

GUIDE FOR FORMATTING
AND SUBMITTING
DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS
AND MASTER'S THESES

PART ONE

GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR FORMATTING

Academic disciplines differ with respect to rules for formatting doctoral dissertations and master's theses. Consequently, you should consult with your research director in choosing a format consistent with the requirements of your discipline. In all matters not covered by this Guide or by departmental standards, your director acts as arbiter.

For guidance on format questions not answered in this Guide, consult a recognized style manual such as one of the following:

The Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook*. 8th ed. New York: MLA, 2016.

The University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff. *The Chicago Manual of Style*. 17th ed. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2017

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 9th ed. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2018.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU USE THE DISSERTATION/THESIS TEMPLATE. THE TEMPLATES ARE LOCATED ON THE GRADUATE SCHOOL WEBSITE UNDER [AUTHOR RESOURCES](#).

REGULATIONS FOR SPACING

SPACING

- 1.1 Double-space the text of your dissertation or thesis, as well as the abstract, preface and any appendices. Indent the first line of each paragraph. Single-space footnotes, bibliographical entries, and block quotations, and include a blank line of space between entries. In the table of contents and the lists of tables and figures, single-space entries and double-space between them. See 1.7.

MARGINS

- 1.2 The left (binding edge) margin must be at least one and one-half inches. The top, bottom and right margins must be at least one inch. This requirement applies to every page in the document. Formal submissions are formatted for single-sided printing; do not use mirrored images.

Figures and Tables should be accommodated within these limits. See 1.15 for techniques for formatting oversized tables. If possible, reduce all tables or figures, including graphs. Elements that are too wide to fit on a portrait page must be moved to a landscape-oriented page.

PAGE NUMBERING

PLACEMENT OF PAGE NUMBERS

- 1.3 Center **each** page number horizontally; and, without including any punctuation, place the number approximately three-quarters of an inch from the bottom of the page. On a landscape-oriented page the page number needs to be located on the left-hand side and reoriented 90 degrees.

PAGINATION FOR PRELIMINARY SECTIONS

- 1.4 Paginate the preliminary sections (1st page after the abstract through last page of the front matter) consecutively in lowercase roman numerals. **Do not place a number on the title page, although it is counted as page number i. Neither number nor count the copyright notice and the abstract. Number the dedication (or the table of contents if no dedication is included) page number ii.**

PAGINATION FOR BODY OF TEXT

- 1.5 Paginate in arabic numerals the main body of the text, beginning with the first chapter or its equivalent (e.g., Introduction), from page number 1 through the last page, avoiding supplementary page numbering (e.g., 57a).

In a multivolume dissertation, continue the page numbering sequence used in the preceding volume. Always begin a new volume with a new chapter. Include the title page as the first page of any subsequent volume, adding the volume number (e.g., VOLUME II) just below the title. On the title page of a subsequent volume the director's signature need not be original and, again, the page is neither numbered nor counted in the page numbering sequence.

HEADINGS, TITLES, AND SUBHEADINGS

HEADINGS

- 1.6 Always begin a major division at the top of a new page. Center the heading (e.g., "TABLE OF CONTENTS," "CHAPTER 3," "RESULTS," or "APPENDIX") approximately **two inches** from the top edge of the paper. The entire title should appear in all capitals, whether the effect is achieved through a formatting style or manual entry.
- 1.7 All chapter-level sections must include a chapter number, descriptive title, or both. If you title one chapter, however, then all chapters must have titles. Keep all titles approximately the same length. Double-space between lines if the title requires more than one line. Do not give the title terminal punctuation.

The first line of text should begin at least 36pts from the end of the chapter title. Apply this guideline to the first entry in the table of contents and the bibliography, as well as to the first

paragraph in a chapter.

SUBHEADINGS

- 1.8 You may wish to subdivide chapters. For numbered subheadings, use Chapter + Order numbering (1.1, 1.2, ...); do not use letters for main text subheadings. Do not mix roman and arabic numerals (e.g., V.1, III.2). Do not type subheadings entirely in uppercase letters. Stay consistent with capitalization within a subheading level; you may use sentence or title capitalization.

Triple-space from the end of a subdivision to the next subheading. Do not end a page with a subheading. Begin a new page if there is not room for at least two lines of text below a subheading. Most computer programs now will automatically suppress “widows” (last line of a paragraph carried over alone to the top of the following page) and “orphans” (a heading, subheading or first line of a paragraph appearing alone at the bottom of a page).

QUOTATIONS

- 1.9 Enclose in quotation marks and incorporate into the text prose quotations of three lines or fewer. Single-space and indent from the left margin prose quotations of four lines or more (block quotations). Double-space from the text to the block quotation and from the end of the quotation back to the text. Do not use quotation marks in a block quotation unless they are used within the original. Maintain paragraph indentations of the original.

Treat verse quotations of more than two lines as block quotations. If a verse is no more than two lines, incorporate it in the text by using quotation marks and a virgule (/) to divide the lines. However, you may wish to give a shorter quote special emphasis by treating it as a block quote.

Enclose interpolations in square brackets [] not parentheses (). If using “sic” outside a direct quote, enclose it in parentheses, not brackets. Note omissions by using ellipsis points (. . .).

REFERENCES

- 1.10 Provide textual references for all data, opinions, judgments, or ideas garnered from another’s work, whether the work is quoted verbatim, paraphrased, or summarized. If you plagiarize, i.e., take the words or ideas of another scholar and pass them off as your own, you create a false impression that the phrases, insights or information presented are the result of your own thinking or research. Avoid the charge of plagiarism by properly acknowledging the words or ideas of others. A safe rule to follow is: “When in doubt, cite the source.” A reference must provide enough information to direct the reader to the primary source.

Follow the referencing format appropriate for your discipline. The decision as to reference format must be approved by your director. One of the following three options must be chosen:

footnotes or endnotes, parenthetical references, or numerical references. Use consistently whatever format you and your director choose.

FOOTNOTES AND ENDNOTES

- 1.11 When referencing a particular work, the first footnote includes the author's name as it appears on the title page (first name first), the complete title of the work, the publication information (city: publisher, date) and the page reference. You may use a shortened form for subsequent references to the same work, provided that enough information is given to identify it. Do not, however, use *op cit*. Another alternative for subsequent references is to use the parenthetical reference method; see 1.12.

Footnotes also may be used for clarification or further explanation of material in the text.

The reference number is an unpunctuated, super-scribed arabic number. You may number footnotes either consecutively through each chapter, beginning a new numbering sequence with each chapter, or consecutively from beginning to end of the document.

Place footnotes at the bottom of each page. Use the following guidelines for either programming your word processor or formatting footnotes manually. Separate the footnotes from the text by a solid line, approximately 20 spaces in length (or approximately one and one-half inches long), starting at the left margin, a single space below the text. Double-space from the separation line to the first footnote. Indent the first line of each footnote. Start subsequent lines at the left margin. Single-space within footnotes and double-space between them.

If you choose, you may use endnotes. The above numbering guidelines apply, except that the notes are placed at the end of each chapter instead of at the bottom of each page. Endnotes must come at the close of each chapter, not at the end of the document, and are collected under a top-level chapter subheading.

PARENTHETICAL REFERENCES

- 1.12 Parenthetical references in the body of the text direct the reader to the appropriate entry in the bibliography. Include in a parenthetical reference the author's last name and a page reference, or the author's last name and the date of publication. Cite specific page numbers when necessary to direct the reader to a quote or other form of substantiation. Include a shortened version of the title or the author's first initial in order to distinguish between multiple works or authors with the same surnames. You may use supplemental numbers (e.g., 1979a, 1979b) to set off works by the same author published in the same year.

Another common use of parenthetical references is for making subsequent references to a work which is initially cited using a complete footnote or endnote. This initial note also indicates that parenthetical references will be used for subsequent citation of the same work.

NUMERICAL REFERENCES

- 1.13 The numerical reference method is used frequently in science and engineering. Place a number in the text directing the reader to the appropriate entry in the list of references.

FORMATTING TABLES

Although there are many ways to format tables, you should follow closely these guidelines even if the publication manual for your discipline directs otherwise.

TABLE NUMBERS, LABELS, AND PLACEMENT

- 1.14 **Number all tables consecutively with arabic numbers.** Do not mix roman and arabic numerals (e.g., V.1, III.2). If the document has many tables, begin a new Chapter + Order numbering sequence for each chapter (e.g., 1.1, 1.2,...3.1,...A.1, etc.).

Insert a table after the paragraph in which it is first mentioned. If a table cannot be accommodated in the space remaining on the page, continue the text to the end of a paragraph, placing the table at the top of the next page. Place a table alone on a page if the space remaining will accommodate fewer than six lines of text. Do not use “Insert Table X here.”

If the table does not begin a new page, triple-space from the end of the paragraph to the table heading. The heading indicates the table number (**Chapter + Order style**) and is followed by the table title which is succinct – similar to a chapter title. For example:

TABLE 5.1:

AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS OF PRODUCTION WORKERS IN
MANUFACTURING IN THE UNITED STATES: 1950-1952

Type the title entirely in uppercase letters, and do not give it terminal punctuation.

Place table notes immediately below the table in 10pt font, single spaced, and indented on the first line. Triple-space from the last table footnote back to the text.

Do not use shading in a table; use italics or bold font to differentiate information.

OVERSIZE TABLES

- 1.15 For those tables which cannot be accommodated on one page, use one of the following methods:

If a table is too wide to fit on a portrait page (wider than 6”), place it on a landscape page. Do not place subsequent text on a landscape page with table.

Reduce a table to fit on one page, but make sure the font is no smaller than 10pt. Do not reduce the table number and title.

It is acceptable to continue a table on additional pages without inverting any pages. Head subsequent pages with the table number but not the caption, e.g., TABLE 5.1 (contd.).

FIGURES

A figure is any type of illustration that is not a table, including charts, graphs, diagrams, photographs, drawings, maps, and blueprints.

Follow these guidelines on figure placement even if the publication manual for your discipline directs otherwise.

FIGURE NUMBERS, LEGENDS, AND PLACEMENT

- 1.16 Insert a figure after the paragraph in which it is first mentioned. When a figure cannot be accommodated in the space remaining on the page, continue the text to the end of the paragraph, placing the figure at the top of the next page. Place a figure alone on a page if the space remaining will accommodate fewer than six lines of text. Do not use “Insert Figure X here.”

Place your figure’s number and caption below the figure. The caption may be either a title or a longer explanation which might also include sources. If the caption is in sentence form, use terminal punctuation. Do not extend the caption beyond the edges of the figure. Single-space additional lines. **Figures are numbered using the Chapter + Order format.**

Number figures consecutively with arabic numbers. Do not mix roman and arabic numerals (e.g., V.1, III.2). If the document has many figures, begin a new numbering sequence for each chapter (e.g., 1.1, 1.2,...3.1,...A.1, etc.).

OVERSIZE FIGURES

- 1.17 If the caption will not fit on the same page as the figure: place it centered vertically and horizontally on a page by itself. The figure should then follow on the next page by itself.

Oversized figures may be placed on a landscape page with the top of the figure on the left (binding) edge.

PART TWO

SPECIFIC REGULATIONS FOR SECTIONS OF THE DOCUMENT

Present the sections of your document in the following order:

- Title Page
- Copyright Notice (optional)
- Abstract (required for doctoral dissertation, optional for master's thesis)
- Dedication (optional)
- Table of Contents
- List of Figures (if 5 or more figures are in the document)
- List of Tables (if 5 or more tables are in the document)
- List of Symbols (if necessary)
- Preface or Acknowledgments (optional)
- Text
- Appendix or Appendices (optional)
- Bibliography

In some disciplines, the bibliography precedes the appendices. Check with your director.

REGULATIONS FOR PRELIMINARY SECTIONS

TITLE PAGE

- 2.1 Key words in the title are the primary reference which other scholars will use to locate the dissertation or thesis. Consequently, choose words which will briefly and accurately convey the contents. Substitute words for symbols and formulas whenever possible.

Center everything on the title page except the line for the director's signature, which begins at the center and runs approximately two and three-quarters inches to the right. Type the title entirely in uppercase letters. If the title is more than one line, double-space between lines in the title.

Center vertically the material on the title page (same space at the top as at the bottom). The minimum margin requirements still apply. Place four or five vertical spaces between the title and "A Dissertation" or "A Thesis," and then skip four more lines to "Submitted to . . ." Double-space the next four lines, capitalizing these words exactly as shown in the sample title pages.

Place the title of the degree four lines underneath "for the Degree of." **(If you are an engineering master's student, use the following: "Master of Science," double-space, "in . . . Engineering.")** Skip four lines to "by" and skip four lines to your name. Use your academic professional name.

From the vertical center of the page, place the director's signature line eight vertical spaces below your name. The line should be two and three-quarters inches in length. Center your director's name and "Director" (e.g., Pat J. Doe, Director) underneath the signature line. If you have co-directors, follow the same format, triple-spacing between the two. (This will require some compensation in spacing after your name and possibly around the title.) Although we retain the classic signature line, do not include a scanned or digital signature on the official submission.

Place your graduate program name four vertical spaces below "Director." Double-space the last three lines. **The date appearing on the title page must be the month and year of submission to the Graduate School, not the month and year of defense or commencement.**

All information on the title page should be in 12-point font, as in the body of the text. **Do not use bold print on the title page.**

COPYRIGHT NOTICE (OPTIONAL)

2.2 Regardless of whether you register an official copyright on your dissertation or thesis, you may include a copyright page immediately following the title page.

Include in the copyright notice the copyright symbol (©), your full legal name, and the year in which the copyright is secured or the text is officially submitted to the Graduate School. Use the following layout:

© Copyright by
PAT Q. PUBLIC
2001
All rights reserved

Center the notice horizontally and vertically. Neither number nor count this page in the page numbering sequence.

ABSTRACT

2.3 All doctoral dissertations must include an abstract. The abstract should be approved by your director. An abstract is optional for a master's thesis; if included, it should be approved by your director. If you and your director decide that your thesis should be microfilmed, you must include an abstract.

The abstract is published in ProQuest. It should be concise and well-written because it is the most widely read section of the dissertation or thesis. Include these points:

- a statement of the problem,

- a description of the research procedures,
- the results, and
- conclusions and/or recommendations.

Do not use formulas, diagrams, figures and references. If absolutely necessary, place references at the end of the abstract.

The recommended word count is 350 words or fewer.

The abstract follows the title page, or copyright notice if one is included. Double-space the text of the abstract. Neither number nor count the page(s) in the page numbering sequence. **If a second page is necessary, place your name in the upper right corner.** Do not list the abstract in the table of contents.

Note the following sample format for an abstract heading:

THE PRODUCTION-ESTIMATION METHOD:
REGRESSION REDUCTION
AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN POWER FUNCTIONS

Abstract

by

Carole (Kelley) Havens

Begin the text of the abstract three spaces below your name. The title and your name should appear just as they are on the title page. Do not list previous degrees after your name in the abstract heading.

DEDICATION

- 2.4 If you wish to dedicate your dissertation or thesis to one or more people, this tribute may be made on a separate page, following the abstract. **The dedication page (if included) is the first page to receive a page number and is identified as “ii.”**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 2.5 There are many options for organizing the dissertation or thesis. The table of contents should accurately reflect this organization plan. **Word your headings for the table of contents exactly as you word them in the text. Check page references for accuracy.**

All chapter-level elements following the Table of Contents must be included in the table of contents. Note that a period leader (a line of periods) must be inserted between a heading and the corresponding page number entry.

List in the table of contents only those items which come after it.

Chapter-level headings do not need to use all-capitals, but capitalization must be consistent within each heading level. Use either title or sentence capitalization.

LISTS OF TABLES, FIGURES AND SYMBOLS

- 2.6 Include a list of tables if the dissertation or thesis has five or more tables. The list of tables provides the table numbers, titles, and page numbers for all tables, including those in the appendices. If there are five or more figures, note these in a list of figures. The list of figures provides the numbers, captions, and page numbers of all figures. **List titles and captions as they are found in the text.**

Do not include these lists on the same page as the table of contents or combine figures and tables into one list. Each list should begin 2 inches from the top of a new page.

If you wish to include a list of symbols or a list of abbreviations, place it after the acknowledgments page. The terms included in this list must be defined when they are first mentioned in the main body of the dissertation or thesis.

PREFACE OR ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (OPTIONAL)

- 2.7 If prefatory remarks are made, entitle the section "PREFACE." Prefatory remarks cover items such as the background of the project, its scope, and its purpose. If you address these points in the main body of the dissertation or thesis, do not include a preface.

If you wish to make acknowledgments without other prefatory remarks, title the section "Acknowledgments." Acknowledgments should include items such as funding and research grants, permission to use copyrighted material, and credit to individuals and organizations who have assisted you. Avoid facetious remarks which you might later regret.

REGULATIONS FOR THE BODY OF TEXT

- 2.8 Write the main body of your dissertation or thesis in the third person.

INTRODUCTION

- 2.9 Include introductory material (e.g., a brief statement of the problem, background on your interest in the subject, the aim of your research) in one of three places: in the preface, at the beginning of the first chapter, or in a separate introductory section.

TEXTUAL DIVISIONS

- 2.10 The content of the dissertation or thesis often suggests the most appropriate method for dividing the text. Although chapters are often used, an alternative method frequently used in the sciences and engineering is to divide the document into major sections such as “Review of Literature,” “Findings,” or “Recommendations.” You may number these divisions and their subdivisions serially, using arabic numerals (e.g., 1.1, 1.2,...2.1, 2.2, etc.). Do not mix arabic and roman numerals (e.g., V.1, III.2); letters are reserved only for appendices.
- 2.11 If you wish to attach the references for your chapters at the end of each chapter rather than collecting them in a Bibliography section at the end of the document, the title for this section should be treated as a top-level chapter subheading. See 2.14 for details.

REGULATIONS FOR APPENDIX AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

PLACEMENT

- 2.12 The appendix usually follows the conclusion of the dissertation or thesis. However, some disciplines require that the bibliography be placed before the appendix. The ordering of these two sections is not a matter of personal choice. The appendix should come first unless your discipline requires otherwise. In either case, the appendix–bibliography order should be consistent in all dissertations and theses submitted from a particular department.

APPENDIX OR APPENDICES (OPTIONAL)

- 2.13 This section presents supplementary material such as original data, lengthy quotation or other material which is helpful but not essential. If you use descriptive titles in the main chapters, do so for each appendix as well.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2.14 Depending on the nature of the material, this section may have an alternate title such as “Selected Bibliography,” “Works Cited,” “Literature Cited,” or “List of References.” Include only

those sources which are cited in the text. You need not include every work consulted while writing your dissertation or thesis.

- 2.15 In science and engineering, sources are often presented in a list of references. The list is arranged alphabetically according to the authors' surnames. Two or more works by the same author are ordered chronologically by date of publication. If numerical references are used in the text, each number should precede its corresponding entry in the list of references. Parenthetical references in the text are preferable to numerical references because the deletion of a reference during a revision does not require that other references be renumbered.

In the humanities and social sciences, the bibliography usually is arranged alphabetically by the authors' surnames. However, if you use a significant number of works of one particular type (e.g., books, government documents, unpublished letters, or interviews), place them under separate headings.

- 2.16 Regardless of the number of works cited, you may divide the bibliography according to some principle appropriate for the material. Some possible divisions include: published and unpublished materials; works by an author and works about that author; type of material (e.g., books, periodicals, films, interviews, etc.); or chronological order by date of publication. Within each of these divisions, the entries should be arranged alphabetically according to the authors' surnames.

Include anonymous works in the same sequence, alphabetized by title.

- 2.17 Each entry should include the author's full name (last name first), the complete title and the publication information (city: publisher, date). In addition, some of the following may be necessary to identify the work: editor or translator, edition, name of the series, number of volumes in the series, or the section of the work consulted (e.g., volume, chapter and/or page numbers). Consult a recognized style manual for specific guidelines. See "Part One" of this Guide.

PART THREE

CHECKLIST FOR FORMATTING

Your dissertation or thesis will be checked against the following list to determine if it complies with the formatting requirements of the Graduate School.

CHECKLIST FOR DISSERTATION/THESIS FORMATTING

TITLE PAGE:

- Director's name is typed under signature line and followed by the title, "Director."
- Date at the bottom of the title page is the month and year in which the paper is submitted to the Graduate School. The page is not numbered.

ABSTRACT:

- Text is double-spaced.
- Title and author's name are exactly as they appear on title page; full name is in upper right hand corner on second page.
- Pages are neither numbered nor counted in the numbering sequence.

PAGE NUMBERING:

- First page after abstract is numbered "ii;" lower case roman numerals are used for preliminary sections.
- Every page number is centered horizontally three-quarters of an inch from the bottom.
- Every page (except the abstract and copyright notice, if included) is numbered.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- Headings (word for word) and page numbers correspond to the text.
- Abstract is not listed.

LIST OF TABLES AND LIST OF FIGURES:

- Titles/captions (word for word, or a clear, concise summary) and page numbers correspond to the text.
- Margins are at least one and one-half inches on the left side and one inch on the other three sides.
- Appendices/Bibliography are included according to your discipline's guidelines for placement.

PART FOUR SUBMITTING THE DISSERTATION OR THESIS

PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

- 4.1 For updated formal submission procedures, please refer to the Graduate School's Doctoral Dissertation and Master's Theses resources.

<https://graduateschool.nd.edu/dissertations>

Before you may submit your doctoral dissertation, the Graduate School must receive confirmation of the passing of your dissertation defense from either your department office or the person who served as chair of your defense.

Before you may submit your master's thesis, the Graduate School must receive confirmation of the passing of your master's examination from your department office.