GUIDE TO THE PREPARATION AND PROCESSING OF DISSERTATIONS, THESES, AND PROFESSIONAL PAPERS

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
Texas Woman's University
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Introduction

Each dissertation, thesis, or professional paper should reflect the highest standards of research and scholarship and should make a meaningful contribution to knowledge in the student’s area of study. Consequently, each of these works must conform to the most rigorous standards of content, style, and format. The use of this guide should facilitate the student’s efforts in achieving these goals.

The purpose of this guide is to provide graduate students and major professors with general guidelines for the preparation, format, and submission of papers. Within this document, the term “paper,” will be used to describe dissertations, theses, and professional papers. These guidelines, which supplement information in the Graduate Catalog, provide answers to the most frequently asked questions concerning the preparation of a paper at Texas Woman’s University. Although this guide minimizes the possibility for misunderstanding or uncertainty concerning final preparation and submission of a paper, it is not designed to answer all questions. The student should consult the particular manual of style required by the department on specific matters of style or format not touched upon here. Before the final draft, the student should resolve any questions with the major professor and, if necessary, with the Graduate School.

***In no instance should the student use another student’s paper as a guide for the style and format of a paper.***
Prior to Research

Registration

The student must be enrolled for dissertation, thesis, or professional paper in order to hold conferences with the major professor or the research committee and to take the final examination. Registration for these hours in one term does not carry over to another term. The student must be regularly enrolled during the semester of graduation, unless all requirements for completion of the degree were met prior to the first day of classes for that semester.

(Check the Graduation Deadlines)

Reduced Tuition Rate

Under provisions of the Texas Higher Education Code Section 54.051(e), Texas residents are eligible for a one-time reduced tuition rate when enrolling for dissertation, thesis, or professional paper ONLY, providing those hours are the final credits required for the degree. Students (Texas residents for tuition purposes only) who are preparing to register for what they believe to be the final enrollment of dissertation, thesis, or professional paper may file a “Code 3” request at the Graduate School no later than the last date of late registration in the semester for which the reduction is requested.

Prospectus

After deciding upon the topic for a dissertation or thesis, in consultation with the research committee, the student submits a prospectus to the Graduate School. Although the committee may require a longer proposal, the prospectus filed in the Graduate School must be no longer than 10 pages.
The prospectus should briefly identify the following:

1. Tentative title
2. The purpose, the reason for the study’s validity or significance
3. The research methodology to be employed

The following documents must be submitted in order to receive prospectus approval:

- PDF/Printed copy of 8-10 page prospectus
- Prospectus Cover Sheet
- Completed RCR Training
- IRB/IACUC Approval Letter (if applicable)
- Agency Approval (if applicable)

**Cover Sheet**

The Prospectus Cover Sheet can be found under forms on the Graduate School website, must bear Student name, TWU ID number, TWU email address, and the original signatures for all research committee members and department chair. In addition, depending upon the academic component, the signature of the academic dean may be required.

**RCR Training**

Effective starting Spring 2013, all graduate students and their faculty advisors must complete RCR training through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) online prior to initiation of research projects for professional papers, theses, and dissertations.

**Human Subjects Review (IRB)**

The research committee chairperson indicates on the prospectus cover sheet whether the study involves human subjects. If the study does involve human subjects, the prospectus
submitted to the Graduate School should have attached a copy of the written approval from the Institutional Review Board. The guidelines of the Institutional Review Board are available on the IRB website.

**Animal Care and Use (IACUC)**

Students whose research involves live vertebrate animals must obtain approval from the Animal Care and Use Committee before the prospectus can be approved. Guidelines and application forms for the process are available in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

**Agency Approval**

Copies of written approval must accompany the prospectus from any agencies or institutions where the student proposes to conduct the research. These approvals should be on the letterhead of the agency and be signed by the appropriate authorities.

*The prospectus filed in the Graduate School does not include copies of any instruments or questionnaires that may be used in the final research.*

The prospectus should be submitted and approved no later than the semester before graduation. The Prospectus must be filed and approved in the Graduate School before the research is begun. (Note: The prospectus for a professional paper does not require Graduate School approval; therefore, it does not need to be filed in the Graduate School.)

**Deadlines**

The Graduation Deadline can be found on the Graduate School website [here](#). You will find the graduation requirements and the final deadline dates by semester for submission of all graduation paperwork due in the Graduate School. Final dates for submitting papers **cannot** be waived for any reason. The Graduate School will automatically delete from the graduation list the names of those persons
who do not meet the final deadline. Each candidate, not the faculty advisor, is responsible for meeting Graduate School requirements and deadlines.

**Forms**

The Graduate School website includes all forms needed for graduate degree completion. Students are invited to contact the Graduate School for assistance on any matters related to the paper. The Graduate School staff will be happy to answer questions or to clarify policies or procedures.
Format Manual

Thesis/Dissertation Format Requirements

Manual of Style

While the student’s department specifies the manual of style to be used, the instructions in this guide supersede all style manuals; every student must follow these guidelines. The student must be sure to use the most current edition of the manual approved by the academic program. No manual, however, can answer all questions that arise. The student's major professor and committee can answer most questions, but the student may consult the Graduate School at any stage in the writing of the dissertation or thesis for assistance with formatting.

Style

The paper should be written in a clear and appropriate style. Particular attention should be given to such matters as grammar, punctuation, and consistency of style.

Margins

Margins for each page carrying a major heading in all caps (e.g., ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, CHAPTER, TABLE OF CONTENTS, and BIBLIOGRAPHY) should have a top margin of two inches: Left: 1.5 inches, Right: 1 inch, Top: 2 inches, Bottom: 1 inch. Margins in the body of the paper should be: Left: 1.5 inches, Right: 1 inch, Top: 1.5 inches, Bottom: 1 inch. To achieve this you can sent the document margins to:

- Top: 1.5 inches
- Right: 1 inch
- Bottom: 1 inch
- Left: 1.5 inches
When you have a page where the title is to be centered and in all caps insert 3 single-spaced lines, this will ensure that the top margin is 2 inches.

**Font and Size**

A font size of 10, 11, or 12 is acceptable. The font must be standard (such as Arial, Times New Roman, Calibri, or Cambria), and the same font and font size must be used consistently throughout the paper. Other irregular typefaces are unacceptable.

**Pagination**

Introductory pages, such as the Table of Contents, are numbered with lower-case Roman numerals at the bottom and center of each page one inch from the bottom edge. The Title Page is counted as the first page although a number will not appear on it. The first page showing a number will be the page following the Title Page, which will be numbered as page ii. The first page of Chapter I should have the Arabic page number 1.

Use the automatic page numbering features of the word processor. Page number position should not vary from page to page. Remember that all numbered pages, whether they bear Roman or Arabic page numbers, are numbered bottom center, 1 inch from the edge of the sheet. Be sure to keep all page numbers, whether Roman or Arabic, in a consistent position throughout the document. Every page (with the exception of the Title Page) should be numbered. All pages in appendixes must also be numbered and comply with margin guidelines.

**Line Spacing**

Text must be double-spaced throughout. Paragraphs should be given standard indention without extra space between paragraphs. Consult the appropriate departmental or disciplinary manual for specific requirements regarding spacing of block quotations, bibliography entries, tables, etc. Wherever possible, avoid beginning a new paragraph at the bottom of a page or
ending a paragraph at the top of a page, unless at least two lines of text can be included in each case. Avoid large expanses of white space within chapters.

**Contents and Order**

Your document must be in the following order:

1. Title Page
2. Copyright Page (optional)
3. Dedication (optional)
4. Acknowledgments Page (optional)
5. Abstract
6. Table of Contents
7. List of Tables (if appropriate)
8. List of Figures (if appropriate)

*The above pages are numbered with lowercase Roman numerals at the bottom of the page, above the 1-inch margin. The title page is counted but not numbered.*

9. Body of Text
10. Bibliographies, Works Cited, Reference List, References, or List of References
11. Appendices (if appropriate)

**Title Page**

The date on the Title Page indicates the month and year the degree is conferred, regardless of when the work was completed. The place on the Title Page is Denton, Texas. This page is counted as page one, but the number does not appear on the page.
Dedication Page (Optional)

It is not necessary to include a dedication page some students, however, choose to use this page to dedicate their loved ones.

Acknowledgements Page (Optional)

It is not necessary to include a statement acknowledging the routine assistance any student receives from a major professor and members of the research committee. Some students, however, may have reason to express formal appreciation for some extraordinary assistance or support that made the completion of the study possible.

Abstract

Each copy of the dissertation or thesis submitted to the Graduate School must include a copy of the abstract. The abstract for a thesis must not exceed 150 words; for a dissertation, it must not exceed 350 words.

The abstract should include the following:

- Student’s Name (as it appears on the Title Page and Signature Page)
- Title of the Dissertation or Thesis
- Month and Year of Graduation (not the month and year the dissertation or thesis is completed)
- Problem or Purpose of the Study
- Procedure Followed in the Study
- Major sources of data and explanation on how data has been interpreted
- Summary of the Conclusions
These suggestions may be helpful when preparing the abstract:

1. Use the same rules for margins and spacing as for the dissertation/thesis.

2. Center the word, ABSTRACT, at the top of the first page. Double space and center the student’s name in all caps. Double space and center the paper’s title in all caps. If the title funs more than one line, the second and subsequent lines are single-spaced and are shorted than the top line (inverted pyramid form). Double space and center the graduation month and year in all caps. Double space and being text

3. The abstract must be equivalent to the dissertation or thesis in meeting the standards for scholarship and presentation of materials

**Table of Contents**

The Table of Contents is composed of a list that includes at least the following elements with their page numbers: chapter numbers and titles, bibliography or list of references, and appendix titles.

**List of Tables (if applicable)**

**List of Figures (if applicable)**

**Body of Text**

The Graduate School does not prescribe the exact order of presentation of the text itself, but the book-length document should be divided into three or more chapters with appropriate titles. A preface is optional, as are subheadings within chapters.

**Charts, Figures, Graphs, Maps, Questionnaires, Tables, and Photographs**

All charts, figures, graphs, maps, questionnaires, tables, photographs, computer-generated images, and other illustrations used in the paper should be designed to comply with the
margin rules of 1-1/2 inches on the left and top, and 1 inch on the right and bottom of the page. (It is preferable that India ink be used for any hand-drawn figures.) These items may be reduced in size if necessary to comply with margins. The tables and figures should be labeled and numbered in accordance with the style manual.

**Landscaped Pages**

Pages with information in landscaped format should be positioned with the heading at the binding edge and numbered at the bottom center of the portrait page the same as other pages in the text.

**Multimodal Format**

Texas Woman’s University now provides opportunity for students to explain non-traditional approaches to dissertation and thesis formats. The multimodal design option works best for those students in departments that have gone to ETD submission.

Students who select the Interactive/Embedded/Multimedia design option, while still adhering to a format outlined by the Graduate School, will be able to submit their dissertation/thesis as an embedded PDF/Embedded PDF’s, as well as any supplementary filed that the student may include, can contain, for example: audio and video clips, interactive files, datasets as well as some customized font formatting. Any student wishing to use this format must meet with the Graduate School after prospectus approval but prior to starting their project as format requirements are currently considered on a case-by-case basis.
Texas Woman's University
Graduate School Thesis & Dissertation Process

1. The student formally defends his or her thesis or dissertation successfully.

2. The student makes any necessary revisions requested by the committee.

3. The committee and the Department Chair read and sign off on the document.

4. The student submits the document to the Graduate Reader electronically, in Word or PDF by the deadline date.

5. The Graduate Reader reviews the document for spelling, grammar, citations – not for content.

   A - If there is a high number of errors, the Graduate Reader will return the document to the student and request that he or she work closely with his or her chair to fix them, then submit to the Graduate Reader for a second review.

   B - If there are a relatively few number of errors, the Graduate Reader will return the document to the student with instructions to make any changes and then move forward to work with the Senior Graduate Services Analyst (Students have 5 class days to make the corrections requested by the Graduate Reader).

6. Once the student has made the changes noted by the Graduate Reader (and been through a second review if needed), the student submits the document to Senior Graduate Services Analyst for formatting review.

7. The student works with Senior Graduate Services Analyst on formatting.

8. After formatting changes are made, the Senior Graduate Services Analyst guides the student through the process of uploading the document to the library system.
Submission Procedures

Final Semester Responsibilities and Deadlines

Prior to the semester of expected graduation, the student should consult the Graduation Deadlines on the Graduate School website. It is the student’s responsibility to meet not only all the deadlines listed there, but also any deadlines set by the academic program.

Submission of Forms

In order to graduate every student must submit the required forms by the semester deadline:

1. Digital copy of defended and committee approved Dissertation/Thesis
2. Signed Signature Page
3. Certification of Completion
4. Completed Fee Sheet
5. IRB Close Letter
6. PDF copy of your Curriculum Vitae (required for Ph.D. candidates and optional for Masters students)
7. Survey of Earned Doctorates (doctoral students only)
8. Publishing rights/agreement form (if applicable)
9. Release from co-authors (if applicable)

Submission of Dissertation/Thesis

The Graduate School at Texas Woman's University has migrated away from paper submissions to paperless submissions. Students will now submit their dissertations/thesis digitally.
Below are the requirements for the digital submission:

- Once the student has completed any revisions notated by the defense committee and the defense committee has approved the document the student will submit the defense committee approved dissertation/thesis and required supplemental and/or administrative filed to the ETD/Vireo website.

- Submissions will be reviewed in the order in which they are received. Students may verify and/or track their submissions by logging into the ETD/Vireo website and clicking on the “manage/view your submission(s)” button. When the document is submitted and pending review the “Assigned to” field will read “unassigned.” When the document is under review, the “assigned to” field will reflect the name of the person reviewing the document.

- Dissertations and theses only (not professional papers) will be reviewed in the Graduate School for correctness of form, the use of acceptable paper and font, correct margins and pagination, and other matters of format and style. The Graduate School staff will be happy to answer questions concerning matters of policy, submission procedures, or form; but the Graduate School does not serve as an official proofreader of papers prior to defense. It is the responsibility of the student and the research committee to ensure that each paper, in all respects, adheres to the highest standards of research, style, content, and format.

- The student must make any corrections required by the committee before submitting to the Graduate School Reader, by the submission deadline or earlier, who will review it for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and citations. The student is responsible for proofreading the final product and correcting any errors found by the committee and Graduate Reader.
before submitting the final copies to the Graduate School for format review. In no case will a dissertation/thesis be accepted in to Graduate School as a final copy until it has been approved and signed by the committee members and other appropriate academic officials, such as the Graduate Reader.

Publishing, Microfilming, and Copyright

Texas Digital Library (TDL) and ProQuest/UMI publish dissertations and theses. Abstracts are published in Dissertation Abstracts International and Thesis Abstracts. The microfilm agreement gives ProQuest/UMI the right to make and sell photocopies of the document as microfilmed, and a small royalty will be paid to the student if the number of photocopies sold exceeds a given number. This agreement does not give ProQuest/UMI, or anyone else, rights to reprint and sell the thesis in any form except photocopy. If the student later revises the paper for publication, legal rights will be protected by a new copyright on the revised text.

Ordinarily, the Graduate School does not encourage copyright; nevertheless, ProQuest/UMI will secure copyright for dissertations and theses if the student should desire it. Students must complete the copyright section of the form and pay the copyright fee at the time they submit papers to the Graduate School.

Survey of Earned Doctorates

Each candidate for a doctoral degree must complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates, available on the Graduate School website. Once completed the student must submitted the certification of completion provided by the survey. The name of each student who completes the doctoral degree is then included in a national roster of holders of the doctorate.
Vitae

All doctoral candidates must submit one copy of their curriculum vitae as a supplemental file when they submit all required documents to the ETD/Vireo website. If the department does not have a required format, the student may choose the format. The student’s curriculum vitae will be uploaded as a supplemental file it is not included within the dissertation. Personal information such as address, phone number, student ID, and Social Security number should not be included in the vitae.

Signature Page

Common mistakes:

- Incorrect author’s name: this name needs to match your title page and abstract.
- Incorrect date: the date on your signature page is the date of your defense.
- Incorrect title: the title here must match your abstract and title page
- Remember, no page numbers on the signature page

Professional Papers

Individual departments, rather than the Graduate School, establish the form and style requirements for professional papers, which do not require Graduate School approval and are not filed in the Graduate School. The candidate submits the signed copies of the completed paper to the department. The department files the Certification of Completion and a copy of the Title Page in the Graduate School no later than the deadline for submission of dissertations and theses. The student should consult the appropriate departmental officials for specific requirements as to the number of copies. If binding is desired, the student may make the arrangements with a commercial bindery. The Graduate School does not accept professional papers for binding.
Common Mistakes

Listed below are some of the more common mistakes made during the preparation of thesis and dissertations.

Title Page

- Incorrect author’s name: this needs to match the signature page and abstract
- Incorrect date: the date on your title page is the official graduation month (May, December, or August) and year.
- Inverted pyramid: your title needs to be in an inverted pyramid
- Incorrect listing of college or degree

Signature Page

- Incorrect author’s name: this name needs to match your title page and abstract.
- Incorrect date: the date on your signature page is the date of your defense.
- Incorrect title: the title here must match your abstract and title page
- Remember no page numbers on the signature page
- Template is on page 20

Copyright Page

- Page number “iii” should appear at the bottom

Table on Contents

- Incorrect heading set up: you need to list only level ones and level twos here
- Chapter headings, titles, and page numbers do not match content in the body
- Page numbers not aligned properly

Content

- Title page: 2” top margin
- Chapter I always starts at page 1
- Margins: all pages must meet the margin guidelines
Plagiarism, Documentation, and Copyrighted Material

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism occurs when an author, consciously or unconsciously, adopts another person’s ideas or words without adequate acknowledgment. Plagiarism thus constitutes the unacknowledged use of someone else’s arguments, terminology, or logic in the development of a paper. The student, therefore, must document and acknowledge credit for any part of the paper borrowed from some other source. For further descriptions and illustrations of plagiarism, see the appropriate style manual for the department.

**Documentation and Use of Copyrighted Material**

Except as stipulated by this Guide, documentation should be prepared in strict accordance with the style manual required. Limited use of copyrighted material usually does not require permission, but rigorous laws govern the use of such material. In light of current copyright laws, the student must take every precaution to gain all of the necessary permissions to quote excerpts from copyrighted work or to reproduce copyrighted questionnaires or other research instruments. For those students who elected a publication track need to ensure that all parties, publisher and any co-authors, have been notified as to plans to include the pre-peer reviewed article as a chapter in your dissertation/thesis. Furthermore, the student will need to obtain a release from the journal as well as any applicable co-authors these release forms will not be included in the dissertation itself but will be uploaded with the dissertation or thesis as supplemental files.
Dissertation/Thesis Checklist

☐ Certification of Completion (Click here)
☐ Thesis or Dissertation
☐ Completed Fee Sheet (Click here)
☐ Survey of Earned Doctorates (doctoral students only) (Click here)
☐ IRB Close Letter (if applicable)
☐ Curriculum Vita (doctoral students only, optional for masters)
☐ Publishing rights/agreement form (if applicable)
☐ Release from co-authors (if applicable)
☐ Signed Signature Page (see next page)
Final Defense

Date of final defense: ________________

Student: ____________________________________________________________
Student ID#: ________________

We, the undersigned are submitting herewith a ☐ Thesis ☐ Dissertation, entitled: ____________________________________________________________, written by the aforementioned student. We affirm that we have examined this document for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of: ____________________________________________________________, with a minor in: ____________________________________________________________.

________________________________________________________
Major Professor/Committee Chair

________________________________________________________
Committee Member

________________________________________________________
Committee Member

________________________________________________________
Committee Member

________________________________________________________
Committee Member

Department Chair (or appropriate title for Departmental Administrator)

Extra signature lines have been provided.

The Graduate School
P.O. Box 425649 | Denton, TX 76204 | 940 898 3415 | gradschool@twu.edu
Capitalizing Words in Titles or Headings

Capitalize major words in titles of books and articles within the body of the paper. Conjunctions, articles, and short prepositions are not considered major words; however, capitalize all words of four letters or more. Capitalize all verbs (including linking verbs), nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and pronouns. When a capitalized word is a hyphenated compound, capitalize both words. Also, capitalize the first word after a colon or a dash in a title.

In her book, *History of Pathology*

The criticism of the article, “Attitudes Toward Mental Health Workers”

“Ultrasonic Vocalizations Are Elicited From Rat Pups”

*Exception:* In titles of books and articles in reference lists, capitalize only the first word, the first word after a colon or a dash, and proper nouns. Do not capitalize the second word of a hyphenated compound (American Psychological Association, 2010, p. 101)
Capitalization of titles, names, and special terms depends on which of the two styles the writer is using: headline style or sentence style. For further assistance in determining which style better suits your research, please see Chapters 8 and 17 in the Chicago Manual of Style (University of Chicago Press, 2003).
These titles should appear in a research paper as follows:

*Bernard Berenson: The Making of a Connoisseur*

*Turner’s Early Sketchbooks*

The rules for capitalizing titles are strict. In a title or a subtitle, capitalize the first word, the last work, and all principal words, including those that follow hyphens in compound terms.

Therefore, capitalize the following parts of speech:

- Nouns (e.g., *flowers* and *Europe*, as in *The Flowers of Europe*)
- Pronouns (e.g., *our*, as in *Save Our Children; that*, as in *The Mouse That Roared*)
- Verbs (e.g., *watches*, as in *America Watches Television; is* as in *What Is Literature?*)
- Adjectives (e.g., *ugly*, as in *The Ugly Duckling, that*, as in *Who Said That Phrase?*)
- Adverbs (e.g., *slightly*, as in *Our Slightly Corrupt, down* as in *Go Down, Mosses*)
- Subordinating conjunctions (e.g., *after, although, as if, as soon as, because, before, if, that, unless, until, when, where, while, as in One If by Land and Anywhere That Chance Leads*)

Do not capitalize the following parts of speech when they fall in the middle of a title:

- Articles (*a, an, the*, as in *Under the Bamboo Tree*)
- Prepositions (e.g., *against, between, in, of, to*, as in *The Merchant of Venice* and “A Dialogue between the Soul and Body”)
- Coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet*, as in *Romeo and Juliet*)

(Modern Language Association, 2009, p. 86)