

# 2024 - 2025 Academic Year

## Graduate Thesis and Dissertation Handbook

Master's and doctoral level scholarship presented as a thesis or dissertation should involve analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation of newly created or existing knowledge with the purpose of advancing the discipline or applying the knowledge to a specific situation. The purpose of the thesis or dissertation document is to present that knowledge to the scholarly community in a clear, concise, and professional manner that is appropriate to the discipline. This handbook is written to guide you, the student-scholar, through the process of developing the final product.

When complete, your work will be archived by the University Library and also disseminated to the scholarly community through the university's repository. That repository is indexed in WorldCat.org and available through Google Scholar.

### Supplemental Materials

The Graduate School contact for questions regarding thesis and dissertation submission and review is Wesley Kapp ([thesis@appstate.edu](mailto:thesis@appstate.edu)).

- [Tips for a Quick Graduate School Review](#)
- MS Word Templates:
  - [Thesis Front Matter](#)
  - [Dissertation Front Matter](#)
  - [Vita](#)
- [Thesis Committee Membership Form](#)
- [Dissertation Committee Membership Form](#)
- [Committee Change Form](#)
- Required Forms for Final Submission (these will be sent to you via email once you receive final approval from the Graduate School):
  - Release Form
  - Indexing Form

# Outline of Thesis and Dissertation Approval Process

## 1. Committee Selection and Responsibilities

### 1.1 Committee Selection and Approval

Early in your academic career, you should seek advice from your department chair, graduate program director, or advisor on the departmental procedure for setting up a thesis/dissertation committee. Steps in the formation of the committee include:

- Determining the content area of the proposed project.
- Meeting with the advisor, department chairperson, or program director to discuss the feasibility of the project.
- Selecting a committee composed of graduate faculty, which is then approved by the department chairperson and by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

The Committee Chair must file the Committee Membership Form ([Thesis](#) or [Dissertation](#)) with the Graduate School before a student can register for dissertation or thesis credit. The prospectus or a summary of the approved topic **must accompany** the Committee Membership Form.

### 1.2 Committee Membership

The Chair must be a full member of the graduate faculty and also a member of the department housing the program (exceptions: Appalachian Studies chairs must be affiliated with the Center for Appalachian Studies; I-O Psychology chairs can be from either Psychology or Management; Educational Leadership chairs may be from any department housed in the Reich College of Education). The Committee must be composed of at least three members, including the Committee Chair. All members must hold current graduate faculty status.

If the research topic is interdisciplinary, the Committee Chair may direct the student to another department for assistance in developing the topic and may suggest that a graduate faculty member from that department serve on the Committee.

At most one committee member may be from another department or from a University other than Appalachian. A faculty member from another institution may be appointed to the committee, provided (1) the institution is regionally accredited, and (2) the faculty member has the equivalent of a Graduate Faculty appointment at that individual's institution.

### 1.3 Duties of Committee Members

The Committee Chair is the student's primary mentor, and:

- directs the student's research project and submits a grade of SP (successful progress) or UP (unsuccessful progress) at the end of each term of enrollment in thesis credit;

- ensures that the student has complied with all regulations covering the use of human or animal subjects in the research project;
- assists the student by redirecting, limiting, or expanding portions of the research when an adjustment is deemed appropriate;
- assists the student in identifying research funding sources and writes letters of support when the student applies for funding;
- informs the student of all deadlines and milestones in the process, and makes sure that the student understands all University policies related to the completion of a dissertation or thesis;
- convenes regularly scheduled committee meetings so that committee members stay informed of the student's progress;
- reads and evaluates the writing quality of drafts, intervening as early as possible with students in need of additional assistance;
- obtains agreement from the committee that the final draft is ready for a defense;
- schedules the defense and announces the defense to the academic and graduate deans, the home department, and any other faculty deemed relevant;
- chairs the defense;
- makes sure that the student incorporates all revisions, corrections, and suggestions resulting from the defense;
- certifies that the final copy submitted to the Graduate School is well-written, formatted correctly according to the guidelines of the disciplinary style used as well as the guidelines in this Handbook, and free of factual errors.

#### Committee Members:

- provide ideas, suggesting additional or new avenues of research;
- bring to the student's attention all relevant announcements regarding funding, deadlines, conference opportunities;
- attend all scheduled committee meetings to keep abreast of the student's progress and the suggestions made by other committee members;
- read and comment on preliminary drafts of the manuscript, providing constructive suggestions;
- read and evaluate the final draft of the manuscript;
- participate in the defense;
- assist the committee chair in ensuring that the manuscript that is submitted to the Graduate School is well-written, correctly formatted, and free of factual errors.

## 2. The Defense and Graduate School Review

### 2.1 The Defense

#### 2.1a Scheduling and Notification

You must defend your research. Since the **“final” (post-defense), and “completed” (post-Grad School review) thesis/dissertation manuscripts must be submitted to the Graduate School by the**

established deadlines, the defense should be scheduled to allow time to make final, post-defense corrections to the manuscript before submitting it for Graduate School review. Consider the following timeline when planning the defense:

- The defense should be scheduled and held no later than six weeks before commencement for the semester in which you will be graduating.
  - **Fall 2024 Defense Deadline:** Week of October 28th
  - **Spring 2025 Defense Deadline:** Week of March 31st
  - **Summer 2025 Defense Deadline:** Week of June 16th
- At least two weeks before the defense, you should submit a close-to-final draft of the entire manuscript to all committee members. The draft should be complete and in acceptable format.
- Within one week, the committee should return the draft to the Committee Chair with written criticisms and statement of conditional approval. In some cases the committee will meet directly with you as a group or individually to go over comments with you.
- If the Committee recommends substantial changes, the chair will typically meet with you to decide on the best plan of action.
- The Committee Chair sends an invitation to the defense, via email, to the following people with the abstract included: the Department Chair, the Program Coordinator/Director, the Dean of the college, the Dean of the Graduate School, faculty members interested in the topic (minimally all faculty in the department), and other graduate students in the department or program. This notification should be sent at least four working days before the defense.
- Following a successful defense and *IF* you plan to get copies of your manuscript bound, the committee members and the department chair should sign the signature page. In this circumstance, make sure you have taken the appropriate number of signature pages on good paper (archival quality bond) with you to your defense; that is the best time to get all signatures. Faculty can be hard to get in touch with over semester breaks, especially in the summer. Signatures should be in blue or black ink only. NOTE: Signatures are **not** required for the digital submission of your manuscript to the Graduate School.
- If the defense is not successful, you will be told by the Committee Chair specifics about the work to be done before another defense is attempted.

## 2.2 Graduate School Review and Approval

Once you have successfully defended, you will work with the Graduate School to complete the process.

1. When all committee-requested corrections are made after the defense, **your Committee Chair** must send an email to [thesis@appstate.edu](mailto:thesis@appstate.edu), copying you and all committee members, along with the department chairperson, **by the draft deadline**, and include:
  - An electronic copy (PDF format) of the full, post-defense corrected manuscript
  - Verification that your thesis was approved by all committee members
  - Indication of what style guide was used for the manuscript (e.g. APA 7th Ed., or if journal guidelines were used, a copy of (or link to) the editorial guidelines must be included)

2. The Graduate School thesis/dissertation reader reads the document, and notes any corrections to be made. The Graduate School will return the “marked” copy along with a feedback form listing the required corrections.
  - At this time, you will also receive two forms which you are required to return along with your corrected manuscript. These are:
    - i. A signed Release Form (electronically signed is acceptable), authorizing the Library and the University to share your document through the online library repository
    - ii. A completed Indexing Form
3. Once any required corrections have been made, return the corrected manuscript, the signed Release form, and the Indexing form to the Graduate School (email to [thesis@appstate.edu](mailto:thesis@appstate.edu)). If you have made all corrections and there are no further changes needed, you will receive a final approval email and be told that you are “cleared for binding.”
  - NOTE: If all corrections have *not* been made, you will be provided with information on what needs further correction.
4. A final approved (“cleared for binding”) manuscript, the signed Release Form, and completed Indexing Form are required for your degree to be conferred.

**Manuscript Binding:** This is not required, but you or your committee may wish to get bound copies of your manuscript. [Instructions for binding options](#) are available. Please note that bound copies should have original, "wet" signatures on the signature page of the front matter. **(No signatures are required on electronic-only copies posted to the repository.)**

## 2.3 Graduation and Commencement

When you have successfully completed all program requirements—including the dissertation or thesis—you are eligible for graduation. **All graduate students must apply for graduation during the first month of the semester in which they intend to complete program requirements.** The application is online through your appalnet account.

- You must [apply to graduate](#) in order to trigger the checkout process, even if you are not planning on attending the ceremony.

There are two commencement ceremonies: May and December. Spring graduates are recognized in the May ceremony, Fall graduates are recognized in the December ceremony.

- Summer graduates, who wish to participate in commencement, are able to choose either the May ceremony preceding their Summer graduation or the December ceremony following their graduation. However, when students apply to graduate (how early or how late) will determine if their names are included in the commencement ceremony announcements for May or December.

Each graduate student will be introduced on stage individually. Attendance at the commencement ceremony is desirable but not required. You can purchase the commencement regalia—cap, gown, and master's or doctoral hood, or specialist scarf—through the University Bookstore. Donated gowns may also be available in the Mountaineer Free Store on a first come, first served basis.

# Preparing, Writing, and Formatting the Manuscript

## 3. Preparing to Write the Thesis or Dissertation

### 3.1 Guiding Questions for Design of Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

These lists of questions are intended as a guide for students to consider when designing their research plans. The lists are not meant to be used as a prescriptive or complete list of considerations, but as a framework for the types of questions a researcher should consider.

#### 3.1a Quantitative Considerations

- Population and Sampling
  - What method will you use to select your sample? Why is this appropriate for this question? What are the potential limitations with regard to your sample?
  - Have you investigated whether your sample size will impact the applicability of your results?
- Methodology and Analysis
  - What data do you plan to collect from your sample?
  - What are your independent and dependent variables?
  - What kinds of collection tools or measurements will you be using?
  - What statistical methods will you use to analyze your data?
  - Are the necessary assumptions and conditions for your chosen statistical method likely to be met by your data, given your data collection plan (e.g., quantitative versus qualitative data)?
  - How will you verify assumptions (e.g., normality) that must be assessed after data collection?
  - How will you determine whether any data points should be excluded from your analysis?
- Discussion and Presentation
  - What is your plan if your research does not produce statistically significant results? Have you discussed this possibility with your advisor?
  - How will you present your results? If you are using tabular or graphical formats, what are the disciplinary standards for formatting the table/graph and discussion of the table/graph within the narrative?
  - To what extent can you realistically generalize your data, given your sampling and analysis?

#### 3.1b Qualitative Considerations

- Participants and Sampling
  - What is your sampling strategy? Why is this an appropriate strategy?
  - How will these participants help you to explore your research question(s)? In other words, why them and not others?
  - What are the potential limitations or constraints with regard to your participants?
- Methodology & Analysis

- What is your methodology or overall research design? (e.g., ethnography, case study, phenomenology)
- What are your data sources?
- What data collection method(s) will you use? What is the protocol for your methods?
- What are ethical issues that need to be considered regarding your method(s)?
- What are potential limitations of your method(s)?
- How will you organize, analyze, and interpret the data?
- Discussion and Presentation
  - What are the major themes, issues, concepts, etc., that you found in the data?
  - How will you represent these findings?
  - What are the limitations of the findings?
  - How did you achieve trustworthiness in your data?
  - What are the connections between your findings and the scholarly literature/disciplinary field? Contributions? Gaps?
  - How do your findings contribute to your conceptual or theoretical framework?
  - What are the larger implications of your findings?
  - What are suggestions for future research, based on your findings?

## 4. Quality of Writing and Formatting

Your manuscript should represent the best formal, professional writing of which you are capable. You are responsible for proofreading and editing the document carefully (or arranging for careful proofreading and editing) before presenting the final draft to your committee and, after your defense, to the Graduate School.

Your Committee Chair and other committee members will assist you with editing and proofreading; however, it is not your committee's responsibility to rewrite your document or to correct grammar and poor word choice. If your manuscript needs significant editing, your Committee Chair may require you to seek additional assistance. Free assistance is available from the University Writing Center, but if you need more in-depth assistance it will be your responsibility to seek that assistance.

You should produce your manuscript according to the requirements of this Handbook and the most recent edition of the appropriate style manual from your discipline. Early in the process, work with your Committee Chair to select a style guide (e.g., APA, MLA, Turabian/Chicago, author guidelines for a specific journal). The Graduate School will review your document based on that style guide and the requirements listed in the formatting section of this Handbook. Note that this Handbook supersedes the disciplinary style guide.

Grammatical and typographical errors and poor or inconsistent formatting must be corrected before the manuscript can receive the Graduate Dean's approval. If the manuscript displays numerous errors or poor text quality, your graduation may be delayed to a later term.

When you submit your dissertation or thesis to the Graduate School for approval, the readers check the manuscript for the following:

- Format, as required by this Handbook (particularly the Front Matter)
- Conformity to the appropriate disciplinary style manual (in particular the formatting of citations, references, tables, and figures)
- Correct standard written English
- Absence of mechanical errors (grammatical errors, misspellings, etc.)
- Consistency between in-text citations and references
- Consistency of formatting for headers, page numbers, figures, tables, and other elements

See the [Tips for a Quick Review](#) document for more advice.

## 4.1 Things to Avoid in Research Writing

4.1a Plagiarism: Taking someone else's work and passing it off as your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

Academic writing requires that researchers carefully cite other's words, pictures, etc., in all forms of communication. When you use other people's ideas, words, or images you must provide full information of the source, following the format of your selected style guide (e.g., APA, MLA, etc.) This is true even when you paraphrase or summarize in your own words. The goal is to provide enough information that the reader can find the same reference you used. The format for citations and reference information varies by discipline.

Keep in mind that intentional plagiarism is a serious offense and can result in dismissal from the University. To learn more about this topic, view this short video on "[Citation](#)," as well as these [documentation guidelines](#) provided by the University Writing Center.

4.1b Unapproved Data Collection or Use: Using someone else's data or gathering data from people or animals without having approval

- Are you using or collecting data from human subjects (people) for your research? Get approval (or an exemption) from the [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) at Appalachian. Approval or exemption must be in place *before* any data collection starts.
  - Committee Chair should be listed as the PI for student research
- Are you using animals in your research by more than just observing them in nature? Get approval from the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#) at Appalachian. Approval is necessary *before* any data collection starts.
- Are you using data that has already been gathered by someone else? Even if you are going to look at the data in a completely different way, you must either get permission to use the data by contacting the source, or you must carefully cite the source if the data were previously published in a book, website, or journal. Do not assume that the data are in the public domain unless that is specifically stated.



## 4.1c Lack of Organization

Most academic research writing in the United States is “thesis driven,” meaning that the main point is stated early in the document, followed by the supporting information. Here is a general outline you can follow when writing, but be sure to understand what your instructor or mentor is expecting!

- State your main points explicitly in an introductory section.
- After the introductory section, you may need to include a discussion of the history or background needed to put your points in context; this is often where you will present other people's work with appropriate citations (being careful to avoid plagiarism!).
- Next provide the evidence, information, data, or argument to support your main points, and be sure that you connect back to your main points.
- Last, provide a conclusion that recaps your main points; you might also address the shortcomings in your argument and ideas for future research.

There is a wealth of information available at the [Purdue University Online Writing Lab](#). Also be sure to take advantage of [Appalachian's University Writing Center](#), located on the second floor of Belk Library and Information Commons. [Remote or in-person appointments](#) can be made online or by phone.

## 4.1d Common Grammatical Errors for ESL Learners

English has an interesting history as a language; it was heavily influenced by invasion, colonization, and innovation over many centuries. Many different cultures' words and expressions were incorporated into the English language, yielding a rich language with a huge vocabulary. There are also differences caused by the divergence of British English and American English, resulting in words that are spelled slightly differently, different idioms, and variations in acceptable writing styles. This leads to a conundrum for non-native speakers: The way that nouns, verbs, pronouns, and modifiers are used in American English can differ depending on the origins of the particular words. Patterns that are always the same in another language (how to create plurals, placement of adjectives and adverbs, etc.) may depend upon what words are being used and how in English.

There are several errors that are common to non-native speakers of English, and most can be traced to the differences between sentence construction, subject and verb agreement, and pluralizing in the two languages. Here is a site that lists [common errors that second language \(ESL\) learners often make](#).

With such a complex language, there are also many [words and idioms that are commonly misused](#) by native and non-native English speakers alike.

# 5. Organization and Required Components

## 5.1 Front Matter

The Front Matter consists of all the pages that come before the main text of the manuscript. Some are optional, and some are not. In most cases, the format required for these first pages is very specific. **Get the Graduate School staff to check the format for these pages before you hold your defense!**

Example Materials: [MS Word Thesis Front Matter](#); [MS Word Dissertation Front Matter](#).

1. **Title page.** This page is required, and the format must be followed exactly. The study title appears on the title page in all capital letters, placed two inches from the top. Your name as author must be your legal name. Make sure that you spell your degree and the name of the University correctly. The date on the title page must be the month and year of your *graduation* (not your defense), i.e., the date on your diploma (e.g., May 2023, August 2023, December 2023). Notice that there is no comma between the month and the year. The title must occur consistently in every respect on the title page, signature page, Abstract, and all approval forms.
2. **Signature page.** This page is required, and the format must be followed exactly. The signature page must include the title of your dissertation or thesis **exactly** as it appears on the title page, and signature lines over the names of the committee chair, the committee members, the chairperson of the department, and the Dean of the Cratis D. Williams Graduate School. Make sure that you have spelled all names and titles correctly. Be sure to double check the format before your defense!
3. **Copyright page.** This page is required, and the format must be followed exactly. Dissertations and theses will be publicly available through Appalachian's online repository, and the copyright statement constitutes notice that the work is the property of the author and may not be reproduced without permission.
4. **Abstract.** This is required, and the format must be followed exactly. An abstract of not more than two pages must be included with the finished manuscript. The abstract, which must adhere to the same style manual as the text, should include the following information: statement of the problem, methodology or procedures, and conclusions or major findings. Note that you will also need to provide an abstract of not more than 500 characters to include online.
5. **Acknowledgments (optional).** If you received a GSGA Research Award, the Zigli or Domer Awards, or any form of external funding to support your research or creative activity, you should acknowledge those sources here along with persons who were instrumental to the completion of the research. This page should be entitled "Acknowledgments." See the template for specific formatting.
6. **Dedication (optional).** If you wish to dedicate the work, you may do so with a brief statement on a separate page entitled "Dedication." See the template for specific formatting.
7. **Table of contents.** This is required, and the format must be followed exactly. The Table of Contents should reference the Abstract page and all subsequent pages, and should list all page-number designations, in Roman or Arabic numerals, for each major chapter/section, and subsections if required by the style manual in use. Do not list the table of contents in the table of

contents. (NOTE: it is strongly recommended that you use the Styles function of MS Word so that you can automatically update the Table of Contents to ensure its accuracy.)

8. **List of tables (optional but recommended).** This page should be included if required by the style manual used or if the tables will not appear near where they are referenced in the text. For example, some styles require all tables to appear at the end of the document, in which case a list of tables is required. Table numbers and titles should be listed fully and exactly as they appear in the text. If you plan to place tables in the text where they are referenced, check with your committee chair regarding whether you need to include a list of tables. The Graduate School does not require it in this case.
9. **List of figures (optional but recommended).** This page should be included if required by the style manual used or if the figures will not appear near where they are referenced in the text. For example, some styles require all figures to appear at the end of the document, in which case a list of figures is required. Figure numbers and titles should be listed fully and exactly as they appear in the text. If you plan to place figures in the text where they are referenced, check with your committee chair regarding whether you need to include a list of figures. The Graduate School does not require it in this case.
10. **Foreword (required only for alternate formats).** In an effort to allow ease of submission for publication, students may seek permission from the committee chair and the Graduate School for the thesis to take the form of a set of articles for submission to journals. This page is required for any thesis that deviates from the traditional organization as described below. It should explain the reason for the deviation (e.g., conformance to a specific journal submission style for publication). Notes: No deviation in pages before the foreword will be allowed.

## 5.2 Main Body

Following the front matter described above, the main body text should be presented and documented according to the conventions in the disciplinary style manual used, and should be written in grammatically and mechanically correct, formal English. The text should be arranged into clearly demarcated chapters or major sections. We strongly recommend that you receive training in the use of styles and other formatting tools in MS Word, because this will make it easier for you to achieve the necessary formatting for your document.

### 5.2a Traditional Organization

Traditionally-organized dissertations and theses will have the following large divisions labeled as Chapters, although the specific content and organization of each division may vary. Every chapter must be written and formatted in the same style. Each chapter should begin on a new page.

1. **Introduction.** This chapter should present an overview of the research, providing some background information designed to put the research in context within the discipline.
2. **Review of the Literature.** This chapter contains a more detailed discussion of the research or creative endeavors upon which the new work is based. In some disciplines the Introduction incorporates this review; in other disciplines the review is a separate and very substantial section.

Both methods are acceptable, and you should follow the method most commonly accepted in your discipline.

3. **Description of the Research; Development of Creative Work.** This part of the manuscript will typically comprise several chapters, including the methodology, research strategy, or development of the original work.
4. **Results; Conclusion; Summary of Findings; Limitations.** The last part of the manuscript should contain a summary of the conclusions drawn from the work as well as an indication of possible future work in the subject. This conclusion may be an entire chapter or may be included at the end of the last chapter, but a clear indication of the findings should constitute the final text in the manuscript.
5. **Bibliography; Works Cited; References (required).** The bibliographic citations must conform to the selected style manual. The Bibliography may be divided into two separate parts if desired: Works Cited and Works Consulted (or References Cited and References Consulted). In consultation with your committee chair, you should decide whether to have a single Bibliography or List of References or a Bibliography or List of References in two parts. Both are acceptable, although specific conventions vary from one discipline to the next. You may choose to double-space the entire reference list; OR, you can single-space each reference, leaving a space between each reference.

## 5.2b Alternate Organization (aka multi-article style theses and dissertations)

The alternate form described here is to accommodate manuscripts in which the main body of the document is one or more articles formatted for submission to a specific journal.\* Major sections may be labeled as Chapters if desired. Each major section should begin on a new page.

1. **Introduction.** This major section should provide an overview of the research and recap answers to the questions addressed in the prospectus, listed again below; include a reference section if any citations are used. If there is more than one article included in the thesis, this section should also describe how the research detailed in the articles is related.
  - What is your topic? Why have you selected this topic, i.e., what is its significance?
  - How does your topic fit within the larger scholarly conversation around the issue (e.g., what is the history of this topic, on what existing scholarship will your work be building?)
  - What methodology did you use, and why?
  - What is your specific role if the research is taking place in a team environment or in partnership with your advisor?
2. **Article(s) Formatted for Submission.** This section (or sections) should include the complete text for the article(s) formatted for submission to the appropriate journal, including a reference section. Notes:
  - Each article must include the name of the intended journal for publication
  - Each article can be formatted differently if submitting to separate journals
  - Each bibliography / reference section must conform to the style of the journal.
3. **Summary of Findings; Limitations.** Brief statement of findings and future research, which may be incorporated into the Introduction if more appropriate.

*\* Publishing prior to thesis or dissertation defense: See section 5.4 “Incorporating Submitted or Published Articles” for information and restrictions.*

## 5.3 Back Matter

1. **Endnotes (optional).** Endnotes that are listed separately from bibliographic entries must conform to the selected style manual.
2. **Appendices (optional).** The appendices are presented in the order that they are mentioned in the manuscript. A separation page can be created to precede each appendix or the title of the Appendix may appear on the first page of the Appendix. If there is more than one appendix, use upper-case letters to identify appendices (i.e., Appendix A, B, C, etc.). Examples of appendix items: Computer codes, survey instruments, IRB approval, etc.
3. **Vita (required).** This page is required and should be the last page of the document. A brief biographical sketch of the author must be included in each dissertation or thesis as the last page in the document and must be listed in the Table of Contents. The sketch may include information such as place of birth, names of parents, marital information, educational background, current professional status, professional experience, future professional plans. This is **not** a resume, but rather one or a few paragraphs describing the author. Remember that a copy will be available in the publicly accessible online repository Worldcat.org (and also often in Google scholar). The sketch should **not** include items that would be an invasion of your privacy, such as your birthday, home address, or highly personal details. [Example Vita](#) (DOC, 68 KB).

## 5.4 Incorporating Submitted or Published Articles

As multi-article style theses and dissertations become more popular, universities recognize that students may have the opportunity to publish part of their work prior to defense of their thesis or dissertation.\*

1. Students must have prior approval from their committee to prepare a multi-article thesis or dissertation. If a student intends to publish part of their thesis or dissertation prior to their defense, they must inform the Graduate School by email ([thesis@appstate.edu](mailto:thesis@appstate.edu)) in advance.
2. The journals selected for the articles’ submissions must be approved by the committee, and they must be named in the introduction of each article within the thesis/dissertation.
3. A **maximum of one article** published or accepted for publishing prior to the defense of the thesis or dissertation may be included in the manuscript. The published/accepted for publishing article must be work undertaken during the student’s graduate school enrollment at Appalachian, and must be connected to the overall theme of the thesis or dissertation.
4. *Copyright:* The student is responsible for obtaining any and all necessary copyright permissions from the copyright holder, and any other authors, to include the article in their thesis/dissertation. As all thesis and dissertation manuscripts are published online through Appalachian State University Library and NC Docks, the student must provide proof of permission from the copyright holder to the Graduate School ([thesis@appstate.edu](mailto:thesis@appstate.edu)).
  - a. When submitting the “final,” post-defense thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School, proof of permission to include the article in a thesis/dissertation from the copyright holder

must be included. Add as a separate email attachment, and as an Appendix in the manuscript.

- b. When obtaining permission from the copyright holder, the student should inform the journal that the article will be included in a thesis/dissertation, which will be published online through NCDocks (indexed: WorldCat.org).
  - c. Obtaining the necessary permissions is required by U.S. copyright law.
5. *Authorship*: The student must be first author on all articles included in the thesis or dissertation
- a. The Dissertation Chair *or* a Committee Member may be co-author on **one** included article, at the student's invitation. Fellow students may not act as co-authors.
  - b. If a co-author exists for one of the included articles, they must be identified and approved at the student's proposal defense by the Committee. Any changes to co-author must be approved by the student's committee.

*\* See Section 5.2b "Alternate Organization" for further information on developing a multi-article style thesis or dissertation*

## 5.5 Inclusion of Multimedia Elements

If your manuscript includes multimedia elements that do not reproduce well statically on the printed page, you may include links to online repositories of those materials. Examples include web pages, video files, audio files, and so on. Please note that the usual copyright rules apply when including other people's work.

# 6. Formatting Requirements

## 6.1 Paper

If you plan to have hard copies of your manuscript bound, either through the Graduate School or an outside vendor, we recommend that you use archive-quality paper (at least 20% cotton content). Manuscripts to be bound should be free of streaks and smudges, correctly aligned on each page, and printed single-sided.

## 6.2 Margins

The **left margin should be set at 1.25 inches** to allow for binding. The **top, bottom, and right margins should be at least 1 inch**. Text, tables, and figures may not go beyond these margins, with the exception of the page numbers, which usually appear within the margin allowance.

A page may not begin or end with only one line of a paragraph, header, figure or table caption. At least two lines should be at the end of a page or the beginning of a new page. Adherence to this "widow and orphan" rule may create a bottom margin that is slightly larger than 1 inch, which is fine.

## 6.3 Font

Use a reasonably-sized font (**11 or 12 point**) and a "**serif**" font face (Times New Roman, for example). **Text must be black**; color may be used in figures if the addition of color results in better readability of the figure. Mathematical variables should be in italics, and please be sure subscripts and superscripts are at least 9 point font. Most style guides include information on the proper use of italics, bold, and underlined fonts; be sure to follow those guidelines and be consistent in your use of these special formats.

## 6.4 Spacing

The text throughout the body of the manuscript must be **double-spaced**. Spacing between the main text and any embedded figures, tables, images, etc. may be wider than double spacing if desired for enhanced readability. Be consistent in your use of spacing.

**Exceptions to double spacing:** Single-spacing should be used only for special purposes such as blocked inset quotations, footnotes, and within figures or tables of five lines or more. You may choose to either double space bibliographic entries OR single space each entry with a double space between entries.

## 6.5 Indentation

Paragraphs must be indented consistently; setting tabs is highly recommended. Footnotes may be indented if indicated in the chosen style guide, and if so should be indented consistently, usually in the same manner as the paragraphs. Bibliographic entries should begin at the left margin but use a hanging indent so that lines after the first one are indented.

## 6.6 Title/Heading Formatting

Headers for chapters (or major sections if chapters are not used) should begin on a new page, and should be bold, centered, and "Title Case."

**Major Heading (Chapter) Bold, Centered, Title Case (Required)**

The table of contents must include at least the major section titles.

If the style guide being used does not provide guidelines on header format, the Graduate School suggests the following header styles for sections:

**First Sub-Heading Bold, Left Justified, Title Case (suggested)**

*Second sub-heading left justified italic sentence case. (suggested)*

## 6.7 Tables, Figures, Images, and Graphics

Illustrations and photographic materials may be included in the manuscript. Graphics must be produced in high quality and be clear and legible. Color images and graphics are allowed where the color helps in readability.

The preference of the Graduate School is to include these objects in the text near where they are referenced for the first time, but if your disciplinary style guide requires them to be placed elsewhere (for example, one to a page at the end of the text or in appendices), that is fine.

If you are using an image or graphic that is the property of another, you *must* seek permission from the original author to reprint the item in your document. Acknowledgment of this permission should be included on your copyright page.

In order to fit large images, graphics, tables, or figures on a page it may be necessary to place them broadside (landscape) on the paper, rotated so that the top of the item is on the left (i.e., the top is toward the binding). The margins for these pages must conform to the margin requirements. Large figures may be reduced if needed. The page number should be typed in the appropriate location **after** the rotation and/or reduction.

## 6.8 Page Numbering

The pages listed below are counted as pages i, ii, and iii, but no page numbers are printed on these pages. Please be sure these pages conform exactly to the templates provided.

- i. Title page
- ii. Signature page
- iii. Copyright page

The pages listed below are numbered in lower-case Roman numerals typed on each page and centered in the bottom margin (footer). Numbering runs consecutively from the title page to the last page before the main body of text (the Introduction). These pages also require very specific formatting. Be sure to follow the templates provided.

- iv. Abstract (no more than 2 pages)
- v. Acknowledgments (optional)
- vi. Dedication (optional)
- vii. Table of Contents
- viii. List of Tables (optional)
- ix. List of Figures (optional)
- x. Foreword (required if nonstandard organization is used)

Starting with the first page of the main body, all subsequent pages (including back matter) are numbered with Arabic numerals on each page. The first page of the text (typically the introduction) begins with



number one (1), and the numbering runs consecutively to the end of the manuscript. The Vita receives the last page number. All page numbers for these pages should be positioned either at the top right corner or at the bottom in the center of the page (preferred).

Page numbers may be within the 1-inch margin, provided they are at least half an inch from the edge of the page.

## 6.9 Footnotes and Endnotes

If you choose to use footnotes or endnotes for citations or other additional information, be sure to reference and format them consistently throughout the manuscript. Footnotes should be single spaced, and if a footnote is very long, it should be broken within a sentence and carried over to the next page. Most word processors will do this automatically. Follow your disciplinary style guide on indentation for footnotes and endnotes.