



**DISSERTATION AND THESIS
FORMATTING GUIDE
Spring 2024**

PREPARED
BY
THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE EDUCATION

Questions concerning these guidelines or any aspect of
manuscript preparation for the dissertation/thesis should be
directed to

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FORMATTING GUIDE

This guide is designed to assist students in preparation of their dissertation/thesis and to help graduate candidates present results of their research for the use and interest of the academic community and the public at large. Submission of the dissertation/thesis is the final step leading to conferral of a graduate master's or doctoral degree. UT Dallas requires publication of the dissertation and abstract in its original form. The dissertation becomes a permanent and archived record of original research. General guidelines outlined in this guide apply to both master's and doctoral students unless otherwise specified. At UT Dallas, the term **dissertation** refers to the final research paper for the doctoral degree and the term **thesis** refers to the research paper required for some master's programs. Please refer to the [DISSERTATION AND THESIS SUBMISSION GUIDE](#) for information and requirements for submission. University policies on graduate study at UT Dallas are outlined in the Policy Statement UTDPP1052, <https://policy.utdallas.edu/pdf/utdpp1052>.

Please note that the student is responsible for knowing and conforming to the current guidelines and to any special departmental or disciplinary requirements that may apply. Difficulty of use or lack of knowledge of software tools will not be considered reasons to exempt an author from compliance with these guidelines.

It is the responsibility of the author to reformat the document into a PDF file, check the reformatted document for accuracy, and submit the PDF document to the [UTD ETD website](#) for publication. No compression should be used. No changes can be made to the electronic thesis/dissertation once it is approved.

STYLE GUIDE OPTIONS

Various disciplines use different conventions in writing and publishing. Therefore, graduate candidates, in consultation with their Supervising Professor and committee, may select from a set of recognized style manuals. All decisions regarding style and format must be consistent with the chosen style manual and the guidelines outlined in this Dissertation and Thesis Formatting Guide. In addition to the recommendations of each style guide, the Office of Graduate Education has a small number of required format elements which are outlined in the remainder of this guide.

Reference guidelines and appropriate citation standards should reflect the author's style guide choice and discipline. They must be detailed consistently throughout the document. Reference format should be consistent with discipline and publication standards and/or style guide choice.

Recommended style guides are listed below:

- Banik, Baysinger, Kamat & Pienta. *ACS Guide to Scholarly Communication*. (3rd edition). An American Chemical Society Publication.

Access has moved to an online version available to ACS Members and organizational subscribers and will be updated digitally (<https://pubs.acs.org/page/acsguide>). Either the book or online version is acceptable.

- American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th Edition). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association. (<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines>)
- *The Chicago Manual of Style* (17th edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- IEEE Editorial Style Manual, <https://journals.ieeeauthorcenter.ieee.org/your-role-in-article-production/ieee-editorial-style-manual/>
- Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook* (9th Edition). New York: Modern Language Association of America.
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (9th Edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

CONTENT OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION/THESIS

The table below displays the contents, document order and page numbers for the dissertation/thesis. Not all documents contain all items; however, if they are included, they must be in this order.

Our office will not accept dissertation submissions that are missing major components. All headings must be set up, all chapters must be complete, all figures/tables must be incorporated into the body of the dissertation or placed in appendices, and there can be no placeholders for major sections. The version submitted to our office is the version that you will defend with, and as such, it must be as complete as possible. The only sections that can be added later are the Dedication, Acknowledgments, Biographical Sketch and Curriculum Vitae.

Section	Numbering & Pagination
Preliminary Pages	
First Page (required, formerly known as Signature Page)	Page counted, number is <u>not</u> typed or printed on page
Copyright Page (optional, but inclusion is highly recommended)	Page counted, number is <u>not</u> typed or printed on page
Dedication (optional)	Page counted, number is <u>not</u> typed or printed on page
Title Page (required)	Page counted, number is <u>not</u> typed or printed on page
Acknowledgments (required)	Counted, number typed Acknowledgments is the first page on which a number will appear in Roman numeral
Abstract (required) ProQuest/UMI permits 500 words for both doctoral and master’s abstracts	Counted, number typed in Roman numeral
Table of Contents (required)	Counted, number typed in Roman numeral
List of Figures (required if there are 5 or more figures)	If included, counted, type number(s) on page(s) in Roman numeral(s)
List of Tables (required if there are 5 or more tables)	If included, counted, type number(s) on page(s) in Roman numeral(s)
List of Abbreviations or symbols (if used)	If included, counted, type number(s) on page(s) in Roman numeral(s)
Body of Dissertation (required)	
a. Text (required) b. Appendix/Appendices (optional) c. Bibliography, References or Works Cited (required)	First page of text is always numbered “1”. Remaining pages are numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals
Biographical Sketch (required)	Counted, number typed
Curriculum Vitae (required)	Pages not counted as part of main text, numbering optional

CONTENT DESCRIPTION OF THE DISSERTATION/THESIS

First Page

Previously called the Signature Page, this page contains the committee members' names. The Supervising Professor (Chair) should appear first, followed by the Co-Chair (if applicable), then other committee members should be listed in alphabetical order by last name unless there is a reason to do otherwise. This page is unsigned in the electronic version of the thesis/dissertation.

Copyright

The author of the thesis/dissertation automatically owns the copyright of their original work once it is "fixed" in some medium - written on paper, stored on a computer drive, etc. It is not required to place a copyright notice on page 2 of the thesis/dissertation, but it is highly recommended. If the notice is included, the student's name must be identical to the name on file in the Registrar's Office and as it appears on the first page, title page and the abstract. For further information about copyright protection, ownership and fair rights, see <http://www.copyright.gov/>.

Title Page

The student's name must appear here as it does on the first page, copyright page and on the abstract. The date on this page is the date of the conferral of the degree, not the date of the defense of the thesis/dissertation.

If the thesis or dissertation has a main title and a subtitle, put the main title on a single line, followed by a colon, and organize the subtitle in inverted pyramid form below the main title. If the main title is too long to fit on a single line, organize the main title in inverted pyramid form.

Acknowledgments

At the end of the acknowledgments page, leave two single line spaces below the last line of text and add the "Month Year" in which you defended your thesis or dissertation.

Abstract

The abstract should be a concise statement of the nature and content of the thesis/dissertation, indicating its significance as a piece of research. It should be a continuous summary, not disconnected notes or an outline. Both doctoral dissertation and master's thesis abstracts should not exceed 500 words. Even though ProQuest/UMI no longer has a word limit on abstracts, they will truncate any abstract over 500 words when they publish it in print indexes such as "Dissertation Abstracts International" and "Master's Abstracts International". The candidate must make certain that the name appearing on the abstract is the same as that on the first, copyright, and title pages. The title of the abstract must be the same as the title on the finished dissertation. The year on this page is the year of degree conferral.

Table of Contents

The Table of Contents is required. The Table of Contents should accurately reflect the outline and organization of the manuscript. It should include the Acknowledgments, Abstract, List of Figures (if any), List of Tables (if any), List of Abbreviations (if any), chapter titles of the text (and any sections/subsections you choose to include), Appendices (if any), Bibliography/References, Biographical Sketch, and Curriculum Vitae (the Curriculum Vitae is listed in the Table of Contents but it is optional to include a page number).

Appendices

Materials which are peripheral but relevant to the main text of the thesis/dissertation should be placed in appendices. Appendix material must meet the same requirements of margins and pagination as the text. Reduction of materials to meet margin requirements is acceptable only if the print remains clear and legible.

Documentation Sources

Reference guidelines and appropriate citation standards should reflect the author's style guide choice and discipline. They must be detailed consistently throughout the document. The bibliography or list of references should indicate materials **actually used** (and the edition, if that used is not the first). Reference format should be consistent with discipline and publication standards and/or style guide choice.

Biographical Sketch and Curriculum Vitae

A brief biographical sketch of the author should be included and written in third person. Information may include education and degrees awarded, publications, and any teaching, business, industry, or military experience. The Curriculum Vitae (CV) should be consistent with discipline standards. For examples and information see [Sample Pages](#) on the Office of Graduate Education website.

Non-Print Dissertations/Theses

Specific format requirements for videotapes, paintings, and so forth should be obtained from the Office of Graduate Education prior to the start of the creative project.

FORMATTING GUIDELINES

The Office of Graduate Education has prepared the following suggestions to assist with dissertation/thesis preparation. The requirements for formatting, production and submission of dissertation/thesis outlined below meet the necessary standards for electronic archiving as set out in the ProQuest/UMI and American Library Association (ALA) guidelines. The precise form, style and appearance should be consistent throughout and conform to best practices in the discipline and those outlined in the selected style guide. The finished dissertation/thesis reflects the ability and character of its author and must be a professional quality manuscript. To help prepare for writing of the manuscript and to assist with formatting and style decisions, see our [Sample Pages](#). Also, completed dissertations are available for review in the Dean's Office of each school, in the Eugene McDermott Library and also online [electronically](#). Examples of preliminary pages are available as downloadable templates in two formats: Microsoft Word and LaTeX.

[Download MS Word template](#)

[Download LaTeX Template](#)

Dissertations submitted to our office must be formatted using our most recent template. Dissertations formatted without a template or with an outdated template (Feb. 2018 or earlier for Word, Oct. 2021 or earlier for LaTeX) will be rejected and students will be asked to resubmit.

DISSERTATION/THESIS CONTENTS

The dissertation/thesis represents an organized, cohesive document of original scholarly research. Content will always include a descriptive title and subtitles. It must also include an abstract, a full introduction delineating a research question, a comprehensive literature review, and a final overall discussion describing the results of the research and the contribution of the dissertation/thesis to the field.

CONSISTENCY

As a representative document, the dissertation and thesis should be produced in a format with a consistent style and appearance. Consistency extends to pagination, font, table presentation, etc. Refer to selected style guide for recommendations.

LANGUAGE

The document should be written in Standard English and adhere to appropriate spelling, grammar, and punctuation conventions.

PAGE SIZE AND PAPER SPECIFICATION

Page size must be 8.5 x 11 inches (or 216 x 279 millimeters), also known as “letter” size in U.S. standards.

MARGINS

- All top margins- 1.25”
- All left margins- 1.25”
- All right margins- .75”
- All bottom margins- 1.25”

Margins must be consistent throughout the manuscript, including pages containing tables, figures, or other illustrative materials.

FONT

- 12-point font is standard and recommended for legibility
- Font size should remain consistent throughout. Within the document, keep all figure/table captions and chapter headings the same font size as the text
- Smaller font size may be appropriate for footnotes or other material outside of the main text

SPACING

The document must be either double-spaced or spaced with 1.5 spaces, throughout.

Exceptions to this may include the following:

- Bibliography should be single spaced **within** each entry while maintaining a double-space **between** each entry - this convention also holds true for Table of Contents entries, List of Tables/Figures entries, and Table/Figure captions that are more than one line in length
- Quotations as paragraphs, captions, lists, graphs, charts, footnotes/endnotes, bibliographic entries, items within tables, and lists in appendices
- Lengthy tables may be single-spaced
- Irregular spacing may be used to accommodate poetry, creative writing or other forms of artistic expression

Avoid:

- **Widows** - a short line ending a paragraph at the top of a page
- **Orphans** - a heading or subheading at the bottom of a page that is not followed by text
- **White Space** - When a figure or table won't fit on a page and you move it to the top of the next page, sometimes blank space or "white space" is left on the first page. Please continue text from the second page to fill up the blank space on the first page.
- **Conversion errors** - If you are working in Microsoft Word, please make all edits in your Word file and convert the file to PDF once edits have been made. Our office cannot make changes to a document that has been converted from PDF to Word. All track changes must be turned off before converting to PDF.

A word of caution: DO NOT use another thesis/dissertation as a model for your work without also checking the current guides. Do not assume that because another thesis/dissertation was accepted with the same format, yours will be. A number of situations could arise: requirements or interpretations may have changed; an inexperienced checker may have let faulty formatting slip by, etc. When in doubt, check with the Office of Graduate Education. Theses/dissertations that differ significantly from the requirements outlined in these guidelines will not be accepted.

TABLES & FIGURES

Tables and figures may be numbered in one of two ways: 1) consecutively throughout the document (e.g. Table 1 – Table 10), or 2) double-numbered so that the tables’ or figures’ numbers reflect their locations in the document (Figure 2.3 is the third figure in Chapter 2, or Figure A.2 is the second figure in Appendix A). For consistency, do not mix these two types of numbering schemes within your dissertation or thesis.

The caption must be placed **above** a table, but **below** a figure. A List of Figures and a List of Tables should be placed after the Table of Contents if there are **5 or more** figures and/or tables in your dissertation/thesis. Also, figures/tables should appear within the text as close to the reference as possible. **NOTE:** Figures/tables should not be arranged using text-wrapping that positions text to the sides of the figure/table. Text should only appear above and below the figure/table.

There are a few different options on how to incorporate figures within the dissertation/thesis. Please do not list figures/tables at the end of a chapter. We ask that figures/tables either be integrated into the text, moved to an Appendix, or uploaded as Supplemental Files. Each option is explained below.

If the information is pertinent to the surrounding text, it may make sense to integrate the figures/tables into the text of the chapters. This is very common for smaller figures/tables, but can apply to larger figures/tables as well. If some of these figures/tables are more supplemental to the dissertation/thesis content, there are a few additional options. Figures/tables can be moved into Appendices after the final chapter of the dissertation/thesis, directly before the References. These sections have headings in the same format as the chapters, for example:

APPENDIX A

SUPPLEMENTAL FIGURES FOR CHAPTER 3

Alternatively, figures, tables or data sets that should be included with the dissertation/thesis material but don’t necessarily need to appear within the dissertation/thesis itself can be uploaded as Supplemental Files. These will be published with your dissertation/thesis online, but not as a section within the dissertation/thesis. Please note that Supplemental Files will appear within UTD’s digital repository, [Treasures @ UT Dallas](#), but cannot be published to ProQuest UMI.

HEADINGS & PAGE NUMBERS

Chapter headings should be centered, bold, in all caps, and 1.25” from the top of the page. **NOTE:** Page 1 is the first time any text can appear in bold face type—**do not** bold text within the preliminary pages.

(line 1) **CHAPTER X**
 (line 2- leave one single line space)
 (line 3) **CHAPTER TITLE**
 (line 4- leave one single line space)
 (line 5- leave one single line space)
 (line 6) Begin text on this line, against the left margin

Lowercase Roman numerals, centered .75” from the bottom of the page, should be used to number preliminary pages, beginning with the preface and/or acknowledgments (see template for examples).

Arabic numerals, beginning with “1” are used to number all pages of the body of the dissertation/thesis. All page numbers should be centered, .75” from the bottom of the page.

USE OF PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED PAPER(S) WITHIN A DISSERTATION/THESIS

At the discretion of the advisor and program, the graduate candidate has the option to include as part of the dissertation or thesis, the text of an original paper or papers that have been or will be submitted to journals in the field. The inclusion of manuscripts co-authored by the candidate is acceptable. Where the student is not the sole author of a manuscript, the introductory material to the chapter must explicitly describe the student’s contribution to the work and acknowledge the contributions of the other author(s) of the work.

Contents

- The manuscript thesis or dissertation must be more than a mere collection of manuscripts published or to be published. It must include a comprehensive abstract, a full introduction and literature review, and a final overall conclusion which interprets the results of the research and describes the contribution to the field.
- On the first page of the chapter based on a previous publication, a footnote must be included which acknowledges or gives credit to the previous publication. Also, use of a separate chapter title page, with authors and their affiliations listed, may be appropriate (see [Sample Pages](#)).
- In addition, the styles used in manuscripts previously published or submitted for publication may follow the styles required by the journals. The pagination of the pages, however, must follow the guidelines for the traditional thesis/dissertation as outlined in this guide. The preliminary pages are the same as for the traditional thesis/dissertation.
- The figures/tables should appear within the text as close to the reference of the figure/table as possible. If it is absolutely necessary not to include figures/tables within the text, they should be grouped in an appendix.

References

- References can either be listed chapter-by-chapter, or be presented in a single list at the end of the thesis/dissertation. If the chapter-by-chapter approach is used, each chapter, including chapters that are not manuscripts (such as the introduction and concluding chapters), requires a list of references.

Each separate chapter may be set up with the following elements:

- Title page
- List of Tables (if any)
- List of Figures (if any)
- Sections within each chapter may include:
 1. Acknowledgments (may be included with chapters or at the beginning of the entire paper)
 2. Abstract
 3. Introduction
 4. Materials and Methods
 5. Results
 6. Discussion
 7. References

Use of Previously Published Papers within a Dissertation/Thesis

- Because many papers will have already been published by the time final dissertations are submitted, the candidate should be careful to refer to page 11 in the [Submission Guide](#) (“USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL”).