Outline for Master’s Thesis Protocols
Mayo Graduate School

1. Title

2. Name of Candidate

3. Name(s) of thesis advisor and consultants on protocol
   (not thesis advisory committee members)

4. Background
   A brief review of the pertinent literature and a list of references.
   This review should demonstrate that the candidate has a thorough
   knowledge of the literature, which is directly related to his proposal.
   Include the titles of the articles read. Emphasis should be on
   developing a review that is highly relevant to the project rather
   than an exhaustive review of the entire field. Its content should be
   carefully selected to keep the length of this section to not more than
   2-3 pages. In writing the entire proposal unusual abbreviations and
   technical jargon should be carefully defined so that the proposal can
   be readily understood by scientists who are not actively working in
   the specialized field which it addresses.

5. Rationale
   State the hypothesis to be tested and the logic of the approach to be
   used.

6. Specific Aims
   A list of not more than five or six (preferably three or less) sentence
   statements of the primary things you plan to determine in the project
   (the purpose of the study). Example: 1) To determine in an animal
   model the effects of hypertension on development of atherosclerotic
   lesions and the nature of aortic sterols, steryl esters and free acids.
   2) To assess the reversibility of these changes after treatment of
   hypertension.

7. Experimental Design
   Outline or display the number of observations in each experimental
   group and list what procedures are to be done and what
   measurements are to be made on each of the groups. In patient
   studies the criteria for inclusion in each experimental group should be
   listed.

8. Methods
   Describe the specific methods to be used in the project. Standard
   methods need not be described in detail but the basis for new
   methods and/or significant modifications of established methods
   should be given. References to specific methods to be followed
   should be listed.

9. Analysis of the Data
   How are the data obtained to be handled to test the hypothesis listed
   under Rationale. It is not sufficient to merely state that standard
   statistical methods will be used. The specific comparisons to be
   made and the number of data samples to be obtained for use in
   making the comparisons should be listed.

10. Role of Candidate in Project
    Describe exactly what part you will be playing in the project,
    performing what procedures in what laboratories, obtaining patient
    material, etc. The sources of other data to be used in the protocol
    (microscopic pathology, diagnostic laboratory results, observations on
    patients made by nurses, etc.) and the role of any technical personnel
    working on the project should be specifically identified. In addition,
    the specific role of each advisor in the conduct of this project should
    be identified.

11. Significance
    What is the significance of this study with reference to the state of
    knowledge of the field and diagnostic or therapeutic implications of
    the funding.

12. Human Studies Aspects
    (when applicable) - Please see Institutional Review Board policy
    manual: http://mayocontent.mayo.edu/irb/index.html

13. Budget
    A detailed listing of the personnel who will be working on the project
    should be included as well as the proposed sources of funding for
    such personnel. Costs of supplies, any diagnostic laboratory tests or
    special research services should also be included.

14. Curriculum Vitae of the Candidate
    This should include the name, institutions attended and dates of
    degrees received, professional experience and bibliography.