Analysis

Business Need

Although the Boise State University (BSU) Instructional and Performance Technology (IPT) department faculty and staff continuously encourage students to complete a thesis as their culminating activity, only two students in the history of the department have actually done so. A formative evaluation regarding this matter revealed that students think of the thesis project as a monumental task and don't feel supported, guided or informed when undertaking such a large project.

Mission Statement

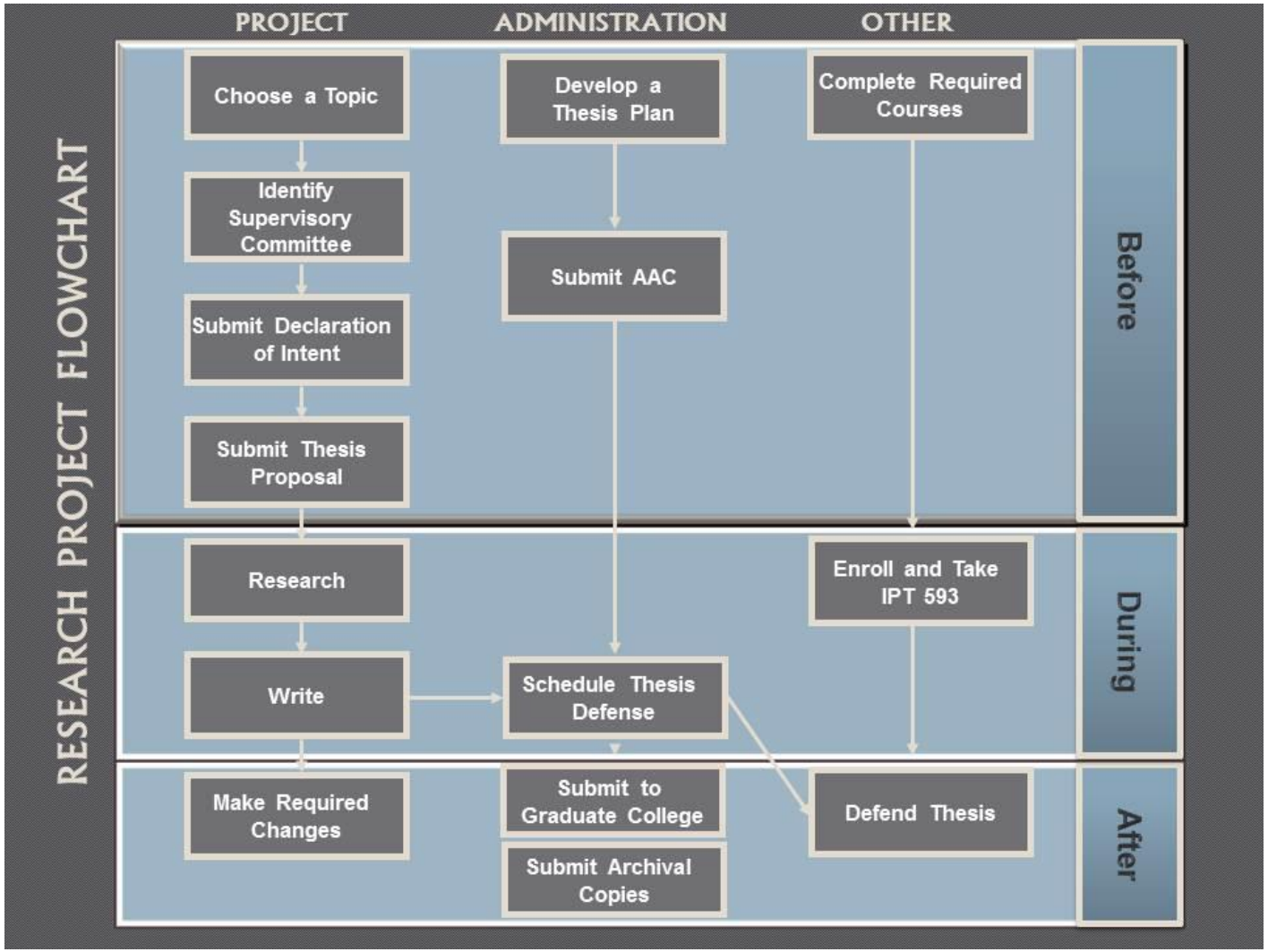
To provide graduate students with the support and guidance needed to feel encouraged to undertake and complete more theses within the BSU IPT department.

Action Plan

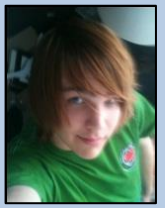
Determine critical success factors for accomplishing mission	▪ Buy-in from all levels: student, staff, faculty and university ▪ A performance support instrument that effectively addresses and resolves the performance gap ▪ Resources (budget, time, equipment, personnel, etc.) necessary to assessing the situation and then constructing and implement performance support instrument ▪ An clear understanding of the performance and how it can be closed
Survey the internal environment (inside your division, department, company) to see what is available to address these critical success factors	▪ Faculty and staff fully support the project and will champion the effort at student and university level ▪ The IPT department is comprised of several HPT and instructional design experts ▪ The IPT department has many resources readily available and presently set-up for this kind of effort
Survey external resources (outside your organization) to see what is available to address the critical success factors	▪ Several open-source software applications ▪ The Albertsons library ▪ Online academic and non-academic search engines
Determine the gaps between what is available and what you need	▪ Project must still obtain support from students and the university ▪ Any resources not presently available within the IPT department must be provided

	by the university
Develop a set of objectives to close the gaps, including who is accountable and when	▪ Develop a clear understanding of the performance problem, the project and what the project will entail ▪ Achieve buy-in from students and the university ▪ Ensure resources are available for the project ▪ Ensure project is completed within a reasonable predefined time period
Delineate action steps to achieve the objectives	▪ Define the scope of the project, including identifying what is and isn't included as well as the time it will take to complete the effort ▪ Identify roles and responsibilities of team members, including who will campaign for support at all levels ▪ Account for resources necessary, including what is currently available and what is still needed, then appoint members to be responsible for obtaining those resources ▪ Create a project timeline by identifying when the project should be completed and then work backwards to the present, creating smaller milestones to be achieved along the way
Establish a plan to monitor your activities toward accomplishing the action plan	▪ Continuously monitor progress in relation to the timeline and ensure milestones are achieved within a timely manner ▪ Document everything and ensure team members document everything ▪ Keep a running list accounting for resources: what is available and what is still needed

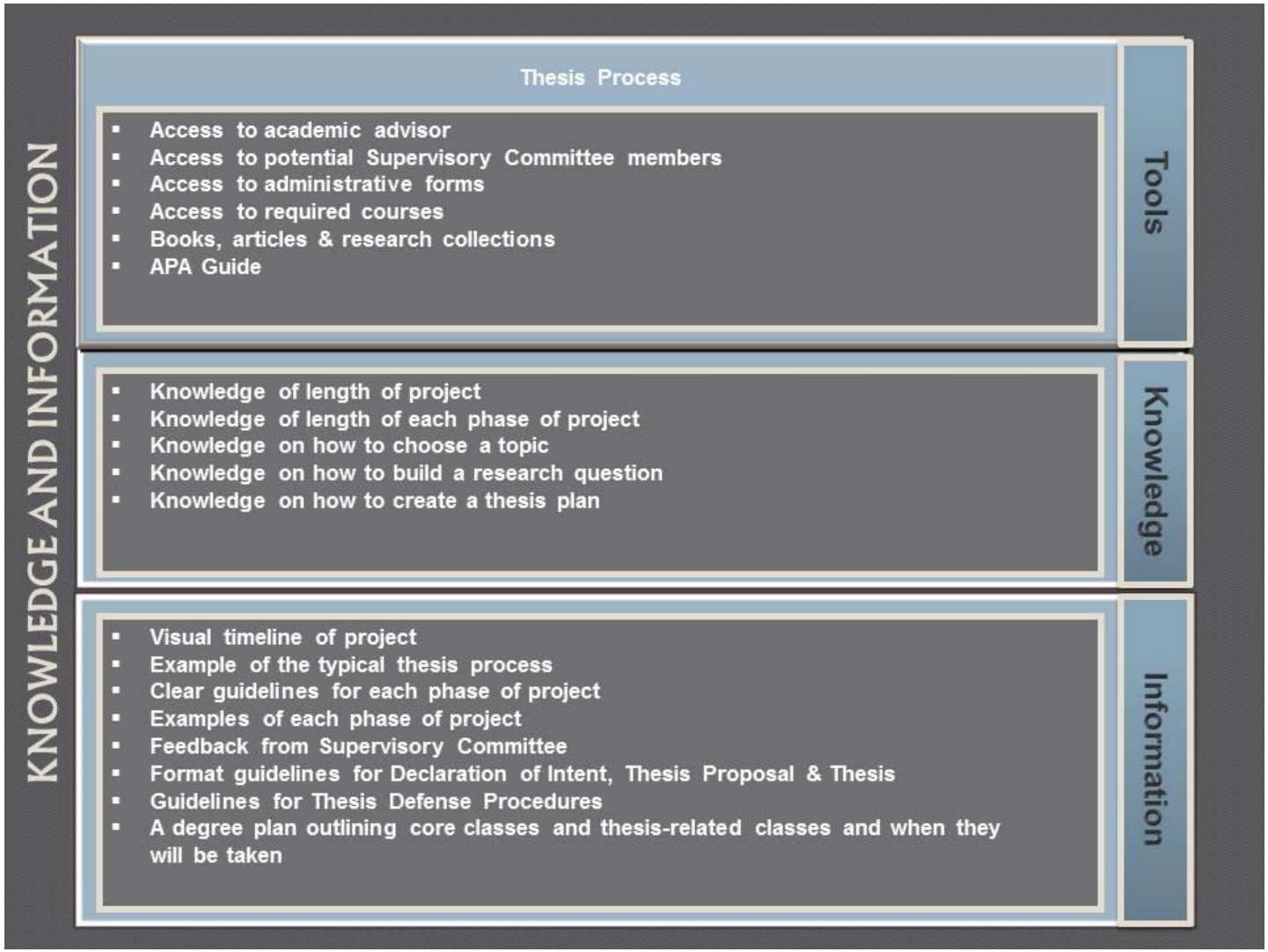
The Thesis Process



Diversity Model

	Vicki	Garrett 
Characteristics	▪ Works full time ▪ Mother ▪ Undergrad was earned 15 years ago ▪ Very studious ▪ Intelligent ▪ Somewhat low confidence in her own learning ▪ Studies in the evening after children are asleep ▪ Basic understanding of technology	▪ Full-time student ▪ Recently earned a BA ▪ High confidence ▪ Procrastinator ▪ Intelligent ▪ Easily comprehends information ▪ Multi-tasker ▪ Easily distracted ▪ Technology savvy ▪ Resourceful ▪ Planning on continuing with school
Wants/Needs	▪ Clear instructions ▪ Encouragement ▪ An understanding of the big picture ▪ Flexible study schedule ▪ Clear resources ▪ Ample time to perform tasks	▪ Help with staying focused ▪ Constant feedback and guidance ▪ Regular communication with and easy access to professors and mentors ▪ A subject he is passionate about
Hinderances/Things to avoid	▪ Unclear directions ▪ Confusing technology ▪ A strict schedule	▪ Unclear directions ▪ Lack of feedback ▪ No guidance
Quote	**"It is my dream to go to graduate school, but I'm not sure if I can handle it"**	**"I have to study something I am interested in, otherwise what's the point?"**

Model the knowledge and information needed to go through the thesis process –



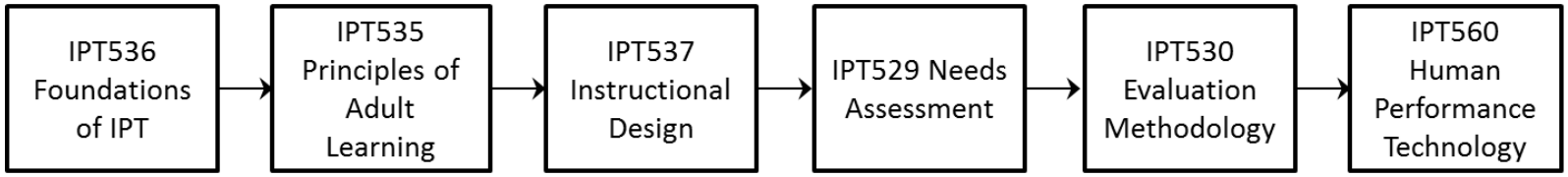
Identify and describe performer needs in each step of the process

Stage:	Student Needs:
Prior to choosing the thesis	▪ What is a thesis? Why would a student choose thesis over portfolio? ▪ How much time will the thesis take, whether the student is full-time, part-time, working only on the thesis, etc.? What kind of commitment is required? ▪ What goes into creating a thesis, what resources are available, what does the thesis process look like?
Develop a Thesis Plan	▪ What are the requirements? ▪ How much time should each phase of the thesis process take? ▪ What should a thesis plan look like?
Choose a topic	▪ Resources to answer questions and help with research
Submit Completed AAC	▪ Proposed graduation date, classes required, electives, and semester each class should be taken ▪ Appropriate paperwork
Submit Declaration of Intent	▪ What is the objective of the thesis and/or what is it asking? ▪ What are the requirements and what should a Declaration of Intent look like? ▪ Necessary paperwork and resources to answer questions
Complete Required Courses/Enroll in IPT593	▪ What kind of research will the project require? Qualitative, quantitative or both? ▪ Information on the classes IPT531 & IPT532
Identify Supervisory Committee	▪ Information on IPT program faculty, areas of research and who can best assist with the thesis ▪ Appropriate paperwork and guidelines for choosing the supervisory committee
Submit Thesis Proposal	▪ What is the purpose of a thesis proposal? What are the requirements, background, objectives, scope, methods and timelines of the thesis research? ▪ APA writing guidelines and appropriate paperwork ▪ Sample thesis proposal
Research	▪ A realistic timeline for research for the student to stick as close to it as possible ▪ Any necessary resources to answer questions ▪ Possible IRB approval
Write	▪ Requirements of the department and graduate college ▪ Appropriate paperwork and resources to answer questions
Schedule Thesis Defense /Submit Completed Thesis to Supervisory Committee	▪ 4 weeks between submission of thesis and thesis defense ▪ Approval from Major advisor ▪ Completed draft

Defend Thesis	▪ **To prepare for the thesis defense** ○ **Research** ○ **Peer review** ○ **Role play** ▪ **Date, time and location of thesis defense**
Make Required Changes	▪ **Feedback from supervisory committee**
Submit thesis to Graduate College	▪ **Submit 8 weeks prior to graduation**
Submit Archival Copies of Thesis	▪ **Submit to graduate college 5 weeks prior to graduation.** ○ **2 copies for graduate college** ○ **1 copy for the department** ○ **Print on 25% cotton paper** ▪ **Appropriate paperwork**

Representation of Business Problem

To help students feel more supported and encourage them to undertake and complete the thesis, structured guidance will be presented in five of the six required courses.



Recommended Course Path for the IPT program

IPT536: Foundations of IPT

Introductions and choosing a culminating activity

One week of the IPT536 course will focus on encouraging students to begin thinking about their culminating activity. The instructor introduces both the portfolio and thesis. The student is presented with one general webpage explaining each culminating activity with links to more information on each. The ***Culminating Activity Page*** will feature both the portfolio and thesis options, comparing the two and assisting students in choosing which project will work best for them. This page will provide quick answers to frequently asked questions about each option, such as

timelines, expectations and reasons for choosing one option over another. The student is encouraged to ask questions as needed and choose a culminating activity by the end of the semester.

	Summary
Activity Webpage	Link to the Portfolio or Thesis Page
Description	A description of the Porfolio or Thesis and a brief summary of the process involved with each activity
Why would I choose the…	Reasons why a student should choose one activity over the other
How much time will it take?	An example Timeline
What are the steps involved?	Would illustrate the process of doing the thesis would look like, including all relevant due dates within that time period.
What are the guidelines and Requirements	APA and formatting guidelines Timelines Forms required for completion
Frequently Asked Questions	A link to a *Frequently Asked Questions* page that answers basic questions regarding timelines, processes, guidelines, etc.
What forms are required?	A Link to An *Administrative* page with all relevant forms
What does a Portfolio/Thesis Look like?	A link to an *Examples* page with examples of projects and phases of projects
Defense Information	A like to a *Defense* page with resources and information on preparing for a portfolio defense
What resources are available to help me choose?	Provides links to: Webinars Student Advisors (Previous students willing to help) Examples

IPT535: Principles of Adult Learning

Getting started, expectations, considerations, etc.

The nuts and bolts of each culminating activity will be introduced in this class. Each culminating activity would have its own website providing all the information a student would need to complete the activity. The ***Thesis Site*** will focus solely on the thesis project. This site will offer students a quick overview of resources that can help with the completion of a thesis, including deadlines, webinars, requirements, paperwork and examples from each phase of the project. Information presented in the five courses will also be available on the thesis site and the site is also accessible from the ***Culminating Activity*** page.

One week during the course will focus solely on helping students learn more about their (hopefully) chosen activity. The class would be separated into two groups by activity and given more information on the process of their chosen activity. For instance, the thesis would include:

A link to the AAC page
Example Thesis plan
Example Declaration of Intent
Example Thesis Proposal
Example Thesis
Thesis Defense information

Students would then be encouraged to brainstorm. For instance, the thesis group would bounce project ideas off of each other and potential approaches to research. The professor would give feedback and guidance to each group.

IPT529: Needs Assessment & IPT:530 Evaluation Methodology

Research
In these classes professors are teaching students different methods of research. Currently Evaluation Methodology and Needs Assessment focus one week of class on how the project could be used in a portfolio. Going forward, equal time would be spent on how a student could use the research methodology in these classes to assist in research for a thesis.

IPT560: Human Performance Technology

Since this class is usually the final course a student takes before graduating, one week of class would focus on preparing for the thesis defense, including various approaches for studying as well as a list of questions that might be asked.

Evaluate the Representation with Real Examples of the Personas, Vickie and Garrett

1. Vicki got overwhelmed by the culminating activity page
2. The timeline did not apply to Vicki, who is a part-time student
3. Garrett felt he needed more than just a class period to help him decide on a culminating activity
4. Vicki took IPT535 before IPT536 because it fit best with her schedule
5. Vicki originally decided on a portfolio, but then switched to a thesis in the midway though the IPT530 Evaluation Methodology class