

Oakland University Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Formatting Guidelines

(June 2022)

Format Overview

Your document should follow a formatting style appropriate to your academic discipline (i.e., APA, IEEE, MLA, and Chicago). Consult with your advisor to determine which formatting style you should use. The entire document should adhere to that style, EXCEPT for those elements that are noted in this guide as required by the Graduate School. It is your responsibility as the author of the document to ensure you follow the guidelines and the responsibility of your advisor to affirm that you have done so. The Graduate School will examine the document to ensure that you have adhered to the Graduate School guidelines and that your formatting is consistent throughout the document. Issues will be noted on the checklist and returned to you for correction. Meetings to review format are no longer required, but can be scheduled if a student feels they would benefit from a verbal explanation after they have reviewed the checklist the Graduate School sends with feedback. To receive final approval, documents must adhere to the Graduate School guidelines and must have consistent formatting throughout.

Students who have difficulty working with Microsoft Word can contact the [OU Help Desk](#), 248-370-HELP, in Room 44 of the Oakland Center.

General Formatting (Required)

- 1. Margin (Required):** 1.5" on the left edge. 1" inch on the top and right edges 1.25" on the bottom edge.
- 2. Headers and Footers (Required):** 0" header 1" footer.
- 3. Page Numbers (Required):** Center page numbers in the footer in the same font and text size as the rest of the document. Number the preliminary pages (except for the title page) consecutively in lower case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv). The text, references and appendix sections are numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4), beginning of the first page of the first chapter. All pages

are counted. No page number appears on the title page. The copyright page is the first to have a page number, which should be page ii.

4. Justification and Line Spacing (Required): Text is left justified and double spaced. Single spacing is typically only used in the following circumstances:

- Multiline headings (i.e., chapter headings, section headings, and appendix headings that are more than one line in length)
- Block quotations
- Table format
- Lengthy lists and tables
- Footnotes
- Reference or bibliographic entries if specified by your style manual
- Documents reproduced illustratively in appendices (e.g., survey questionnaires, lesson plans)

5. Font Typeface (Required): All document text should be in a serif font (e.g., Times New Roman). Only one font type may be used throughout the document.

6. Font Size (Required): The entire document must be typed in 12-point size. In certain cases, such as within footnotes and endnotes or within tables, as small as 10-point font can be used.

NOTE: DO NOT INCLUDE RUNNING HEADS IN YOUR DOCUMENT

Document Organization

The Graduate School requires the document to be assembled and organized in an orderly way. There are some sections that are required, and others are optional, as explained in the following section. For your convenience, a template for both a thesis and dissertation is available on our [website](#). Preliminary Pages (Unless otherwise noted, list Preliminary Pages in Table of Contents).

7. Title Page (Required):

- MUST follow the template provided [at this link](#).
- Do not list it in the Table of Contents.
- The page number is counted as “i” but the page number should not appear on the page.
- Illustrations may not be included on the title page.
- Nothing on this page is typed in boldface.
- The title
- The student's name must appear as it is on file in the Registrar's Office and reflected in the student information system. The Academic Records office must process name changes if necessary.
- The year is the year of degree conferral, not the year the thesis or dissertation is submitted and not the commencement year.
- The title page should list the student's advisory committee, beginning with the student's adviser.
- No signatures should appear on the title page.

8. Copyright Page (Required):

- Does not have a heading
- Do not list in the Table of Contents
- Page numbers begin on this page as “ii”.
- Whether students decide to register the copyright or not, a notice of copyright should appear as the sole item on the page immediately following the title page.
- The student’s name and date must be identical to that appearing on the title page.
- The copyright notice is centered vertically and horizontally within the margins as follows:

© by Jane B. Student, 2004
All rights reserved

9. Dedication Page (Optional): The dedication honors those who inspired or encouraged the writing of the thesis or dissertation. The style guidelines for the dedication page are:

- Text should be centered (vertically and horizontally); double-spaced, usually typed in italics, and
- The dedication does not have to be in English.

10. Acknowledgments Page (Optional): The acknowledgments page is a courteous way of recognizing people to whom the author is indebted for guidance, assistance, or special aid.

11. Abstract (Required): The following rules apply to the abstract page:

- The heading is the word Abstract.
- A thesis abstract contains no more than 150 words; a dissertation abstract contains no more than 350 words.
- The title of the thesis or dissertation and the student’s name must appear exactly as it does on the title page.

12. Table of Contents (Required): Table of Content format should reflect the heading style used in the rest of the document and use the same spacing and capitalization as with the rest of the document.

- Include a heading.
- Page numbers are aligned at the right-hand margin from the heading they correspond with.
- Do not use dot leaders between the heading and the associated page number.
- Only first, second, and third-level headings (chapters or chapter equivalents, sections and subsections) are typically included in the Table of Contents.
- Include all preliminary pages in the Table of Contents except the following: title page, copyright page, dedication page and the table of contents.
- If there is a List of Tables, List of Figures, or other “List of” pages, include them in the Table of Contents, but do not list each table and/or figure separately in the Table of Contents

13. List of Tables (Required If Tables Exist): The List of Tables page is used to provide the location of every table that appears in the thesis or dissertation ([see example](#)).

- This is a listing of your table titles and the page number they appear on.

- Do not use dot leaders between the heading and the corresponding page number.
- List all tables appearing in the text **and** appendices in the List of Tables, in the order they appear.
- If the List of Tables occupies more than one page then use “List of Tables – Continued” as the heading for each subsequent page.

14. List of Figures (Required If Figures Exist): The List of Figures page is used to provide the location of every figure that appears in the thesis or dissertation.

- Do not use dot leaders between the heading and the associated page number.
- List all figures appearing in the text **and** appendices in the List of Figures, in the order they appear.
- The use of figure titles is recommended.
- If the caption appears on the page preceding the figure, list the page number of the caption page.
- If the List of Figures occupies more than one page then use “List of Figures – Continued” as the heading for each subsequent page.

15. List of Abbreviations or List of Terms or List of Symbols or Glossary or Nomenclature (Optional):

16. Text Section (Required):

The text section, or the body of the thesis or dissertation, should be organized in a manner consistent with your department’s style guidelines.

The text section should be divided into major divisions, i.e., chapters or chapter equivalents, appropriate for the topic or field.

- Avoid partially filled pages. Text must be continuous except where you have reached the end of a chapter. If tables or figures are less than a full page, they should be embedded in the text.

17. References (Required): Using the style appropriate to your discipline, credit each source cited in your document.

18. Appendices (Optional Unless University Approval For Research Activities is Required):

Place materials that are peripheral but relevant to the main text of the thesis or dissertation in the appendices. These may include survey instruments, additional data, computer printouts, details of a procedure or analysis, a relevant paper written by the student, etc. and may be assembled appropriately so that each type of collected information is placed in a separate, lettered appendix. If you are required to have university approval for your research activities as noted in the last section of these guidelines, you must include your approval letter as an appendix.

Appendix material must meet the same requirements for margins and pagination as the text itself. If the materials are reduced to meet margin requirements, the print must remain clear and legible. All material included in the appendices must meet font requirements, except for reproduced material produced in a different font.

19. Headings and Subheadings: Students should refer to the standards set by their department's choice of style manual or professional journal for section level format **Regardless of formatting style, all heading and subheading formatting must be consistent throughout the thesis or dissertation.**

20. Footnotes and Endnotes (If used): If included, footnotes are single spaced in 10-point type size and must use the same typeface as the text. Footnote numbering can be continuous throughout the dissertation or thesis or may start again for each chapter or page, but the method must be consistent. The use of endnotes is discouraged, if not required by a department's style manual of choice.

21. Equations (If used): Align equation numbers with the right margin. Number equations in accordance with the recommended style manual. If the student's department does not recommend a style manual, students should number equations either by chapter or consecutively throughout the text. Spacing before and after equations must be consistent with the rest of the text. Do not insert extra space above or below an equation.

22. Illustrative Materials (If used):

The placement of tables and/or figures should follow the style guide recommended by the department. If no style guide is recommended, use a consistent format throughout the document. The word "figure" designates all nonverbal material such as charts, graphs, maps, photographs, line drawings, works of art, etc. Figures must be high quality and easily readable. A table consists of numbers, words, or both and presents information separated into columns with distinct column headings. The following guidelines should be followed when placing tables in the document:

- Reduced font size is allowed in large tables that will not fit between the left and right margins.
- Large tables continuing to other pages should start on a new page. You may continue the table on as many pages as necessary, provided the columnar headings remain the same and are repeated at the top of each succeeding page. The first page contains the table number and title, and subsequent pages contain the remainder of the table and the designation. For example:

Table # — Continued.

- Illustrative Material Placement: Figures and tables should be inserted as near as reasonably possible after they are first mentioned in the text.
- Oversized Illustrative Materials: You may place illustrative materials that will not fit within the margins lengthwise (landscape) on the page. "Landscape" pages should have page numbers in the same place and orientation as other portrait-oriented pages.

University Approval for Research Activities

Each of the entities below must approve relevant research prior to the research being conducted. If your research requires approval or a permit from one of these entities, you must include the approval letter in an appendix in your document.

23. Protection of Human Subjects: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) must review all research projects involving the participation of human subjects or use of materials of human origin before the

research can be conducted. This requirement includes all research, from low-risk investigations, such as surveying people on the street about their favorite television shows, to high-risk studies, like clinical trials of experimental medical treatments.

24. Protection of Animal Subjects: Research using vertebrate animals must have the approval of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and be conducted according to university guidelines. For more information, visit <https://www.oakland.edu/research/compliance/>

25. Biosafety: The Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) must approve all research, teaching, and testing at Oakland University involving recombinant DNA, infectious agents and/or cultured cell lines. Students must obtain approval by submitting a biosafety research application. For more information, visit <https://www.oakland.edu/research/compliance/>

26. Radiation Safety:

Only authorized Oakland University permit holders or students under the supervision of a permit holder can use radioactive material (including machinery producing ionizing radiation). User permits are issued by the Radiation Safety Committee (RSC) only to the full time OU faculty members or principal investigators. All others must work under the supervision of a full-time faculty member. For more information, visit <https://www.oakland.edu/labsafety/radiation-safety/>.