

REQUIREMENTS FOR THESIS PREPARATION

A Manual
For
Master's Thesis Preparation



Spring 2008

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REQUIREMENTS FOR THESIS PREPARATION

Master's Thesis Guidelines

I. General Comments

The Thesis: The thesis is the culmination of an individual research experience that may use new data or information to replicate an earlier study, a secondary analysis of data from another study, or the product of original research based on primary data. A public oral presentation of the thesis proposal, which is a detailed description of the problem and planned research, is required. Upon completion of the thesis, the student must pass a public defense of the thesis conducted by his or her committee. This oral examination also evaluates the student's knowledge of general principles and techniques. The thesis committee minimally consists of the student's thesis chair and two other full-time university faculty members. Once a student has a thesis proposal approved by the Office of Graduate Education, the candidate must be in continuous registration (excluding summers) for at least one hour a semester until the thesis is completed.

The Office of Graduate Education requires that all theses conform to the specifications given below. Unless the thesis chair or program coordinator has given consent in advance, departures from these norms will render a thesis unacceptable.

- A Thesis must be written in English.
- A Thesis must demonstrate the candidates ability to carry out research and to organize results.
- A Thesis must be expressed in good literate style and must be a distinct contribution to knowledge.

II. Copyright

Under present laws, a copyright is secured automatically when the work is created and fixed in a copy form for the first time. This is defined as the date when the written work is approved by the Office of Graduate Education on behalf of ECSU. While notice of copyright of the written work is not required to have claim to copyright, failure to comply with the requirement can result in loss of certain additional rights otherwise available to the copyright owner. Therefore, students who anticipate publishing the copyright page or using the submitted written work in some way, are urged to include the copyright page.

Since the written work is submitted in satisfaction as a part of the requirement for an advanced degree, the candidate automatically conveys to the University a license for limited use including: (1) microfilming, (2) distributions to major departments or libraries, or (3) responses to inquiries regarding research in the subject area of the work. According to the Copyright Act of 1976, a student has five years from the date of publication to register a copyright.

III. Thesis Specifications

A. Components of the Thesis (see Appendix A for Thesis Layout)

The thesis must include:

1. **Title and Approval Page.** The title page must include:
 - the title of the thesis;
 - the name of the author and department
 - the month and year the thesis was submitted (see Appendix B for sample)
 - **signatures of Thesis Committee members must be in black ink**

2. **Copyright Notice. (If applicable) [See Appendix C for sample]**

3. **Abstract.** Every copy of the thesis must have an abstract. An abstract must provide a concise summary of the thesis. Particular care should be taken in preparing the abstract, since it will be published in Dissertation Abstracts or Master's Abstracts and the length is limited by the publisher. The abstract may not exceed 150 words for a Master's thesis. In style, the abstract should be a miniature version of the thesis. It should be a summary of the results, conclusions or main arguments presented in the thesis. (See Appendix D for sample)

4. **Dedication.** A Dedication page may be included in your thesis just before the Acknowledgments page, but it is not a requirement.

5. **Acknowledgments.** It is appropriate to declare the extent to which assistance has been given by members of the staff, fellow students, technicians or others in the collection of materials and data, the design and construction of apparatus, the performance of experiments, the analysis of data, and the preparation of the thesis (including editorial help). In addition, it is appropriate to recognize the supervision and advice given by the thesis committee and chair

6. **Table of Contents.** The table of contents must be detailed. Each chapter and main section in the thesis must be listed in the "Table of Contents" and each must be given a page number for the location of a particular text. (See Appendix E and F for sample)

7. **Chapter I.** An Introduction that clearly states the rationale and objectives of the research. It also includes:
 - a. Background
 - b. Statement of Purpose (Objective)
 - c. Methods and Procedures
 - d. Research Overview

(See Appendix G for headings levels)

8. **Chapter II.** More than one chapter will be necessary to complete the research. A background, **comprehensive** review of the literature (in addition to that covered in the introduction to the paper) is required. This is known as the Review of Literature and should include relevant, recent research that has been done on the subject matter.

9. **Chapter III.** The Methodology is included in this chapter and should include all relevant methods that were utilized as well as research methods and measurements.
10. **Chapter IV.** The Results : This should include your data analysis and findings
11. **Chapter V.** Discussion: This should include your summary, conclusions and recommendations
12. **References.** A thorough Reference list.
13. **Appendices (optional).** May include a list of definitions, abbreviations and acronyms. It may contain an ethics certificate in the case of research involving human or animal subjects, microorganisms, living cells, other biohazards and/or radioactive material (see Internal Review Board for your discipline).

B. Final Version

The final version of the thesis (after oral defense) must be free from typographical, grammatical and other errors when submitted to the Graduate Director. While this is the responsibility of the student, thesis chairs should not sign off on theses that are not error free.

C. Thesis formatting

1. **Paper and Font.** Theses must be typed (computer generated). Use 8-1/2 x 11, 100% cotton rag or 20 lb. bond, un-ruled paper for all copies submitted. Use one side of the page only. A conventional font e.g. Times New Roman, size 12-point must be used.
2. **Margins.** Left, 1-1/2 inches; top, bottom, and right, 1 inch. These are necessary to allow for binding and trimming. Do not punch holes in the margin, since holes would make binding impossible. **PLEASE NOTE:** If you do not follow the appropriate margin guidelines that are included here, you might lose content when your thesis is bound.
3. **Spacing.** Double space the text. Long quotations, reference entries (double space between entries), table captions, and similar special material may be single spaced. **(See Appendix H for spacing requirements before and after tables and figures)**
4. **Page Numbering.** Preliminary pages of the thesis, that is, those preceding the Dedication are not to be numbered. Pages after the **Dedication** up to **Chapter I** are to be numbered in Roman numerals. The count for these preliminary pages should start with the Title and Approval page. For example, if the thesis has a Title and Approval page, Copyright page, and Abstract, the Dedication should be the first page showing a number, and it should be numbered with the Roman numeral **iv**.

Pages of the text itself (Chapter I) should be numbered consecutively throughout in Arabic numbers, beginning with number 1 on the first page of the first chapter or introduction. In

this section, number every page to be bound, including pages on which only illustrations, drawings, tables, or captions appear.

Page numbers should be centered and placed at the bottom of the page. **Only** the number should appear, **not** *page 9* or the abbreviation *p. 9*, for example.

(Note: You may consult the APA handbook for formatting styles. It is available at the Reference desk of the G. R. Little Library).

5 Figures and Illustrations. Figures, tables, graphs, etc., should be positioned according to the scientific publication conventions of the discipline. Illustrations must be drawn using an ink that permits microfilming and high quality photocopying. Charts, graphs, maps, and tables that are larger than the standard page should be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Legends or captions accompanying full-page graphics must be presented on a separate page. All figures should appear within the text at the point where reference to them is first made.

6. Photographs. Digital pictures may be incorporated into the thesis. Photographs with dark backgrounds should be avoided. Digital pictures must be of the quality accepted by journals in your discipline (usually 4.0 megapixels or better).

7. Additional Materials. Slides, tapes, diskettes, etc. are to be avoided if possible and can be included only if the candidate authorizes the reproduction of the thesis without them.

8. Printing. A laser printer should be used for the final copy.

The availability of sophisticated word processor packages and of desktop publishing software has made possible a variety of dazzling presentation options. However, the candidate should remember that features that should stand out in the thesis include the quality of the scholarship or research, the soundness of the logic, the originality of ideas, and the lucidity of the prose, but not the size of the headlines. Therefore, the use of headers or chapter titles larger than 3/16" is discouraged and the use of excessive *ITALICS* or **BOLD** print is prohibited.

All errors must be corrected before final deposition

(Use Appendix I to check that the thesis has been correctly formatted)

Appendix A – Thesis Layout

Page Order

Flyleaf (blank sheet for hard copy paper copies only)
Title and Approval Page
Copyright Page (optional)
Abstract Page
Dedication (optional)
Acknowledgements
Table of Contents
List of Tables
List of Figures
List of Charts, Illustrations, Photographs, Symbols, etc. (optional)
Main Text (Chapters)
Bibliography (References or Works Cited)
Appendices (optional)
Flyleaf (blank sheet for hard copy paper copies only)

Appendix B –Sample Title and Approval Page

TITLE OF THESIS:
CENTERED;
UPPERCASE; DOUBLE
SPACED IF MORE THAN
ONE LINE

THESIS AT ELIZABETH CITY

2 double spaces from top of
page

by

YOUR NAME:
UPPERCASE

JANE DEER DOE

A Thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Elizabeth City State University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science

The degree

Elizabeth City, North Carolina

The month and year that
the degree was awarded

December
2008

APPROVED BY

(Name) Chair of Thesis Committee (centered)

(Name) Committee Member

(Name) Committee Member

(Name) Committee Member

(Name) Committee Member

Appendix C – Sample Copyright Page (Optional)

Copyright by
JANE DEER DOE
December
2008

1. Centered on page
2. Name is exactly as that appearing on the title page
3. Year and month that degree was awarded

Appendix D – Sample Abstract

Exactly as it appears on the
Title and Approval Page

TITLE OF THE THESIS

4 spaces from the top of the
page; centered; uppercase

First line of Abstract

4 spaces from the title

Abstract must be double spaced
and no more than 150 words

Appendix E – Sample Table of Contents

Centered, uppercase

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Your page assignments

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
Subheading(s)	2
Sub subheading(s)	3
CHAPTER II REVIEW OF LITERATURE	4
Subheading(s)	7
Sub subheading(s)	11
CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY	20
Subheading(s)	25
Sub subheading(s)	40
CHAPTER IV RESULTS	50
Subheading(s)	52
Sub subheading(s)	54
CHAPTER V DISCUSSION	60
REFERENCES	62



The Lists of Tables and Figures (Appendix F) with the exact title of each figure/table should come after the Table of Contents

**Appendix F – Sample List of Tables and or
List of Figures (each list on a separate page)**

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
No.	Name of table (exactly as it appears above the Table)	(Arabic No.)

1. If there are Figures, the next page should have the List of Figures;
2. The number at the bottom of this page should be in Roman numeral

Appendix G – Heading Levels Adopted for Theses

HEADING
e.g. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION
(CENTERED, UPPERCASE HEADING, BOLD)

Subheading
e.g. Cell cycle
(flush with left margin, uppercase and lowercase, bold)

Sub subheading
e.g. Apoptosis
(flush with left margin, uppercase and lowercase, italics)

1. The first page of the Introduction should be numbered 1;
2. All pages after this are consecutively numbered in Arabic numeral e.g. 2, 3.....

Appendix H - Sample format and spacing before and after a Table and Figure:

All tables/figures should be separated from the text by three blank lines (two double spaces) before and after the table.

Two double spaces (three blank lines)

Table 1. Title

Paper Type	Total for 2005	Total for 2006
Dissertation	52	54
Thesis	150	150

Two double space (three blank lines)

The example below shows the format of the caption on a figure and the spacing required before and after a figure.

Two double spaces (three blank lines)



Two double spaces (three blank lines)

Figure 1. ECSU

Beginning of next paragraph...

Appendix I - Document Format Checklist

- Page order** and **front of document** are formatted correctly (see Thesis specifications).
- The same Font** is used consistently throughout the document (font size should be 12 pt.).
- Margins:** Right, top, bottom = 1.0 inch. Left = 1.5 inches for binding.
- Spacing** is double throughout the document. Single spacing may be used for long quotations, footnotes, table captions, tables, figure captions, figures, table of contents, list of figures, list of tables, dedication page, and appendices. References entries should be double spaced. Each line should be single spaced.

Page Numbering

- Page number begins:** on the dedication page.
- Page number placement:** upper right hand corner inside margins (set Header to 1", so the page number does not appear in the margin). Also, press the *Entry* key once after inserting the page number to allow for proper line spacing between the page number and text.
- Page number assignment:** every page is assigned a number, but no number appears on the title (first) page, copyright and abstract
- Page number format:** page numbers stand alone. Use no dashes (-2-) or words (Page 2, title, name, etc.) before or after the page number. Page numbers should be formatted in the same font as text.

Tables/Figures

Follow the discipline specific style guide (APA.) to format tables and figures. If the style guide does not have specific instructions, please use the following as a guide.

Placement of table/figure:

- Tables and figures appear in the document after mentioned in text. If a table/figure is large, place the entire table/figure on the following page (use CTRL-Enter to insert a page break).
- Tables that spread over several pages, should have the title "Table #: continued" at the top of the following page(s).
- Tables/figures are left aligned and fit within the margins.
- No text appears to the left or right of a table/figure.
- If the page is oriented in landscape, the margins should be 1.5 inch top margin and 1.0 inch on all other sides. This should occur naturally when you set the page to landscape in Word.

Titles/Captions on Tables/Figures:

- A brief and explanatory title should appear at the top of all tables. All titles should appear in the List of Tables with same wording and the same capitalization as they appear in the body of the document. The titles should be in the same font and size as other text.
- A concise explanation (called a caption) should appear below all figures. All captions should appear in the List of Figures with same wording and the same capitalization as they

appear in the body of the document. The titles should be in the same font and size as other text.

- Titles and captions have a consistent font, numbering, placement, and capitalization. Conventions for capitalization of words and punctuation in titles and captions vary from discipline to discipline. The format selected should be consistent throughout the document.
- Spacing between the title/caption and the table/figure should be formatted consistently on all tables and figures.

Text

- If the page number is one inch from the top or bottom, then the text must be at least two inches. The text should not run into the numbers. No hanging sentences.