relevant figures, maps, and graphs. Length: 8,000 words.
- (4) Curriculum design and development:** A curriculum-focused IP will provide an opportunity for students to gain curriculum development skills materials in response to a clear need in the International and Comparative Education field. Students can choose to write a *curriculum design paper*, which includes an extensive research paper and sample curriculum module. The paper will consist of an abstract, introduction, context (if developed for a specific location/program), rationale for curriculum (based on needs assessment data or other research if available), conceptual framework for curriculum (drawing on curriculum development theories, curriculum design choices and key principles, including scope and sequence) limitations. The accompanying curriculum module will include 1-3 page outline, table or other "snapshot" of a module or session to illustrate a sample of what a more extensive curriculum might contain once fully developed. Or, students may choose to create a *Curriculum Development Project*, which includes a shorter research paper (Length: 5,000 words) and a fully developed curriculum that includes the overarching goals and learning objectives, activities, assessment strategies, and other required materials for successfully executing the curriculum. Curriculum materials may be developed for students, teachers and/or facilitators. Length: 8,000 words. (*Length of the curriculum will depend on the type of curriculum and duration of course/training and should be agreed upon with your advisor.*)

Other types of writing projects may also be accepted pending consultation and approval from your advisor.

General IP Guidelines to Follow:

1. Define your paper around a specific topic or problem that is of interest to you. Try to avoid writing a description of a topic like “development objectives of non-governmental agencies.” If you were to select this broad topic, think about what interests you the most about it. What is the most controversial aspect discussed in the courses you have taken and covered in the readings? What are the theoretical and practical issues surrounding the topic? Another option would be to select a specific project and discuss how your course work has broadened your understanding of the role of NGOs in development processes.
2. All of the options described above should include a review of relevant literature. If you choose options 1 or 2, then the bulk of the paper will be a review of the literature organized around a thesis statement, or major argument, you are seeking to support. If you choose option 3, the integrated project will have a concise literature review along with additional written and/or visual material.
3. The integrative project should include a title page, abstract, table of contents, reference list, and appendices (if relevant), and it should be in accordance with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, which includes no spelling errors, grammatical mistakes, or typos. It is recommended that the IP be between 25-30 pages long (exclusive of references, appendices, and other components).
4. An outline of the paper should be presented to your advisor before the deadline. You should have your advisor’s approval on the topic, content, and structure of your integrated project. Dates for the first and final drafts of IPs are listed on the next page.
5. The Peer Advisor in the International and Comparative Education Program plays a critical role in guiding master’s students through the process of preparing the IP. Workshops and individual consulting sessions are available to assist students at every step of the way. Students will be notified about the workshops through the website and weekly newsletter.
6. Peer Advisors are **not** editors and should not be asked to proofread your paper; they can help develop your ideas and assist in structuring your IP. It is highly recommended that you form a writing group and exchange drafts with your peers to receive initial edits. If you require further assistance, please discuss it with your advisor or seek assistance at the Teachers College Graduate Writing Center (GWC) at Thorndike Hall, Room 162 (writingcenter@tc.edu or 212-678-3789).

Procedure: Students are required to discuss their projects with their advisors and obtain advisors’ approval before undertaking the projects. Advisors are required to review project outlines before signing degree application forms.

IP Support: In addition to ongoing support from their Peer Advisor, the International and Comparative Education Program will offer weekly Integrative Project (IP) Workshops for students writing their IPs for the M.A. or Ed.M. in Program. The workshops are designed to introduce students to the different components of an integrative project (IP) research paper and provide structured support and accountability during the writing process. Students will explore the basics of research including how to formulate research questions, how to write a critical literature review, how to develop a conceptual framework, and how to write a methods section. In addition, students will have the opportunity to receive feedback on their work from the Peer Advisor (a doctoral fellow) and from their peers. Students should also work closely with their primary advisors for approval of the IP and final draft. Once the IP is completed, the student's faculty advisor must approve it through Degree Audit.

As per New York State requirements, students must submit a soft copy of their completed IP the program assistant. Students will complete a release form indicating whether or not they grant permission for the IP to be viewed by other students.

COMPLETING THE IP CHECKLIST

- Attend the IP workshops.
- Submit the IP to your faculty advisor by the deadline.
- Include the following statement on your cover page:

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts (or Master of Education) in International Educational Development (or Comparative and International Education) at Teachers College, Columbia University

- As per New York State requirements, submit a soft copy of your IP to the Program Assistant
- Complete the release form (available from the program assistant) indicating whether or not you grant permission for the IP to be viewed by other students.