

Thesis Preparation Checklist

This checklist emphasizes many of the formatting concerns relevant to thesis preparation. However, it highlights important material contained in the *Thesis Manual*. It is not a substitute for use of the *Thesis Manual*. The Office of Graduate Studies and Research provides a template for creating your thesis, we suggest that you use it. Don't forget to schedule a pre-submittal conference with the Thesis office. The [online pre-submittal conference](#) is available from the Office of Graduate Studies and Research website for additional help.

General Concerns

Use the *Thesis Manual* as a tool while work is in preparation.

- Have you checked for uniform typeface (font and point size) and vertical spacing in the text?
- Have you checked for uniform text justification style? Text may be either fully justified or left aligned. Either way, the style needs to remain consistent throughout the document
- Is all text within the prescribed margins? Left, right, top and bottom margins should be 1". Are all page numbers in the top right corner? (Page numbers should be approximately ½" from the top edge of the paper and 1" from the right edge.)
- Have you spell checked the entire document? Also, have you checked all titles that are in all capital letters for correct spelling? (Spell check does not always pick up errors in words in all capital letters.)
- Have you checked for correct grammar? Once you submit your manuscript, there can be no further corrections. The only changes will come from the Thesis Office.
- Are equations the same font and point size as the text?
- Are the pages numbered correctly with the preliminary pages (beginning with the Abstract, p. iii) in Roman numerals and the text (beginning with the first page of Chapter I or the first section) in Arabic numbers (beginning with 1)?
- Has any of the material in your thesis been published? If so, check with the Thesis Office for instructions.

PDF Conversion

- Did you open your PDF file before submitting (checking to be sure the file is not empty)? Does the author and title listed in the PDF properties indicate your name and manuscript title?
- Are all fonts embedded?
- Is security turned off?
- Is your PDF searchable?

- Are pages in the PDF 8.5” x 11”?
- Does the PDF file open to the first (title) page of the thesis?
- Is lettering in figures at least 1.5 mm?
- Are page numbers on landscape figures in the portrait position?
- LaTeX users—does thesis appear fuzzy on the monitor?

Preliminary Pages

Follow the *Thesis Manual* sample pages very carefully.

- [Title page](#) – put yours on top of sample – does the vertical alignment match? Does the title of the manuscript match exactly across the Title, Approval and Abstract pages? Title should be all uppercase and double spaced with no punctuation
- [Copyright page](#) – recommended but optional unnumbered page, if present, does it follow the Title page and precede the Approval page. Have you officially registered the manuscript with the Library of Congress? It is not required to use a copyright page, but highly recommended.
- [Approval page](#) – Is everything spelled correctly? Correct date of graduation? Are the names correct with no titles listed for committee members?
- [Abstract](#) – Is the title of your thesis in upper and lower case letters? Does the vertical spacing of the preliminary lines match the vertical spacing of the text? We recommend the length of the text be no more than 350 words
- [Table of Contents](#) - Is there consistent vertical spacing? Consistent capitalization? Are all page numbers correct? Does the word ‘Page’ (and, if needed, ‘CHAPTER’) appear on continuing pages? Do all chapter titles and subheadings agree with text? Does the spelling of acknowledgements match on the TOC and on the Acknowledgement page, if included?
- [Lists of Figures/Tables](#) – Is there consistent vertical spacing? Consistent capitalization? Are all page numbers correct? Do the titles match exactly the wording of the titles in the text (up to the first period)?

Text

The subheading organization must be consistent and coherent throughout the entire thesis. A first level subheading must appear before a second level subheading. Do not omit a level. In addition:

- Are all chapter or major section titles in all capital letters and centered?
- Does the first chapter title or major section title include the word ‘Introduction’?
- Does the last chapter title or major section title include the word ‘Summary’ and/or ‘Conclusion’?

- Does the wording of subheadings match the Table of Contents? Page numbers agree? Are all major headings and 1st level subheadings included on the Table of Contents?
- Is there a consistent capitalization format for subheadings?
- Have you checked to make sure the following requirements are met?
 - No punctuation after freestanding subheadings or major headings (section or chapter titles)
 - No centered, all capital letters for a subheading style
 - No subheading as the last line on the page
- Do all new chapter titles or major section titles begin on a new page? (Note: Do not start a new page for subheadings.)
- Are all chapter numbers written as Roman numbers (both at the beginning of the chapter and any text mentions)? Section numbers may be Roman or Arabic.
- Does every page of text contain at least 4.5" of text (unless there is a table or figure on the page or it is the last text of the chapter)?
- Is the model journal sentence at the bottom of page 1 of the text?
- Is the expression 'et al.' written correctly (no period after the 'et', period after 'al.')?

Tables and Figures

- Have you checked your journal for title positions (above or below the tables or figures)? Do not place titles beside tables or figures.
- Have you checked for first text mention of each table/figure? Each must be mentioned in sequence. Also, have you checked that each text mention is within 1-½ pages of text before or on the first page of text after the table/figure?
- Have you checked for word agreement of the titles with the List of Figures/Tables?
- In the List of Tables and Figures, have you checked that there are no words in figure column or page number column?
- Have you checked for consistent formatting of titles (including capitalization, vertical spacing of title and use of end punctuation)?
- Have you checked each table/figure for legibility and minimum size (capital letters and numbers may be no smaller than 1.5 mm)?
- Have you checked for at least a triple space (3 single spaces) separation from text for any embedded table or figure or between tables and figures?
- Are continued tables/figures formatted according to *Thesis Manual* requirements? Do not repeat full title; only table/figure number and column headings.

References

See *Thesis Manual*, page 19 for a more extensive checklist.

- Has the reference section been organized following the journal style? Is it alphabetized with author, date in text? Is it numbered and alphabetized with random numbers for citations in the text? Is it numbered and non-alphabetized with reference numbers in sequence in the text?
- Have you followed your model journal in the use of italics, bold, underlining, parenthesis, quotes, etc.?
- Is each entry complete (for retrieval)?
- Is there consistent capitalization?
- Are all state names written or abbreviated consistently?
- Does this section include only sources actually read?
- Is each entry cited somewhere in the document?
- Do all text citations agree with information in the reference section?

Appendix Material

- Are appendix designations and titles in all capital letters with a double space between them?
- Is all material within the appendix legible and large enough (1.5 mm is the minimum height for capital letters and numbers)?
- Does each appendix page have a page number (continuously numbered from text)?

Vita

- Is the same font and point size as the text used?
- Does the form of your name agree with the name on the first three pages of your thesis?
- Is the permanent address good for at least two years?
- Is your educational background (degree, university, major subject and year for each previous degree) included? Is the information in agreement with the information on page iii?
- Is the Vita limited to one page?
- Have you avoided giving personal information that you do not want on the Internet?