

THESIS AND DISSERTATION GUIDE:
FOCUS ON FORMATTING

by

The Graduate College of Texas State University

Effective for the 2021-22 Academic Year

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-------------|
| LIST OF TABLES | vi |
| LIST OF FIGURES | vii |
| CHAPTER | |
| I. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| Purpose of the Guide | 1 |
| Revisions to the Guide | 1 |
| Resources for Thesis/Dissertation Students | 1 |
| Guide Instructions | 3 |
| II. OPTIONS FOR THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS/DISSERTATION | 5 |
| Copyright for Article-Based Thesis/Dissertation Structure | 7 |
| To Be Submitted Later Category | 7 |
| Forthcoming/Already Published Category | 8 |
| Co-authored Articles | 9 |
| Formatting Requirements: Article-Based Thesis/Dissertation | 9 |
| (1) Standard Formatting | 9 |
| (2) Limited Customized Formatting | 10 |
| III. FORMATTING CHECKLIST | 11 |
| Title Page | 11 |
| Copyright Page | 12 |
| Fair Use and Author’s Permission Statement Page | 12 |
| Dedication | 13 |
| Acknowledgements | 13 |
| Table of Contents | 14 |
| List of Tables, List of Figures, etc. | 16 |
| List of Abbreviations | 17 |
| Abstract | 17 |
| Text Section | 18 |
| Margins and Pagination | 18 |
| Font | 18 |

| | |
|--|----|
| <u>Spacing</u> | 19 |
| <u>Grammar and Punctuation</u> | 19 |
| <u>Headings and Subheadings</u> | 20 |
| <u>Tables, Figures, Illustrations, etc.</u> | 21 |
| <u>Citations in the Text</u> | 21 |
| <u>References</u> | 21 |
| <u>Common Mistakes</u> | 22 |
| | |
| <u>IV. COMMON MISTAKES</u> | 23 |
| | |
| <u>Dot Leaders</u> | 23 |
| <u>Chapters and Subheadings</u> | 24 |
| <u>Name Inconsistencies</u> | 26 |
| <u>Tables and Figures</u> | 28 |
| <u>Tables</u> | 28 |
| <u>Figures</u> | 29 |
| <u>Landscape Pages</u> | 30 |
| <u>References/Literature Cited</u> | 34 |
| <u>(1) Reference Section at the End of Each Chapter</u> | 34 |
| <u>(2) Reference Section at the End of the Thesis/Dissertation</u> | 34 |
| <u>(3) Reference Section at the End of Each Chapter and the End of</u> <u>the Thesis/Dissertation</u> | 35 |
| <u>Mistakes in References/Literature Cited</u> | 35 |
| <u>Consistency</u> | 37 |
| | |
| <u>V. FORMATTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR TRADITIONAL AND</u> <u>ARTICLE-BASED STRUCTURES</u> | 40 |
| | |
| <u>Microsoft Word Template</u> | 40 |
| <u>Copy and Paste</u> | 40 |
| <u>Style</u> | 41 |
| <u>Arrangement of Thesis and Dissertation</u> | 43 |
| <u>Abstract Requirement</u> | 44 |
| <u>Typography</u> | 47 |
| <u>Margins</u> | 47 |
| <u>Spacing</u> | 49 |
| <u>Text Alignment</u> | 49 |
| <u>Text Alignment – PC</u> | 49 |
| <u>Text Alignment – Mac</u> | 50 |
| <u>Dot Leaders</u> | 51 |
| <u>Dot Leaders – PC</u> | 51 |

| | |
|---|--------|
| <u>Dot Leaders – Mac</u> | 52 |
| <u>Next Page Section Break</u> | 52 |
| <u>Section Break – PC</u> | 53 |
| <u>Section Break – Mac</u> | 54 |
| <u>Pagination</u> | 56 |
| <u>Page Numbers – PC</u> | 57 |
| <u>Page Numbers – Mac</u> | 59 |
| <u>Supplementary and Illustrative Materials</u> | 61 |
| <u>Headings and Subheadings</u> | 61 |
| <u>Headings: Front Matter</u> | 61 |
| <u>Headings: Body of the Text</u> | 62 |
| <u>Heading and Subheading Example</u> | 62 |
| <u>Abbreviations and Acronyms</u> | 63 |
| <u>Tables and Figures</u> | 63 |
| <u>Tables</u> | 64 |
| <u>Figures</u> | 65 |
| <u>Citations</u> | 66 |
| <u>Computer Use</u> | 67 |
| <u>Conversion to PDF</u> | 67 |
| <u>Conversion Tools</u> | 67 |
| <u>PDF conversion for PC users</u> | 68 |
| <u>PDF conversion for Mac users</u> | 68 |
| <u>Make Sure to Check the Final PDF</u> | 68 |
| <u>Supplementary Materials</u> | 69 |
| <u>Technical Support</u> | 70 |
| <u>APPENDIX SECTION</u> | 71 |

LIST OF TABLES

| Table | Page |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Resources for Thesis/Dissertation Students | 2 |
| 2. Style Guides by Major | 41 |
| 3. Arrangement of Thesis and Dissertation | 45 |
| 4. APA Headings | 62 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| Figure | Page |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Example Showing Margins for Front Matter | 48 |
| 2. Example Showing Margins for Text Section and Back Matter | 48 |
| 3. Setting Text Alignment – PC | 50 |
| 4. Setting Text Alignment – Mac | 50 |
| 5. Setting Tabs for Dot Leaders – PC | 51 |
| 6. Setting Tabs for Dot Leaders – Mac | 52 |
| 7. Diagram Showing Location of Next Page Section Breaks Option in Page Layout | 53 |
| 8. Diagrams Showing Header/Footer Components – PC | 54 |
| 9. Diagram Showing Location of Next Page Section Breaks Option in Document Elements | 55 |
| 10. Diagrams Showing Header/Footer Components – Mac | 56 |
| 11. Diagram Showing Location of Page Numbers | 57 |
| 12. Diagrams Showing Page Number Format Box – PC | 58 |
| 13. Diagrams Showing Page Number Format Box – Mac | 59 |

I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Guide

This guide provides a specific overview of the formatting requirements required for all theses and dissertations at Texas State University. The Graduate College formatting requirements take precedent over all other style guides. Recent style manuals (i.e. APA, Turabian, MLA, etc.) in the students' major disciplines, as agreed upon by your committee, may be consulted for style material not included in this guide. Theses and dissertations must be formatted as specified in this guide to be approved by The Graduate College.

It is important for students to consult with their departments regarding departmental requirements outside The Graduate College's requirements outlined in this guide, as well as progress towards a degree. Students are responsible for adhering to both The Graduate College's requirements and their departmental requirements in order to graduate from Texas State University.

Revisions to the Guide

Texas State University reserves the right to make changes to the requirements in this guide. If changes are considered necessary, they will become effective immediately and will apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled. Current students must not use old manuals, previous theses, or previous dissertations when preparing a current document, as styles and requirements may have changed.

Resources for Thesis/Dissertation Students

Below is a list of resources available for thesis and dissertation students:

| | |
|--|--|
| <u>Guide: Focus on Processes and Procedures</u> | Provides an overview of the thesis/dissertation process leading up to submission, including committees, forms, expectations, and more. |
| <u>Guide: Focus on Vireo Submission</u> | Provides overview of submitting to Vireo and the corrections process before final approval. |
| <u>Thesis & Dissertation Information page</u> | Central hub for thesis and dissertation resources. |
| <u>Forms</u> | Digital copies of required forms for thesis and dissertations students. |
| <u>Deadlines</u> | Deadlines for graduation applications; thesis/dissertation defense, submission, and approval; and comprehensive exam forms. |
| <u>Resource Guides</u> | Information about the thesis/dissertation process broken up into three distinct stages. |
| <u>How-To Videos</u> | Step-by-step video instructions on complex formatting requirements. |
| <u>Microsoft Word Template</u> | Formatted Word document for theses/dissertations. |
| <u>Digital Collections</u> | Online repository for the scholarly and creative works produced and owned by the Texas State University community. |
| <u>Funding</u> | Resources to help fund the cost of graduate education. |
| <u>Thesis Research Support Fellowship</u> | Competitive fellowships designed to support master's students' thesis research. |
| <u>Doctoral Research Support Fellowship</u> | Competitive fellowships designed to support doctoral students' dissertation research. |
| <u>Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee</u> | Oversees the provisions for the care and well-being of animals used for research and educational purposes at Texas State University. |
| <u>Institutional Review Board</u> | Protects the rights and welfare of human research subjects conducted or supported by Texas State University. |
| <u>Shop Talks</u> | Informational webinars, including a webinar on formatting theses and dissertations. |
| <u>Writing Center</u> | Helps develops writing at any stage of the writing process, in any style guide, and in any discipline. |
| <u>Student Learning Assistance Center (SLAC)</u> | Offers walk-in tutoring lab, Supplemental Instruction, Veteran Academic Success Center, and excellent online resources. |
| <u>Alkek Library – Graduate Student Services</u> | Offers research consultations, copyright assistance, and more. |
| <u>ITAC</u> | One-stop-shop for technology needs, questions, and support. |

Guide Instructions

The [Microsoft Word Template](#) provided on The Graduate College [Thesis & Dissertation Resource Guides page](#) already follows most of The Graduate College formatting requirements. Using the template should save students time in formatting and reduce the number of corrections needed upon submission to Vireo. The Graduate College template is a Word template and is the only template recommended for Texas State thesis and dissertation students. LaTeX templates are no longer supported. Students should only retrieve the template from the [Thesis & Dissertation Resource Guides page](#) as it is the most up-to-date. Templates listed anywhere else may not be the correct version.

Even when using the template, formatting errors can occur. Please refer to chapters [III. FORMATTING CHECKLIST](#) and [IV. COMMON MISTAKES](#) before submitting the thesis/dissertation to The Graduate College. Upon submission to Vireo, students with significant formatting errors will be instructed to review these chapters for their first round of corrections. As each item is completed, check off the appropriate bullet. If further instructions are needed and available, click on the corresponding link to see an in-depth explanation for that requirement. A link to our [How-To videos](#) is also included if available. Using the checklist and list of common mistakes will help save time during final editing and ensure documents meet formatting requirements. Students should be very thorough in completing this checklist or they may be referred to it again during the corrections process. [Appendix A](#) in this document has visual examples of the Front Matter, Text Section, and Back Matter.

Students are encouraged to review the final PDF version of their submission to ensure it saved properly and still meets all formatting requirements. See the [Conversion to PDF](#) instructions. Several reviews may be needed until formatting requirements are met as changes can create additional errors.

II. OPTIONS FOR THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS/DISSERTATION

Throughout the thesis/dissertation guides, we will refer to the structure of the thesis/dissertation and the format of the thesis/dissertation. The structure of the thesis/dissertation refers to how knowledge, research, and/or creative works are organized. For example, the structure of a thesis based on poetry will have a different structure compared to a thesis based on an empirical study. The format, on the other hand, concerns how the thesis/dissertation looks and includes all items in the formatting checklist and guide. For example, no matter what structure you follow, all theses/dissertations have the same front matter per Graduate College formatting rules. All must have a table of contents and acknowledgement in the front matter, and all must use a sequential pagination, among other required formatting items. For specific formatting requirements and guidelines, refer to the thesis/dissertation guide on formatting.

Students have several options for the structure of their thesis/dissertation and should consult with their committee chair and members about the proper structure to follow. While there are options that are discipline-specific, two common structures are (1) a traditional structure or (2) an article-based structure. **In a traditional structure**, theses and dissertations present the findings of original research in a monograph, often consisting of five distinct chapters (i.e., introduction, literature review, methodology, presentation of findings, and a concluding discussion). **An “article-based” thesis/dissertation structure** is an alternative structure to a “traditional” thesis/dissertation. Although most article-based theses/dissertations retain the introductory and conclusion chapters, the middle chapters are each self-contained units, each having their own introduction, literature review, findings, and concluding discussion

sections. The term “article-based” describes the structure that allows any of the middle chapters to be able to be formatted as a free-standing journal article.

Students must consult with their committee chair and members about which structure is best and do not need to seek approval from the Graduate College about whether they should use a traditional structure, article-based structure, or some other commonly used structure in their field.

Utilizing a thesis/dissertation as an article-based structure must be approved by each student’s thesis/dissertation committee, as with other aspects of the thesis/dissertation. The appropriateness of the article-based structure may differ by discipline and context of the thesis/dissertation, as well as other deciding factors. As with all theses/dissertations, the thesis/dissertation committee is the arbiter of quality of all parts of the document, including any previously published work that may be included in the thesis or dissertation.

In most cases, the thesis/dissertation committee will require that an article-based thesis/dissertation includes a thorough introduction chapter and a comprehensive conclusion chapter in addition to the other article chapters. These chapters provide framing for the thesis/dissertation as a cohesive work, as opposed to an anthology of different articles. An article-based thesis/dissertation is normally comprised of several articles, each as a freestanding chapter (in addition to an overall introduction and conclusion chapter). The number of article chapters within a given thesis/dissertation is highly dependent upon the student’s research and the expectations of the discipline and the program and must be approved by the student’s committee.

Articles used as chapters in an article-based thesis/dissertation may be considered “to be submitted later” (i.e., to be submitted to a publication source at a later time) or “forthcoming/already published” (accepted, forthcoming, or already published in a journal or other publication source). As with all theses/dissertations, the thesis/dissertation committee must confirm that work must have been done while the student was enrolled in the current degree program at Texas State. For example, articles published or submitted to a journal prior to the student’s matriculation in the degree program at Texas State are not eligible for inclusion in the student’s thesis/dissertation. Likewise, the committee will confirm that work done previously as part of another degree’s requirements is not included as an article chapter in the current degree’s thesis/dissertation. The student’s thesis/dissertation committee is the arbiter of quality and appropriateness for all articles under consideration for inclusion.

Copyright for Article-Based Thesis/Dissertation Structure

The student (not the Graduate College) is responsible for obtaining any necessary copyright permissions needed for inclusion of their article in their thesis/dissertation, and in most cases, the thesis/dissertation committee will require that the documentation of those copyright permissions be reviewed by the thesis/dissertation committee and included in the thesis/dissertation. The student should contact the [Copyright Officer](#) in Alkek Library for copyright questions and concerns.

To Be Submitted Later Category

If the student plans to complete the thesis/dissertation first and then subsequently publish chapters from the thesis/dissertation, the copyright process from the university’s perspective is straightforward. There are no copyright concerns for the thesis/dissertation

– however, students should disclose to their target publication outlet that the work has previously been included in a thesis/dissertation.

Forthcoming/Already Published Category

If the student plans to include one or more of their previously-published articles in their thesis/dissertation, there are some considerations:

- If the student does not hold the copyright to their work they will need to acquire permission from the copyright holder to include that work in their thesis/dissertation.
- The student's committee and Alkek Library require written permission from the copyright holder for each work the student plans to include in their thesis/dissertation.
- It is possible that the copyright holder may not grant permission for the student's publication to be used in the student's thesis/dissertation. In that case, the student should seek guidance from the Copyright Officer in Alkek Library for their specific situation as there are fair use exemptions that may be pursued in some cases. However, it is to the student's benefit to pursue permissions from the copyright holder as early in the process as possible to avoid situations which may delay graduation.
- When a forthcoming/already published article is included as a chapter in the thesis/dissertation, the thesis/dissertation committee will require that the citation for the article is provided on the first page of each article chapter.

Co-authored Articles

It is within the purview of the thesis/dissertation committee to accept only (or a minimum number of) sole-authored articles in a thesis/dissertation. If allowed by the thesis/dissertation committee a student's co-authored articles may be included in a student's thesis/dissertation under certain conditions:

- A statement that documents that the student contributed at least 51% of the content of each of the articles to be used in their thesis/dissertation must be provided to, and approved by, the student's thesis/dissertation committee
- The student must provide documentation to their committee indicating that their co-authors have given permission for the use of their co-authored article in the student's thesis or dissertation
- The student's thesis/dissertation committee is the arbiter of quality for all articles under consideration for inclusion in the thesis/dissertation and the committee's approval is required in order to include the co-authored article in the student's thesis/dissertation

Formatting Requirements: Article-Based Thesis/Dissertation

There are generally two approaches to formatting requirements for article-based theses/dissertations. Students should consult with their committee about which format to follow:

(1) Standard Formatting

The thesis/dissertation is formatted according to current university thesis/dissertation formatting requirements, and the article chapters must follow the

formatting requirements for the rest of the thesis/dissertation, regardless of formatting requirements of the journal or other publication source.

OR

(2) Limited Customized Formatting

University guidelines require certain formatting requirements for all theses/dissertations. For article-based theses/dissertations, those formatting requirements must be followed throughout the thesis/dissertation. The exception to the university formatting requirements for article-based theses/dissertations applies to the article chapters, which may (with approval by the student's thesis/dissertation committee) be formatted according to the requirements of the publication source (for published articles) or the target publication source (for to-be-published articles). Students must follow the Graduate College thesis/dissertation formatting guidelines unless there is a requirement by the publication source to retain their formatting structure. The following restrictions apply:

- Pagination and margins must be consistent throughout the thesis/dissertation, even if using a journal's formatting requirements
- Any appendices must be included at the end of the entire thesis/dissertation, not within the body of the document
- Figures, tables, and other non-text inclusions must follow a consistent numbering system throughout the thesis/dissertation so that there is no repetition of figure/table numbers from one chapter to the next

III. FORMATTING CHECKLIST

Title Page

- Page has a 2-inch top [margin](#).
- Page has a 1.5-inch left margin.
- Right and bottom margins are 1 inch.
- Page does not have any bold font.
- Title is in ALL CAPS, is double spaced, and formatted in an inverted pyramid (if more than one line is needed). An inverted pyramid style has the longest line on top, with lines getting increasingly shorter as they are added below.
- Student's name is the official name on file with the Registrar's Office at Texas State. Exceptions can be made on an "as needed" basis.
- Degree type of any *previously* earned degree(s) is abbreviated correctly (B.S., M.S., etc.) after student's name and listed oldest to most recent if more than one is included.
- The following text is single-spaced and centered on the page, with the student's official degree and major as listed by the University:

A thesis/dissertation (pick the applicable document) submitted to the Graduate Council of
Texas State University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Degree Type (Master of Science, Doctor of Philosophy, etc.)
with a Major in Major Name (Biology, Criminal Justice, etc.)
Graduation Month and year (e.g. December 2016)

- Graduation month (December, May, or August only) and year are correct.
- Names of committee members are spelled correctly. No titles (e.g., Dr., Mrs., Mr., etc.) other than Chair or Co-Chair are listed after the applicable committee member's name.

Copyright Page

- Page has a 2-inch top [margin](#).
- Page has a 1.5-inch left margin.
- Right and bottom margins are 1 inch.
- Text on this page is centered.
- The word “**COPYRIGHT**” is bold and in ALL CAPS.
- Text on this page is double spaced.
- Degrees and/or titles are not included with the student’s name. The student’s name must exactly match the name listed on the Title Page.
- The year of graduation is listed on this page. Month is not included.

Fair Use and Author’s Permission Statement Page

- Page has a 2-inch top [margin](#).
- Page has a 1.5-inch left margin.
- Right and bottom margins are 1 inch.
- The “**FAIR USE AND AUTHOR’S PERMISSION STATEMENT**” heading is in ALL CAPS, bold, and centered.
- The Fair Use text listed in [Appendix A](#) must be included exactly as it appears in the example, including alignment and spacing.
- Choose one of the two Duplication Permission statements and include it on the page.
- Spacing between subheadings and paragraphs are consistent.

Dedication

**This page is optional. If it is included, please format it as follows:*

- Page has a 2-inch top margin.
- Page has a 1.5-inch left margin.
- Right and bottom margins are 1 inch.
- The “**DEDICATION**” heading is in ALL CAPS, bold, and centered.
- Formatting is not required to follow any specific guidelines, other than conforming to the required margins of Front Matter and heading style for the word “Dedication”. It is suggested to use formatting that is similar to other sections of the document (same font, etc.).

Acknowledgements

- Page has a 2-inch top margin.
- Page has a 1.5-inch left margin.
- Right and bottom margins are 1 inch.
- The “**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**” heading is in ALL CAPS, bold, and centered.
- This is the first numbered page of the document. The page number is a lower-case Roman numeral and should be centered in the footer a ½ inch from the bottom of the page. Though this is the first page numbered in the document, this is not page i; this page will be numbered according to where it is in the document. Page numbers are 12 pt font and are the same font type as used throughout the document.

Table of Contents

(How-To Video)

- Page has a 2-inch top [margin](#).
- Page has a 1.5-inch left margin.
- Right and bottom margins are 1 inch.
- The “**TABLE OF CONTENTS**” heading is in ALL CAPS, bold, and centered.
- The word “**Page**” is right justified and in bold on the second line of the Table of Contents (below the page header).
- [Font type](#) matches what is chosen for the document. Only the items listed above will be in a particular font style.
- [Dot leaders](#) with a right tab are used to connect entries with page numbers. Items in the Table of Contents are correctly numbered with the corresponding page number.
- The ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS page and all pages after the Table of Contents in the Front Matter should be included as entries in the Table of Contents. Pages before ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS as well as the Table of Contents itself should *not* be included as entries in the Table of Contents.
- CHAPTER is listed after Front Matter entries with no dot leader or page number.
- [Headings, chapter titles, and subheadings](#) appear *exactly* as in the text. (Words and capitalization only. Italics are not included unless used for nomenclature.)
- Each chapter is in all caps, indented, and must begin on a new page.
- Prologues and Epilogues, if included, are numbered and formatted like chapters.

- Chapters are numbered, and numbering is consistent between the Table of Contents and the text. Either Roman or Arabic numerals are acceptable but once chosen, only one numbering choice must be used.
- If one subheading is included in the Table of Contents, all subheadings of the same level must be included in the Table of Contents. Subheadings are not required to be listed in the Table of Contents, despite whether they are listed in the text.
- Subheadings are indented for each level included in the Table of Contents and are single spaced as one block under each chapter, with a blank line before and after each block.
- APPENDIX SECTION (if included) and REFERENCES (or other title) are aligned against the left margin after the last chapter/subheading.
- [Page numbering](#) continues from the previous page, with a lower-case Roman numeral, centered in the footer.
- *Article-based students* – Articles should be listed as chapter titles. All other titles and headings within the article need to be listed as subheadings.
- *MFA Poetry students* – poems should either be listed under one chapter as subheadings or each poem listed as its own chapter as long as they follow the required formatting for the Table of Contents.

List of Tables, List of Figures, etc.

([How-To Video](#))

*A list of tables, figures, etc. is only included if the document contains **two or more** tables, figures, etc.

- Page has a 2-inch top [margin](#).
- Page has a 1.5-inch left margin.
- Right and bottom margins are 1 inch.
- Heading (**LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES, etc.**) is in ALL CAPS, bold and centered on the page.
- The word “**Table/Figure/Illustration**”, etc. is left justified and bold on the page.
- The word “**Page**” is right justified on the same line and bold.
- [Dot leaders](#) with a right tab are used to connect entries with page numbers.
Items in the List of Tables/Figures/Illustrations, etc. are correctly numbered with the corresponding page numbers.
- Items in the Appendix Section are not included in these lists.
- Titles of tables/figures/illustrations, etc. appear *exactly* as they are in the text.
(Words and capitalization only. Italics are not included unless used for nomenclature.)
- Only the first sentence of the table, figure, illustration, etc. title is listed.
- Entries that are more than one line are indented after the first line, and the entire entry is single spaced.
- [Page numbering](#) continues from the previous page, with a lower-case Roman numeral, centered in the footer.

List of Abbreviations

**This page is optional.*

- Page has a 2-inch top [margin](#).
- Page has a 1.5-inch left margin.
- Right and bottom margins are 1 inch.
- The “**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**” heading is in ALL CAPS, bold and centered.
- The word “**Abbreviation**” is in bold and aligned against the left margin. The word “**Description**” is in bold on the same line and aligned about the middle of the page.
- Each entry is aligned under the appropriate column.
- The text in the list is double spaced.
- [Page numbering](#) continues from the previous page, with a lower-case Roman numeral, centered in the footer.

Abstract

**This page is required for all doctoral students. It is also required for those master’s students writing a thesis in a language other than English (the abstract must be in English in those cases). Abstracts are optional for all other master’s students.*

- Page has a 2-inch top [margin](#).
- Page has a 1.5-inch left margin.
- Right and bottom margins are 1 inch.
- The “**ABSTRACT**” heading is in ALL CAPS, bold and centered.
- The text in the abstract is double spaced.

- [Page numbering](#) continues from the previous page, with a lower-case Roman numeral, centered in the footer.
- *Article-based only*: if using abstracts for individual chapters, format the abstracts as subheadings. Place abstract subheadings at the beginning of their respective chapters.

Text Section

Margins and Pagination

- All pages in the Text Section and Back Matter have a 1-inch top margin. Text, tables, and figures starting at the top of the page should start at the 1-inch margin.
- All left margins are set at 1.5 inches.
- Right and bottom margins are 1 inch.
- Use left alignment for paragraph text (creating uneven right margins).
- Page numbers start over at 1 using Arabic numerals in the Text Section and are a half-inch from the bottom of the page. Page numbers are 12 pt font and are the same font type as used throughout the document.

Font

- The same font is used throughout the Front Matter, Text Section, and Back Matter, including all page numbers. Font is 12 pt and is a professional font (Times New Roman, Garamond, etc.).
- Font size for tables, figures, illustrations, etc. can be 10-12 pt font. All other text must be 12 pt font.

Spacing

- All text is double spaced except where single spacing is appropriate. Single spacing is allowed for:

- Subheadings that carry over onto two lines,
- Table and figure titles and captions,
- Reference entries in the literature cited section,
- Block quotations,
- Footnotes.

- Spacing of your choice in other areas is consistent throughout each chapter.

Examples include:

- Size of paragraph indentations
- Spacing before/after
 - Titles and subheadings
 - Paragraphs
 - Tables, figures, illustrations, etc.
- Poetry lines (for MFA Poetry students)

Grammar and Punctuation

- Grammar, punctuation, and spelling must be correct.
- Use the word data correctly. Data is plural; datum is singular. The text should read: data were (not data was), these data (not this data), etc.
- Acronyms and abbreviations appear correctly in document.
 - Any usage of “et al.” appears correctly in text, with the period after al.

- Acronyms and abbreviations are fully spelled out the first time mentioned in the text or included in a List of Abbreviations in the Front Matter.
- Commas and periods are inside quotation marks.
- Semicolons and colons are outside quotation marks.
- Be consistent in spacing after punctuation throughout the text. Punctuation at the end of a sentence should preferably be followed by two spaces (some style manuals specify one space).
- Texas State University is referenced correctly. The first time the university is mentioned in the text, the full university name, Texas State University, is used. Thereafter, the name may appear as Texas State if an abbreviation is desired.
- Scientific nomenclature should be italicized in all areas of the paper, including titles and Front Matter entries.

Headings and Subheadings

- Headings/subheadings must be worded *exactly* the same in both the Table of Contents and Text Section with words and capitalizations. (Do not include italics in Table of Contents unless used for nomenclature).
- Each level of subheading format style is different from all other levels.
- Each level of subheading format style is *consistent* among all chapters.
- At least two lines fit under a subheading at the bottom of a page. If not, move to next page.
- If headings are numbered, numbers cannot be repeated within the thesis/dissertation. Exceptions **not** allowed for article-based submissions.

Tables, Figures, Illustrations, etc.

- Tables, figures, illustrations, etc. are numbered using Arabic numbers only.
- Titles on the tables, figures, illustrations, etc. in the Text Section must *exactly* match the titles in the List of Tables, Figures, Illustrations, etc. (Words and capitalization. Do not use italics in Lists unless it's for scientific nomenclature.)
- Table captions (title and description) are placed above the tables.
- Figure and illustration captions (titles and descriptions) are placed below the figures.
- Caption font size should 10-12 pt font.
- Caption formatting should be *consistent* for all tables.
- Caption formatting should be *consistent* for all figures and illustrations.
- Tables, figures, illustrations, etc., including captions, are at or within the four margins. Nothing may go outside any of the required margins.

Citations in the Text

- Follow the guidelines in the appropriate style manual for formatting citations.
- Be *consistent* in citation format within and among chapters.

References

* *Section may also be referred to as Bibliography, Literature Cited, Works Cited, etc.*

- Page has a 1-inch top [margin](#).
- Page has a 1.5-inch left margin.
- Right and bottom margins are 1 inch.
- Either all entries should be double-spaced, or each entry should be single-spaced with one blank line in between each entry.

- Entries at the bottom of a page are not split between two pages. Move to next page to keep an entry together if needed.
- Entries at the top of a page should start at the top 1-inch margin. (No extra space before entry.)
- Black font is used throughout the literature cited section, including any websites listed.
- For all other formatting, follow the guidelines in the appropriate style manual as chosen by your committee.
 - Spacing is consistent between author's initials (one or no space).
 - Author's names are spelled correctly.
 - Dates are correct and match those cited in text.
 - Titles of works cited and page numbers in the entries are correct.
 - Punctuation is consistent within and between citations.

Common Mistakes

** See next chapter for common mistakes. Check off the box for each item when done.*

- [Dot leaders](#)
- [Chapters and subheadings](#)
- [Name inconsistencies](#)
- [Table and figures](#)
- [Landscape pages](#)
- [References/Literature Cited](#)
- [Consistency](#)

IV. COMMON MISTAKES

The following is a list of common mistakes we see most in thesis and dissertation submissions. Be sure to check your paper for these mistakes before submission. Incorrect and correct examples are given as well as links to further instructions if needed. (Please note that formatting requirements for tables and figures may not be followed in this chapter for clarity of information.)

Dot Leaders

Dot leaders are required within your Table of Contents as well as similar pages that include page numbers (Lists of Tables/Figures/Illustrations). When using dot leaders, however, please ensure that they are visible and clearly linked to the text. Below are examples of misapplied dot leaders:

Incorrect

| Table | Page |
|---|-------------|
| 1. A table with a long title that is being used, within this document, as a quick example . | 1 |

These dot leaders cannot be accepted due to the lack of space between the table's title and page number. Please ensure that all titles, in all areas dot leaders are used, have at least three dots between the title and page number.

Incorrect

| Table | Page |
|---|-------------|
| 1. A table with a very long title that is being used within this document as a short example | 1 |

The dot leaders in this example also cannot be used. When applying dot leaders, at least one word must be on the same line as the page number. After doing so, make sure to indent the additional line(s) of text.

Correct

| Table | Page |
|---|------|
| 1. A table with a long title that is being used, within this document, as a quick example | 1 |

The example above shows the dot leaders being applied correctly. The dot leaders are clearly visible and connected to the table's title. Since this example is more than one line long, the second line is indented, and the entire entry is single spaced. For more information about dot leaders, view the [dot leader instructions](#).

Chapters and Subheadings

Chapter titles can be numbered with either Arabic numbers or roman numerals. Although you are free to use either method, you must be *consistent* with your subheadings.

Incorrect

| | |
|--------------------------|----|
| II. RESEARCH | 65 |
| 2.1 Current Methods..... | 65 |

In the above example, the Roman numeral used for the chapter conflicts with the Arabic numbering of the subheading. Numbering your subheadings is optional but must be consistent within the Table of Contents.

When creating your Table of Contents, ensure that the subheadings are properly leveled. A subheading level refers to the degree in which one subheading is part of another. In the Table of Contents, these levels must be signified through varying indentions. Here is an example:

I. INTRODUCTION

Place holder text. Place holder text.

General Scholarship

Place holder text. Place holder text.

Recent Field Studies: Place holder text. Place holder text.

Methods

Place holder text. Place holder text.

In the example above there are two distinct subheading levels. One level includes “General Scholarship” and “Methods” while the other level only includes “Recent Field Studies.” Because “Recent Field Studies” is a different level of subheading than “General Scholarship,” this should be visible in the Table of Contents (if those level are included). Here is an incorrect and correct example:

Incorrect

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| I. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| General Scholarship | 1 |
| Recent Field Studies | 1 |
| Methods..... | 1 |

Correct

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| I. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| General Scholarship | 1 |
| Recent Field Studies | 1 |
| Methods | 1 |

Remember, different levels of subheadings cannot be formatted the same. The two levels in the page example above are distinctly different from one another. See the [Heading and Subheading Example](#). However each level is formatted, it must be *consistent* for all subheadings in that level.

Name Inconsistencies

The naming of all sections, subheadings, tables, figures, etc. must match *exactly* between the text and the Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, or List of Illustrations. However, do not italicize entries in the Table of Contents or List of Tables/Figures/Illustrations, even if they are italicized in the body of the text, unless it is necessary for a specific nomenclature. Here is an example of a naming inconsistency:



Figure 1. *Generic Placeholder Image.*

The entry in the List of Figures must match the figure title provided here but not be italicized. Neither of the following are acceptable:

Incorrect

| Figure | Page |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. <i>Generic Image</i> | 1 |

Incorrect

| Figure | Page |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Generic placeholder image..... | 1 |

The first example is incorrect because it lacks the word “Placeholder.” The second example, while having the full title, is also incorrect because it does not capitalize each word as in the figure example. The capitalization must match between the body of the text and its entry in both the Table of Contents and the List of Tables/Figures/Illustrations.

Tables, images, and illustrations can also be titled based on their first sentence. Such as in this example:



Figure 2. This is a logo of Texas State University. It is used in many places.

For this figure, the List of Figures should only include the first sentence. The example below is a properly typed List of Figures that includes the correct figure titles for both images above.

Correct

| LIST OF FIGURES | |
|--|-------------|
| Figure | Page |
| 1. Generic Placeholder Image..... | 1 |
| 2. This is a logo of Texas State University..... | 1 |

Tables and Figures

The title of a table or figure must be placed appropriately. For tables, the title must go above it. For figures, the titles must go below it.

Tables

Incorrect

| College | New students | Graduating students | Change |
|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| | <i>Undergraduate</i> | | |
| Cedar University | 110 | 103 | +7 |
| Elm College | 223 | 214 | +9 |
| Maple Academy | 197 | 120 | +77 |
| Pine College | 134 | 121 | +13 |
| Oak Institute | 202 | 210 | -8 |
| | <i>Graduate</i> | | |
| Cedar University | 24 | 20 | +4 |
| Elm College | 43 | 53 | -10 |
| Maple Academy | 3 | 11 | -8 |
| Pine College | 9 | 4 | +5 |
| Oak Institute | 53 | 52 | +1 |
| Total | 998 | 908 | 90 |

Table 1. Fictional Data



Correct

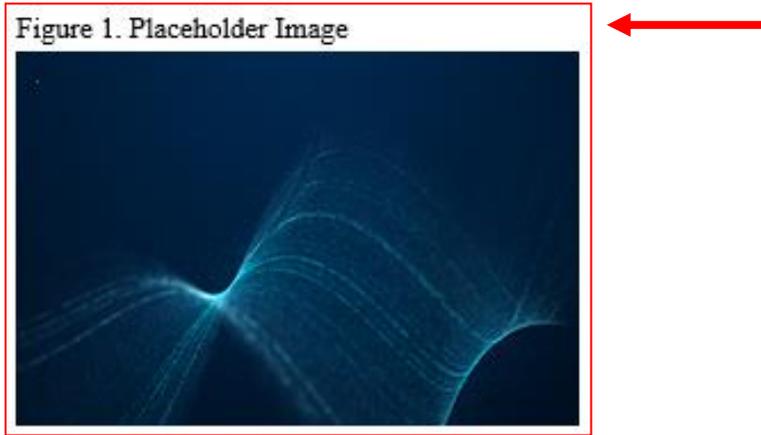
Table 1. Fictional Data

| College | New students | Graduating students | Change |
|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| | <i>Undergraduate</i> | | |
| Cedar University | 110 | 103 | +7 |
| Elm College | 223 | 214 | +9 |
| Maple Academy | 197 | 120 | +77 |
| Pine College | 134 | 121 | +13 |
| Oak Institute | 202 | 210 | -8 |
| | <i>Graduate</i> | | |
| Cedar University | 24 | 20 | +4 |
| Elm College | 43 | 53 | -10 |
| Maple Academy | 3 | 11 | -8 |
| Pine College | 9 | 4 | +5 |
| Oak Institute | 53 | 52 | +1 |
| Total | 998 | 908 | 90 |

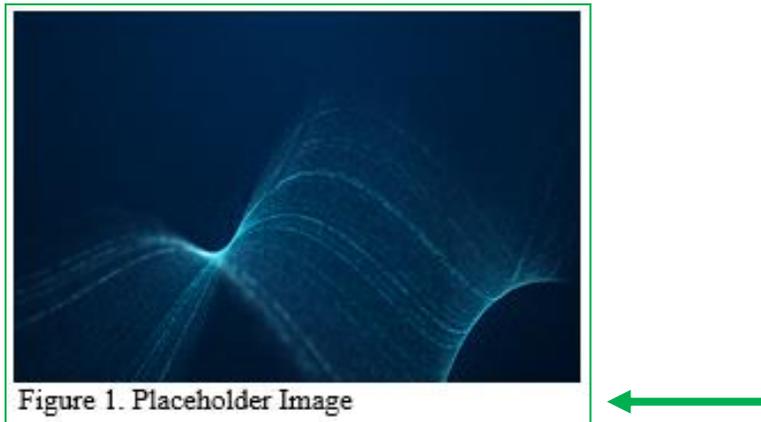


Figures

Incorrect



Correct



Please ensure all table names go above the tables and all figure names go below the figures. Illustrations, like figures, should have their names go below the illustration.

Additionally, tables, figures, and illustrations must remain within the margins of the page. Below is an example of a table that violates the page margins.

Incorrect margins. Margins should be 1.5 inches on left and 1 inch on all other sides.

← 0.88 in →

↑ 0.82 in ↓

← 0.95 in →

Table 1. Media Consumed, 2099

| <i>Media</i> | <i>New students</i> | <i>Graduating students</i> | <i>Change</i> |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Undergraduate | | | |
| <i>Music</i> | 110 | 103 | +7 |
| <i>Film</i> | 223 | 214 | +9 |
| <i>Podcast</i> | 197 | 120 | +77 |
| <i>Video Games</i> | 134 | 121 | +13 |
| <i>N/A</i> | 202 | 210 | -8 |
| Graduate | | | |
| <i>Music</i> | 24 | 20 | +4 |
| <i>Film</i> | 43 | 53 | -10 |
| <i>Podcast</i> | 3 | 11 | -8 |
| <i>Video Games</i> | 9 | 4 | +5 |
| <i>N/A</i> | 53 | 52 | +1 |
| <i>Total</i> | 998 | 908 | 90 |

Source: Fictitious data, for illustration purposes only

All tables, figures, and illustrations must adhere to the margin requirements. For a table like the one above, the student should consider using a landscape page.

Landscape Pages

Landscape pages are vertical pages that are rotated clockwise. Although these pages are uncommon, it is imperative that the page number location is also adjusted. Landscape pages with improperly formatted page numbers cannot be accepted due to the printing performed by Alkek Library.

Margins are also rotated clockwise for landscape pages. The top margin on a landscape page is actually the left 1.5-inch margin on a vertical page. All other margins are 1 inch. Make sure that any text, tables, or figures start at the top 1.5-inch margin.

If landscape pages are properly formatted, the page numbers and margins would still align if rotated back to a vertical page.

The next two pages will provide an example of an incorrectly formatted landscape page as well as a correctly formatted one. In the incorrect example, the top margin and page number location are incorrect. The correct example fixes these errors. Consider using landscape pages for readability of wide tables and other figures or illustrations that would not fit on a vertical page. For a detailed tutorial on how to set up landscape pages, please consult the [How-To Videos](#) on the Graduate College website.

Incorrect Landscape Formatting

Table 2. A Large Amount of Data

| City or Town | Point A | Point B | Point C | Point D | Point E |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Point A | — | | | | |
| Point B | 87 | — | | | |
| Point C | 64 | 56 | — | | |
| Point D | 37 | 32 | 91 | — | |
| Point E | 93 | 35 | 54 | 43 | — |

Correct Landscape Formatting

Table 2. A Large Amount of Data

| City or Town | Point A | Point B | Point C | Point D | Point E |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Point A | — | | | | |
| Point B | 87 | — | | | |
| Point C | 64 | 56 | — | | |
| Point D | 37 | 32 | 91 | — | |
| Point E | 93 | 35 | 54 | 43 | — |

References/Literature Cited

With a few exceptions, university guidelines require that theses/dissertations have a reference section. This section will go at the end of the document in the traditional thesis/dissertation structure. In the article-based thesis/dissertation structure, students can have a references section at the end of each chapter, one set of references at the end of the entire document, or both. Students should consult with their thesis/dissertation committee about reference placement(s).

The approach used in that thesis/dissertation must be consistent throughout and must be approved by the student's thesis/dissertation committee (and The Graduate College at the point of submission). If the student opts to have references at the end of each chapter, then all chapters must follow that bibliographic format. The thesis or dissertation should not be submitted with some chapters concluding with references while others do not.

(1) Reference Section at the End of Each Chapter

Students may want to keep the reference list located with the article-chapters and introduction and conclusion chapters (if applicable). The guideline here is consistency: if there is a reference list at the end of any chapter, there must be a reference list at the end of each chapter (even those chapters – like the thesis/dissertation introduction chapter – that are not one of the article-chapters)

OR

(2) Reference Section at the End of the Thesis/Dissertation

This is the traditional approach wherein all the citations are included in a single reference section at the end of the document.

OR

(3) References at the End of Each Chapter and the End of the Thesis/Dissertation

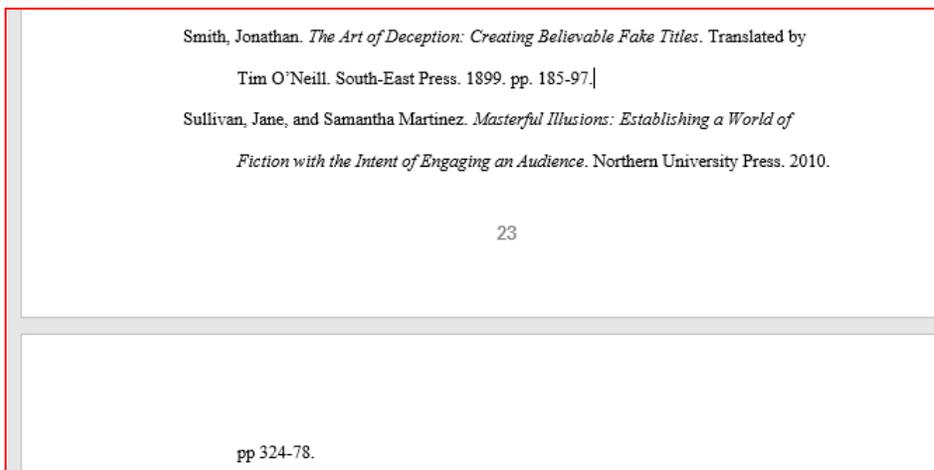
In some cases, the committee will require references at the end of each chapter and at the end of the thesis/dissertation.

Mistakes in References/Literature Cited

Although the content of this section is determined by your graduate committee, the formatting must not conflict with Graduate College requirements. Typically, students title this section “REFERENCES” but the terms “LITERATURE CITED,” “BIBLIOGRAPHY,” and “WORKS CITED” are also acceptable.

The most common error in this section is the splitting of entries across multiple pages. If an entry cannot fit on the page it starts on, the entire entry must be moved down to the next page. Here are some examples:

Incorrect



Although only a small bit of text trails into the next page, the entire entry needs to be moved to the next page.

Correct

| |
|--|
| <p>Smith, Jonathan. <i>The Art of Deception: Creating Believable Fake Titles</i>. Translated by Tim O'Neill. South-East Press. 1899. pp. 185-97.</p> <p>23</p> |
| <p>Sullivan, Jane, and Samantha Martinez. <i>Masterful Illusions: Establishing a World of Fiction with the Intent of Engaging an Audience</i>. Northern University Press. 2010. pp 324-78.</p> |

Additionally, it is important that, regardless of citation style, there is some space between each entry. Entries can either be double spaced throughout or single spaced with one blank line between each entry.

Incorrect

| |
|---|
| <p>Smith, Jonathan. <i>The Art of Deception: Creating Believable Fake Titles</i>. Translated by Tim O'Neill. South-East Press. 1899. pp. 185-97.</p> <p>Sullivan, Jane, and Samantha Martinez. <i>Masterful Illusions: Establishing a World of Fiction with the Intent of Engaging an Audience</i>. Northern University Press. 2010. pp 324-78.</p> |
|---|

Correct

| |
|---|
| <p>Smith, Jonathan. <i>The Art of Deception: Creating Believable Fake Titles</i>. Translated by Tim O'Neill. South-East Press. 1899. pp. 185-97.</p> <p>Sullivan, Jane, and Samantha Martinez. <i>Masterful Illusions: Establishing a World of Fiction with the Intent of Engaging an Audience</i>. Northern University Press. 2010. pp 324-78.</p> |
|---|

Correct

Smith, Jonathan. *The Art of Deception: Creating Believable Fake Titles*. Translated by Tim O'Neill. South-East Press. 1899. pp. 185-97.

Sullivan, Jane, and Samantha Martinez. *Masterful Illusions: Establishing a World of Fiction with the Intent of Engaging an Audience*. Northern University Press. 2010. pp 324-78.

Please ensure that your references page, unlike the incorrect example, maintains space between its entries. Although these examples are based on MLA, you can use whichever style is approved by your thesis/dissertation committee.

Consistency

Consistency is key for approval. Think of it as creating a style guide for your paper in which each item has a specific format that should be followed throughout your entire paper. This includes table, figure, and illustration caption formatting; spacing before and after paragraphs, subheadings, tables, etc.; size of paragraph indentions, and more. The example below shows inconsistent formatting within a paper.

V. FORMATTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR TRADITIONAL AND ARTICLE-BASED STRUCTURES

Grad College Shop Talks are workshops, seminars, and presentations organized by The Graduate College that are specific to the graduate student experience. One of those Shop Talks, titled “Formatting Your Thesis/Dissertation,” is focused specifically on formatting requirements for the thesis/dissertation document. Students who were not able to attend that Shop Talk might find it useful to access our recording of that session, found in our Shop Talk archives at:

www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/events/shoptalks/recorded.html. After logging in, students can enter “formatting” in the search box and the “Formatting Your Thesis/Dissertation” Shop Talk recording will emerge.

Microsoft Word Template

As stated in the [introduction](#), the [Microsoft Word Template](#) provided on The Graduate College [Thesis & Dissertation Resource Guides page](#) already follows most of the formatting requirements. Using the template should save students time in formatting and reduce the number of corrections needed upon submission to Vireo.

Copy and Paste

When copying and pasting into the template, either place your cursor where needed or highlight the text you wish to replace. Then right click and click on



Merge Formatting. This option is recommended as it discards most formatting that was applied directly to the copied text and takes on the style characteristics of the paragraph where it is pasted. This option should help retain the formatting of the template

when pasting from another document that is formatted differently. However, students should still always double check that their work meets formatting requirements.

Style

Though the formatting specifications set by The Graduate College are required for all theses and dissertations, students are also encouraged to use the style manual appropriate to their field for content not specified in the guide. Table 1 below lists the major disciplines at Texas State and appropriate style manuals to be considered. Students should ultimately consult with their committees regarding the appropriate style manuals and manual versions for their documents.

| Table 2. Style Guides by Major | |
|--|---|
| <i>Doctoral Majors and Recommended Style Manuals</i> | |
| Major | Style Manuals Used |
| Adult, Professional, and Community Education | APA ⁵ |
| Aquatic Resources and Integrative Biology | CBE ⁷ |
| Computer Science | Turabian/APA ⁵ |
| Criminal Justice | APA ⁵ |
| Developmental Education (Ph.D./Ed.D.) | APA ⁵ |
| Geographic Education | Turabian |
| Geographic Information Science | Turabian |
| Geography | Turabian |
| Materials Science, Engineering, and Commercialization | Turabian/ACS ² /AIP ³ |
| Mathematics Education | APA ⁵ |
| School Improvement | APA ⁵ |
| <i>Master's Majors with a Thesis and Recommended Style Manuals</i> | |
| Major | Style Manuals Used |
| Adult Education | APA ⁵ |
| Agricultural Education | APA ⁵ |
| Anthropology | AAA ¹ /CBE ⁷ /SAA ¹¹ |
| Applied Mathematics | None Specified |
| Aquatic Resources and Integrative Biology | CBE ⁷ |
| Athletic Training | AMA ⁴ /APA ⁵ |
| Biochemistry | Turabian/ACS ² |

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Biology | CBE ⁷ |
| Business Administration | Turabian |
| Chemistry | Turabian/ACS ² |
| Communication Design | None Specified |
| Communication Disorders | APA ⁵ |
| Communication Studies | APA ⁵ /MLA ¹⁰ |
| Computer Science | Turabian/APA ⁵ |
| Creative Writing | Turabian/MLA ¹⁰ |
| Criminal Justice | APA ⁵ |
| Dementia and Aging Studies | See Department |
| Developmental Education | APA ⁵ |
| Elementary Education | APA ⁵ |
| Elementary Education-Bilingual/Bicultural | APA ⁵ |
| Engineering | See Department |
| Exercise Science | APA ⁵ /MLA ¹⁰ |
| Family & Child Studies | APA ⁵ |
| Geography | Turabian |
| Health Education | APA ⁵ |
| Health Information Management | APA ⁵ |
| Healthcare Administration | APA ⁵ |
| History | Turabian |
| Human Nutrition | AMA ⁴ |
| Interdisciplinary Studies with a Concentration in Sustainability | See Department |
| International Studies | Turabian |
| Literature | MLA ¹⁰ |
| Mass Communication | APA ⁵ |
| Materials Physics | AIP ³ |
| Mathematics | Turabian |
| Merchandising and Consumer Studies | APA ⁵ |
| Music | Turabian |
| Philosophy – Applied Philosophy and Ethics | Turabian/MLA ¹⁰ |
| Physical Education | APA ⁵ |
| Physics | Turabian/AIP ³ |
| Political Science | Turabian |
| Population & Conservation Biology | Turabian |
| Professional Counseling | APA ⁵ |
| Psychological Research | APA ⁵ |
| Recreation Management | APA ⁵ |
| Rhetoric & Composition | APA ⁵ /MLA ¹⁰ |

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Secondary Education | APA ⁵ |
| Sociology | ASA ⁶ |
| Software Engineering | Turabian/APA ⁵ |
| Spanish | Turabian/MLA ¹⁰ |
| Sustainability Studies | See Department |
| Technical Communication | MLA ¹⁰ |
| Technology Management | APA ⁵ |
| Theatre | MLA ¹⁰ |
| Therapeutic Recreation | APA ⁵ |
| Wildlife Ecology | JM ⁸ /JWM ⁹ |

¹AAA = American Anthropological Association

²ACS = American Chemical Society

³AIP = American Institute of Physics

⁴AMA = American Medical Association

⁵APA = American Psychological Association

⁶ASA = American Sociological Association

⁷CBE = Council of Biology Editors

⁸JM = Journal of Mammalogy

⁹JWM = Journal of Wildlife Management

¹⁰MLA = Modern Language Association

¹¹SAA = Society for American Archaeology

Arrangement of Thesis and Dissertation

Per Texas State requirements, the thesis/dissertation consists of three major components: the Front Matter, the Text Section, and the Back Matter. The Front Matter section is best thought of as the Texas State requirements section. It consists of many informational and required pages, such as (in order):

- Title page,
- Copyright,
- Fair Use and Author's Permission Statement,
- Dedication (optional),
- Acknowledgements,
- Table of Contents ([How-To Video: Table of Contents](#)),
- List of Tables (if applicable) ([How-To Video: List of Tables](#)),
- List of Figures (if applicable) ([How-To Video: List of Figures](#)),
- List of Illustrations (if applicable),

- List of Abbreviations (if applicable), and
- Abstract (required in dissertations, optional in most theses).

[\(How-To Video: Front Matter\)](#)

The Text Section is where the student's work/research is reflected. It contains the individual chapters (the number will vary by thesis/dissertation), tables, figures, and/or illustrations (if included), and any additional information that either precludes or concludes the thesis/dissertation. Items like Prologues and Epilogues will go in the Text Section, as they are part of the document's content, and should be numbered as chapters.

The Back Matter includes the Appendix Section (optional) and References (also referred to as Bibliography, Literature Cited, Work Cited, etc.). Table 2 indicates the overall arrangement of the thesis and dissertation. The required pages and sections should be listed and arranged in the document in the order indicated in the chart. Documents missing required pages and/or sections will be sent back for reformatting. See [Appendix A](#) for examples of formatting.

Abstract Requirement

Doctoral students are required to include an abstract in their dissertations. The abstract is optional in the thesis, except for a thesis written in a language other than English. For students writing theses for the Master of Arts degree in Spanish and choosing to submit the thesis in a language other than English, the thesis must include an abstract written in English. A duplicate abstract in the non-English language may also be included, if desired.

| Table 3. Arrangement of Thesis and Dissertation | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <i>Page</i> | <i>Required or Optional</i> | <i>Format of Page Number</i> | <i>Description and Helpful Tips</i> |
| Title page | Required | Counted, but not numbered | 2" top margin. Do not use bold on this page. The title should be in all capital letters in an inverted pyramid structure. |
| Copyright | Required | Counted, but not numbered | 2" top margin. Copyright is bold and in all caps. Copyright is automatic once the work is in fixed form. The student holds the copyright to their thesis/dissertation. Students may have their copyright registered with the U.S. Copyright Office. |
| Fair Use and Author's Permission Statement | Required | Counted, but not numbered | 2" top margin. Fair Use and Author's Permission Statement is bold and in all caps. Include only one of the two duplication permission options. |
| Dedication | Optional | Counted, but not numbered | 2" top margin. Dedication is bold and in all caps. |
| Acknowledgements | Required | This is the first page numbered, using lower case Roman numerals, centered, a ½ inch from the bottom of the page. All pages will be numbered from this point forward. | 2" top margin. Acknowledgements is bold and in all caps. This page gives credit and acknowledgement to those who have helped the student during their academic career. |
| Table of Contents (TOC) | Required | Continuing from previous page | 2" top margin. Table of Contents is bold and in all caps. All chapter titles, headings, and subheadings listed should be worded in the TOC exactly the same as in the text. Dot leaders must be used. |
| List of Tables (LOT) | Required if document contains 2 or more tables | Continuing from previous page | 2" top margin; List of Tables is bold and in all caps. All table titles listed should be worded in the LOT exactly the same as in the text. Dot leaders must be used. |

| <i>Page</i> | <i>Required or Optional</i> | <i>Format of Page Number</i> | <i>Description and Helpful Tips</i> |
|--|--|---|---|
| List of Figures (LOF) | Required if document contains 2 or more figures | Continuing from previous page | 2” top margin; List of Figures is bold and in all caps. All figure titles listed should be worded in the LOF exactly the same as in the text. Dot leaders must be used. |
| Any additional List entry in the document | Required if document contains 2 or more illustrations or other entry | Continuing from previous page | 2” top margin. List title is bold and in all caps. |
| Abstract | Optional for theses written in English, required for all dissertations and theses in a foreign language. | Continuing from previous page | 2” top margin. Abstract is bold and in all caps. |
| Text Section | Required | The first page of the text is where the numbering will change from Roman to Arabic numbers. Page numbering starts over at 1 and is still centered and a ½ inch from the bottom of the page. | 1” top margin throughout text section. Chapter titles must be bold and in all caps with the number designation listed in the TOC. |
| Appendix Section | Optional | Arabic numbers continue from previous section | 1” top margin. Appendix Section is bold and in all caps. Individual appendices are not included in the Front Matter. Students may include a separate TOC in the Appendix Section, but it is not required. |
| Literature Cited/References/Bibliography/Works Cited | Required (except for MFA poetry/fiction students not using outside resources) | Arabic numbers continue from previous section | 1” top margin. Literature Cited (or whichever title the student uses) is bold and in all caps. Use the style appropriate for the student’s discipline. Do not split citations between two pages. |

Typography

The same font must be used throughout the Front Matter, Text Section, and Back Matter of the document. Fonts recommended by most style manuals include Times New Roman or Garamond, but any professional font will be accepted for this document. The body of the thesis/dissertation and required pages in the Front Matter must be in 12-point font. Tables and figures may contain as small as 10-point font to allow for inclusion of all required information. Also, captions and legends for tables and figures may be as small as 10-point font and no bigger than 12-point font. The body of a figure and equations in the text may have a font size larger than 12-point. The document should be left aligned, which creates an uneven right margin.

Documents submitted to The Graduate College must not be in Track Changes mode. Any document in Track Changes will not be reviewed by The Graduate College until that mode is removed.

Margins

The Front Matter has a different top margin than the Text Section and Back Matter. Pages in the Front Matter require a two (2) inch top margin, a one and one-half (1.5) inch left margin, and one (1) inch right and bottom margins as shown in Figure 1. For all other pages in the document (Text Section and Back Matter), the top margin changes to one (1) inch, the left margin remains one and one-half (1.5) inches, and the bottom and right margins remain one (1) inch (Figure 2). Students will need to use “Next Page” section breaks within their theses/dissertation, as pagination and margins are different between the Front Matter and Text Section. Instructions for setting next page section breaks are provided later in this chapter. ([How-To Video: Margins](#))

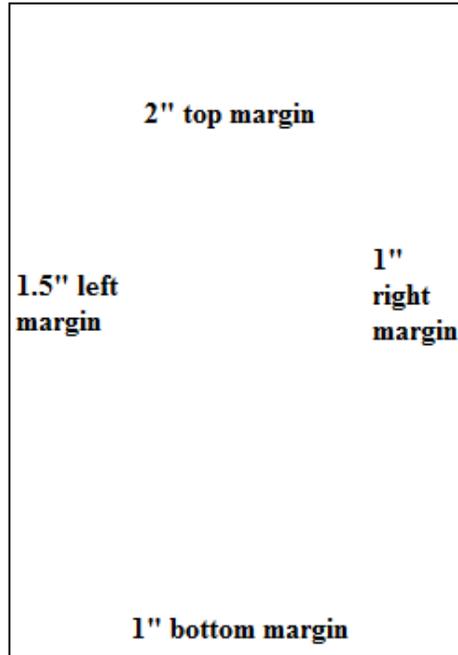


Figure 1. Example Showing Margins for Front Matter. Please note that required and optional pages of the Front Matter include: Title page, Copyright, Fair Use and Author's Permission Statement, Dedication, Acknowledgements, Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, List of Illustrations, List of Abbreviations, and Abstract.

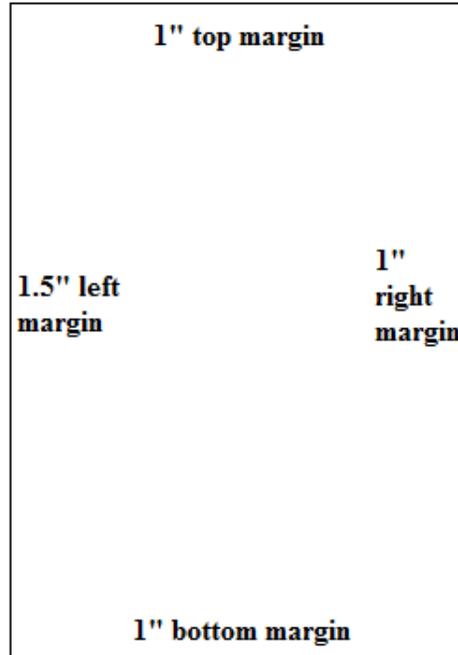


Figure 2. Example Showing Margins for Text Section and Back Matter. Body of the text and Back Matter include: chapter(s) of document, Appendix Section (if included), and Literature Cited (or other name).

Spacing

Overall, the text throughout the thesis/dissertation is double spaced. However, there are specific required text portions in the Front Matter that must be single spaced, and formatting of these examples can be found in [Appendix A](#). The body of the abstract is double spaced and must follow formatting in the example in [Appendix A](#). The Text Section and Back Matter are doubled spaced. Items in the Appendix Sections of the document can be single spaced. Lengthy quotations may be double or single spaced.

Table and figure captions may be single spaced or double spaced in the document. Entries within a List of Tables and/or List of Figures must be double spaced, except for entries that are more than one line which are single spaced. Entries within the Table of Contents are double spaced except for subheadings within each chapter, which are single spaced, and entries that are more than one line (please see [Appendix A](#) or the [How-To Video](#) for an illustration of how the Table of Contents is set up). Citation entries in the references section may be double spaced throughout or may be single spaced with one blank line between each citation.

Text Alignment

Throughout the document, different alignments are used for formatting certain sections (i.e. title page, copyright page, body of the document, etc.). The instructions listed in this chapter will be for Microsoft Word, both for a Mac and a PC.

Text Alignment – PC

To align text in the PC version of Microsoft Word, select the Home tab on the ribbon at the top of the page. Locate the Paragraph section (the word ‘Paragraph’ is below the section). There are four icons with blocks of lines that designate the alignment

types available: Left, Center, Right, and Justified. It is possible to either select the alignment type needed and start typing text, or type the text needed, highlight the text with the cursor, and select the appropriate alignment for that section (see Figure 3).

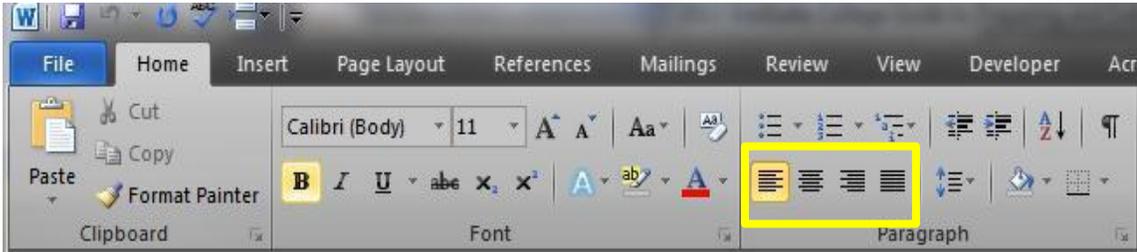


Figure 3. Setting Text Alignment – PC

Text Alignment – Mac

To align text in the Mac version of Microsoft Word, select the Home tab on the ribbon at the top of the page. Locate the Paragraph section (the word ‘Paragraph’ is above the section). There are four icons with blocks of lines that designate the alignment types available: Left, Center, Right, and Justified. It is possible to either select the alignment type needed and start typing text, or type the text needed, highlight the text with the cursor, and select the appropriate alignment for that section (see Figure 4).

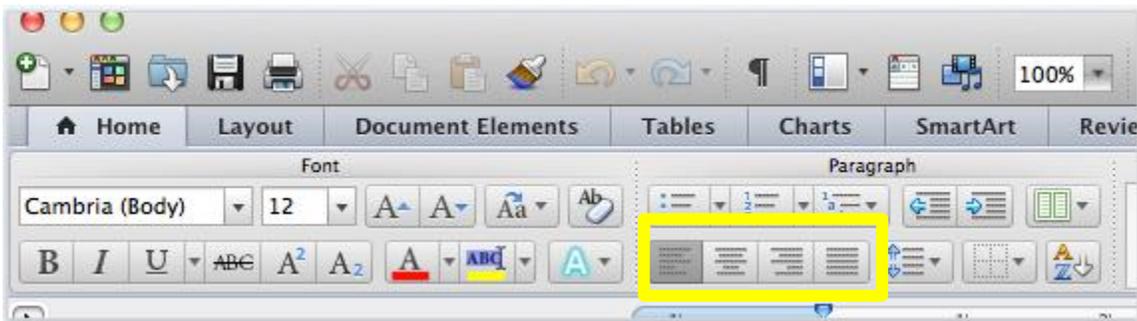


Figure 4. Setting Text Alignment – Mac

Dot Leaders

Dot leaders add a consistent line of dots between tabs in a document. These leaders should be used instead of periods in the Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, or any other list included where page numbers from the text are referenced. Dot leaders are required and must be used in the thesis/dissertation.

[\(How-To Video: Dot Leaders\)](#)

Dot Leaders – PC

To set dot leaders, under the Home tab in Microsoft Word, click on the small arrow at the bottom right corner of the Paragraph box, and select Tabs. Figure 5 shows the menu that will appear and gives further instructions. Once the dot leader tabs are set in the document, click the cursor between the entry and page number, and hit the tab key to insert dot leaders.

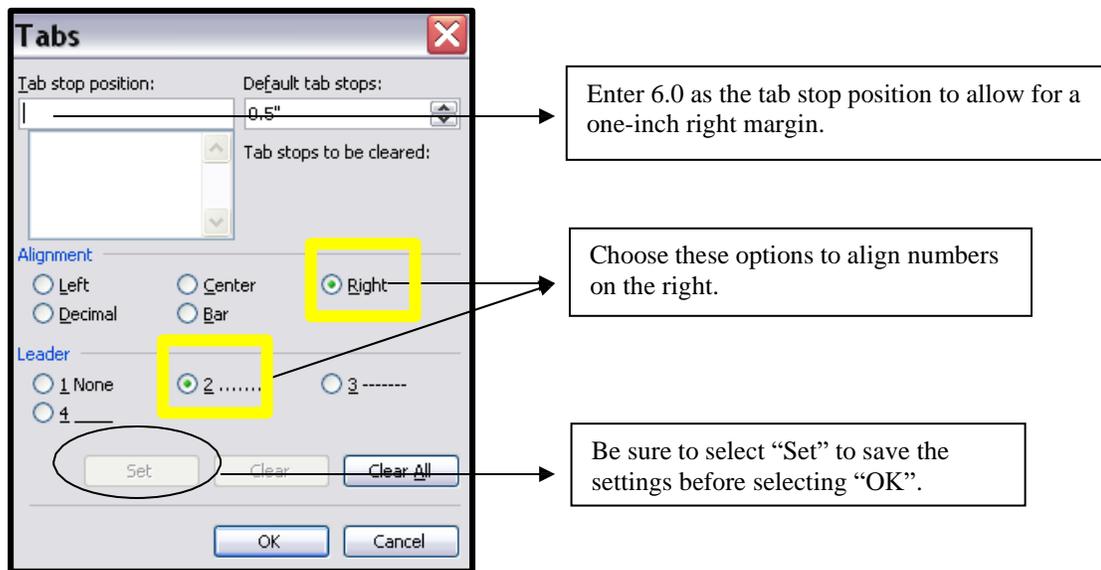


Figure 5. Setting Tabs for Dot Leaders – PC

Dot Leaders – Mac

To set dot leaders, go to the Format section from the Word bar at the top of the screen. Click on Paragraph to open the paragraph menu. Click on the tabs box at the bottom left corner of the Paragraph menu. Figure 6 shows the menu that will appear and gives further instructions. Once the dot leader tabs are set in the document, click the cursor between the entry and the page number, and hit the tab key to insert dot leaders.

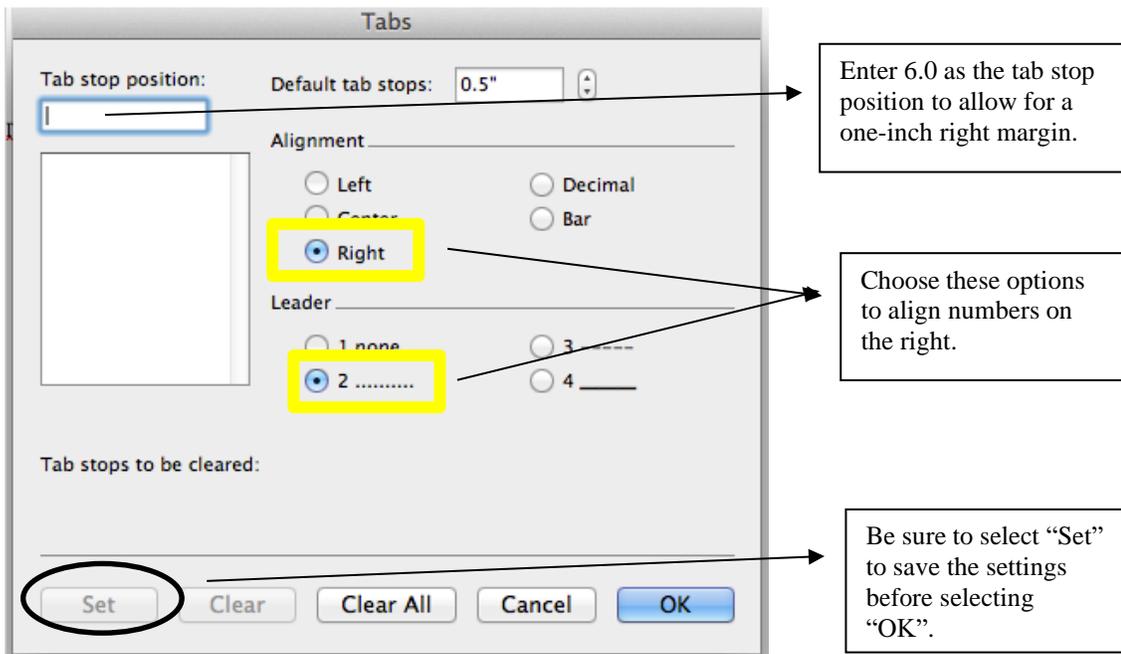


Figure 6. Setting Tabs for Dot Leaders – Mac

Next Page Section Break

Insert a Next Page Section Break between pages that have different margins, page orientations, etc. **Do not use continuous page breaks for every page in the document.** Sections of the paper include but are not limited to the Front Matter prior to the Acknowledgements Page, the Front Matter before the Text Section, the Text Section, and/or any landscaped pages throughout the document. Breaking down the individual

document into subsections using section breaks will help with changing the page numbers (explained in next section). ([How-To Video: Page Breaks](#))

Section Break – PC

In Microsoft Word, the section break is located in the Layout tab. Select Breaks at the top, then choose Next Page from the drop down list (See Figure 7).

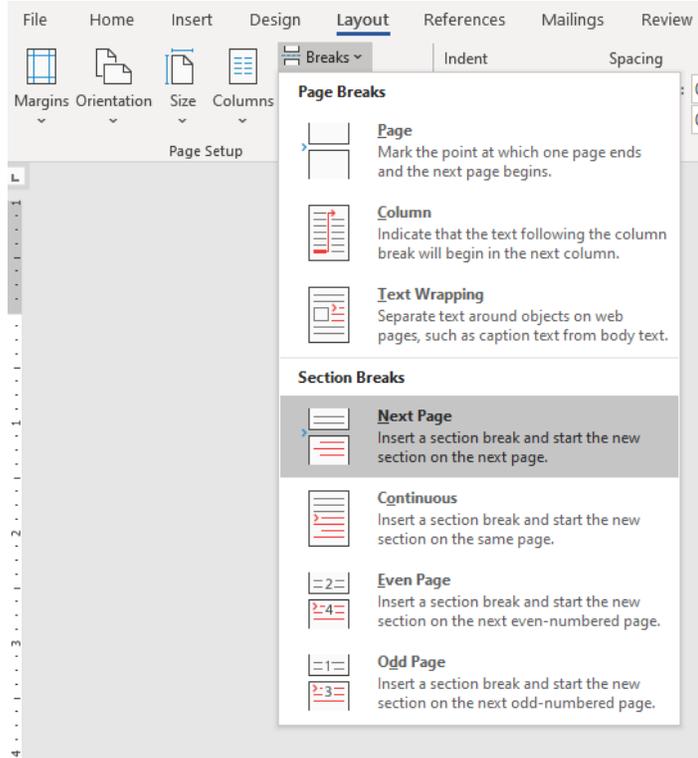


Figure 7. Diagram Showing Location of Next Page Section Breaks Option in Page Layout. From Page Layout tab, select the Breaks option and scroll down to the Next Page option listed under Section Breaks.

Before making any changes to the headers and footers, remove the “Link to Previous” setting in each header *and* footer. This will ensure that the page numbers or other formatting will not be the same as the previous section. When students click the “Link to Previous” button there will no longer be a “Same as Previous” designation in the header or footer. See Figure 8 for an example of the location of “Link to Previous” in the

footers and in the header/footer menu and an example of the appearance of two sections.

Section one in Figure 8 is shown with the footer and section two is shown with the subsequent section's footer.



Figure 8. Diagrams Showing Header/Footer Components – PC. When a next page section break is added to the document, each section can be seen in the header and/or footer. The headers and footers will remain the same, until the Link to Previous button is unclicked. This will allow different page numbers, margins, and page orientations to be selected, without affecting previous sections.

Section Break – Mac

In Microsoft Word for Mac, the section break is located in the Document Elements tab. Under Insert Pages, click the down arrow next to Break for the break menu. Choose Next Page from the drop down list (See Figure 9).

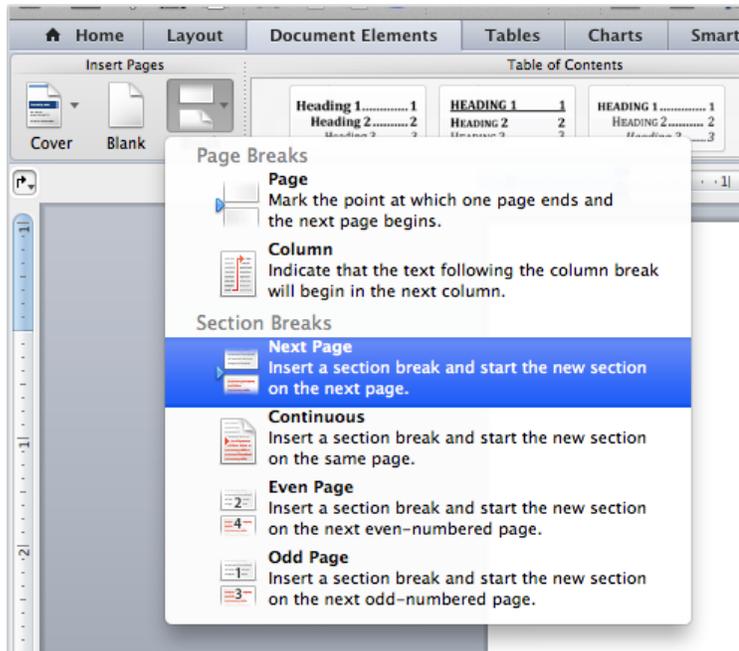


Figure 9. Diagram Showing Location of Next Page Section Breaks Option in Document Elements. From Document Elements tab, select the Breaks option and scroll down to the Next Page option listed under Section Breaks.

Before making any changes to the headers and footers, uncheck the “Link to Previous” setting in each header *and* footer. This will ensure that the page numbers or other formatting will not be the same as the previous section. When students uncheck the “Link to Previous,” there will no longer be a “Same as Previous” designation in the header or footer. See Figure 10 for an example of the location of “Link to Previous” in the footers and in the header/footer menu and an example of the appearance of two sections. Section one in Figure 10 is shown with the footer and section two is shown with the subsequent section’s footer.

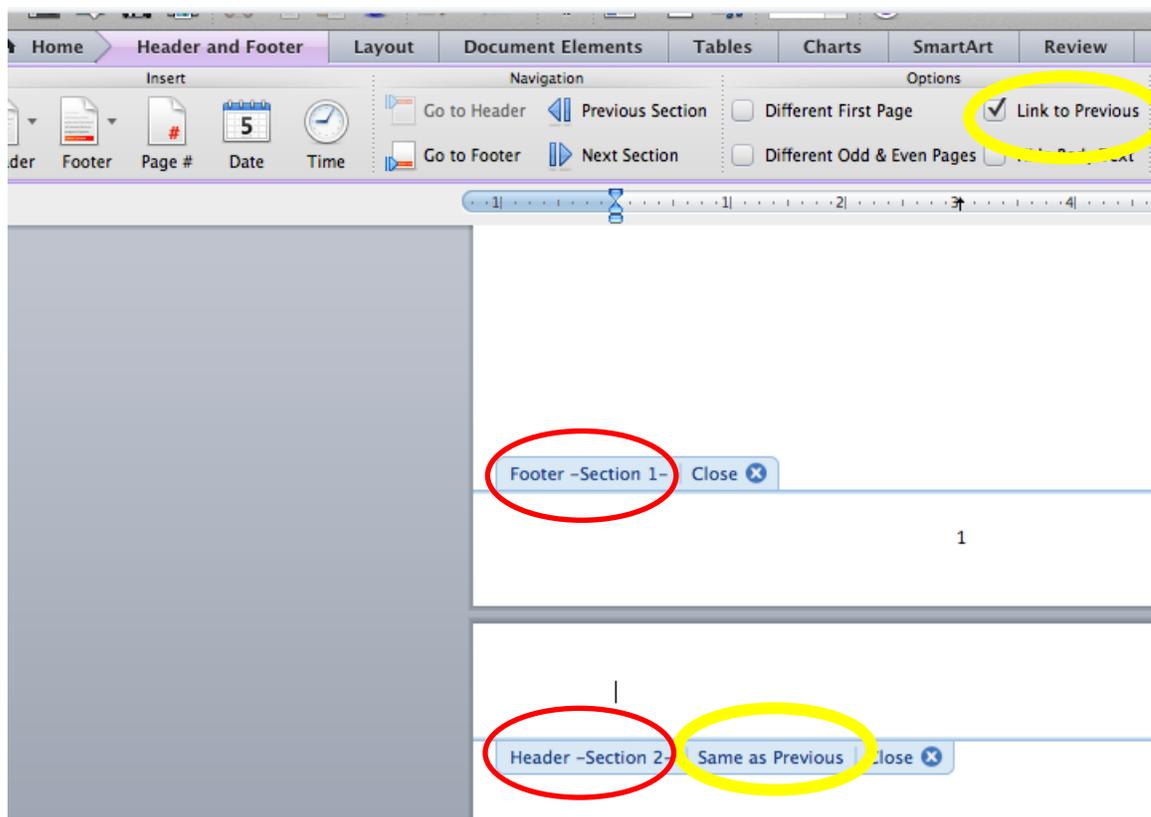


Figure 10. Diagrams Showing Header/Footer Components – Mac. When a next page section break is added to the document, each section can be seen in the header and/or footer. The headers and footers will remain the same, until the Link to Previous button is unchecked. This will allow different page numbers, margins, and page orientations to be selected, without affecting previous sections.

Pagination

All page numbers throughout the document must appear centered and one-half (.5) inch from the bottom of the page within the footer. Numbers on pages in the Front Matter of the thesis/dissertation are lower-case Roman numerals. All pages of the Front Matter are counted in overall page numbering, but the actual page numbers start on the Acknowledgement’s page. They are **not** placed on the Title page, Copyright page, Fair Use and Author’s Permission Statement page, or Dedication.

Numbers in the Text Section of the thesis or dissertation are Arabic, and the page numbers will start over at one (1) in the Text Section. Arabic numbers continue through the end of the document.

It is easiest to paginate a thesis/dissertation when all sections of a thesis/dissertation are contained in the same document. Sections of the paper include but are not limited to the Front Matter prior to the Acknowledgements Page, the Front Matter before the Text Section, the Text Section, and/or any landscaped pages throughout the document. Set [section breaks](#) if needed before inserting page numbers.

[\(How-To Video: Page Numbers\)](#)

Page Numbers – PC

To add a page number in Microsoft Word, click on Insert on the ribbon at the top of the page and then click on Page Number. A dropdown menu will show, allowing the student to select placement of a page number. Select Bottom of the Page from the dropdown menu and the option that allows for centered alignment. In Figure 11, that option is Page Number 2.

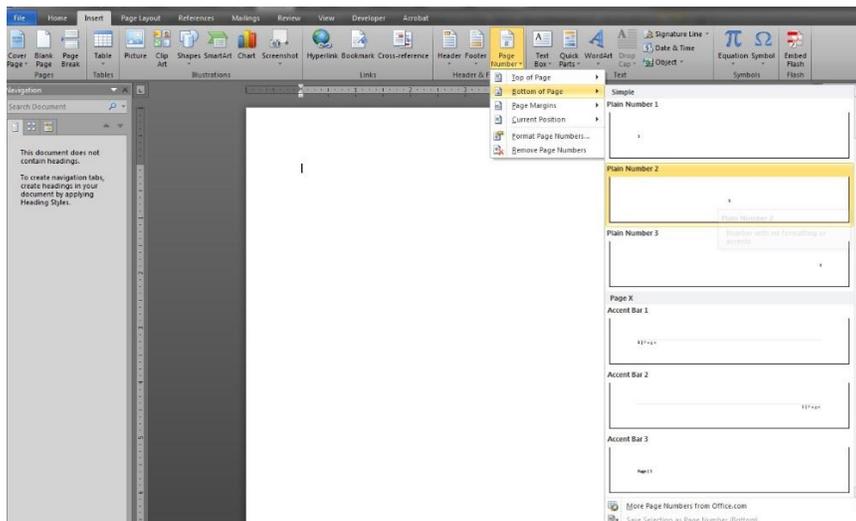


Figure 11. Diagram Showing Location of Page Numbers. From Insert tab, select the Page Number option and scroll down to the Plain Number 2 option listed under Bottom of Page.

To change the page number type (Roman or Arabic numerals), click on Insert again at the top of the page, click on Page Number, and select Format Page Numbers.

This will allow students to select the number type (Roman or Arabic), the page number at which to start, and indicate if it is needed to continue numbering from the previous section (See Figure 12).

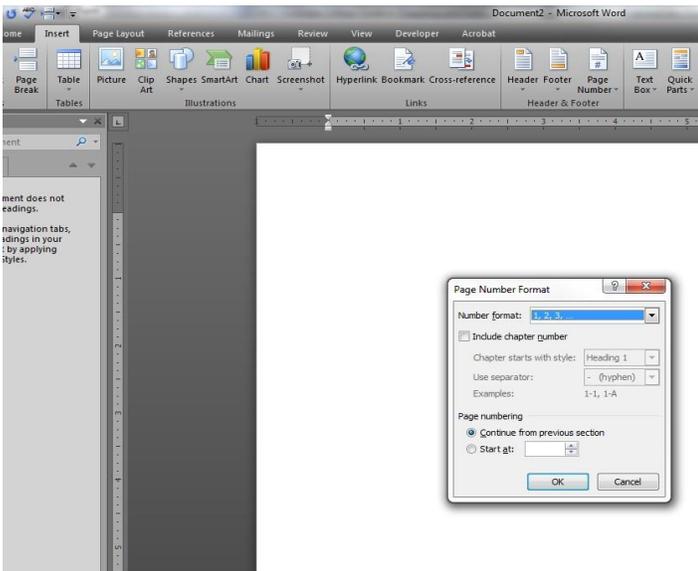
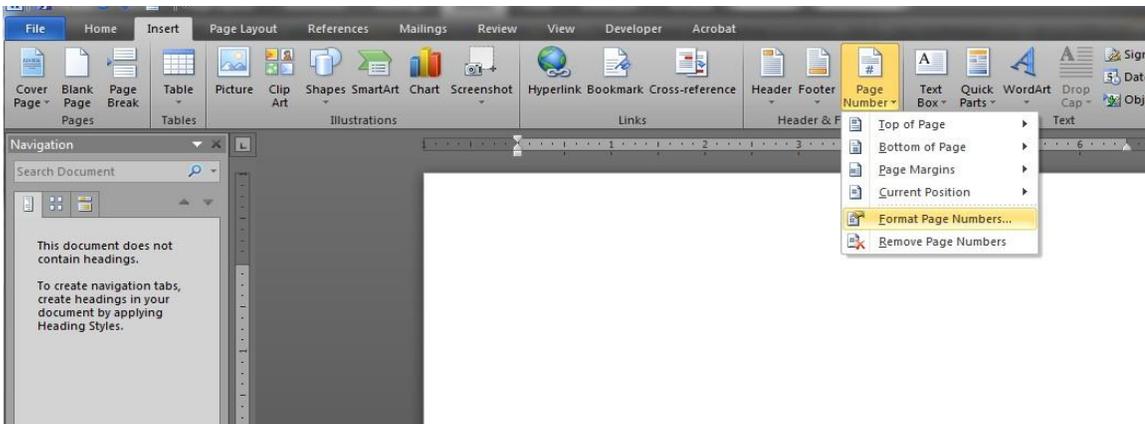


Figure 12. Diagrams Showing Page Number Format Box – PC. From Insert tab, select the Page Number option and scroll down to Format Page Numbers. The Page Number Format Box will appear, allowing customization of page numbers.

If needed, delete any blank line under the page number that pushes the number up. Page numbers should sit ½ inch from the bottom of the page. Make sure page numbers are 12-point font and the same font type as used in the rest of the document.

Page Numbers – Mac

To add a page number in Microsoft Word, click on Document Elements on the ribbon at the top of the page and then click on Page # under the Header and Footer section. A menu will pop up, allowing students to select placement of a page number. Select Bottom of the Page (Footer) from the menu, and center for the alignment.

To change the page number type (Roman or Arabic numerals), click on Format in the Page Numbers menu. This will allow students to select the number format (Roman or Arabic), the page number at which to start, and indicate if it is necessary to continue numbering from the previous section (See Figure 13).

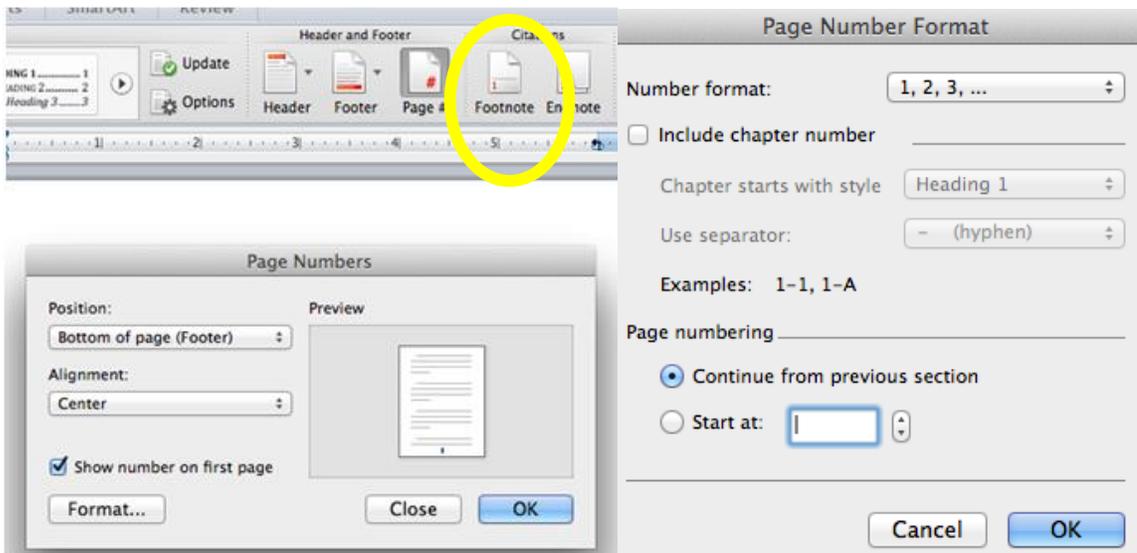


Figure 13. Diagrams Showing Page Number Format Box – Mac

If needed, delete any blank line under the page number that pushes the number up.

Page numbers should sit ½ inch from the bottom of the page. Make sure page numbers are 12-point font and the same font type as used in the rest of the document.

Supplementary and Illustrative Materials

In electronic theses and dissertations, supplementary materials may consist of any additional resources that could be used to support a thesis/dissertation. This material includes, but is not limited to, complex digital objects such as images, video, and audio. If students do include supplementary materials with the thesis/dissertation, a list of these materials should be included in the Appendix Section.

Illustrative materials included in the body of the thesis/dissertation must fit the margins described under the subheading “Margins.” Illustrations may be reduced if necessary. Please include a List of Illustrations if the document will contain two or more illustrations.

Headings and Subheadings

Headings throughout the thesis/dissertation must be set up as instructed in this manual.

Headings: Front Matter

All headings in the Front Matter are required to be centered, capitalized, in 12-point font and in bold (with the exception of the title page; do not use bold on this page). Chapter titles/headings and headings in the Back Matter are also required to be centered, capitalized, in 12-point font and in bold. Chapter titles in the text must include the chapter number as listed in the table of contents and the chapter title all on one line. Please see the examples of chapter titles throughout this document and Appendix A, as they are formatted in the style required for theses and dissertations.

Headings: Body of the Text

The body of the thesis or dissertation should utilize a heading and subheading format from a style guide acceptable to the student's program (see Table 3: Style Guides by Major). The formatting of subheadings will vary among theses and dissertations.

Please do not refer to any previously submitted thesis/dissertation for any formatting guidelines. Consult recent style manuals in the major discipline and this guide for appropriate formatting.

The Graduate College will check throughout the document for consistency. Use as many subheading levels as the committee deems necessary. Any subheadings included in the document must be worded and capitalized exactly the same in both the Table of Contents and the text of the document. If headings are numbered, numbers cannot be repeated within the document. Subheadings appearing at the bottom of a page should be moved to the next page if two lines of text cannot fit beneath them.

Heading and Subheading Example

The American Psychological Association (APA) style guide is one of the more common formatting style guides used in Texas State theses and dissertations across subject areas. The heading and subheading structure for APA style has five levels, applied to text in order:

| Level | |
|-------|---|
| 1 | Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Headings |
| 2 | Left-aligned, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading |
| 3 | Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with a period. The body text begins after the period, on the same line as the subheading. |
| 4 | <i>Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.</i> The body text begins after the period, on the same line as the subheading. |
| 5 | <i>Indented, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.</i> The body text begins after the period, on the same line as the subheading. |

Thus, if the thesis or dissertation uses APA heading level 3, it also by definition uses heading levels 1 and 2. If level 2 headings are included in the Table of Contents for a particular chapter, all other chapters that have level 2 headings must also have them represented in the Table of Contents as well.

The guiding framework here is one of consistency. No matter which formatting guide is used, it must be used consistently throughout the thesis or dissertation.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Standard abbreviations such as time and measurements may be used without explanation; however, other abbreviations or symbols should be fully spelled out either upon their first use followed by the abbreviation, or in a List of Abbreviations in the Front Matter. After the first use, the abbreviation will be sufficient.

Acronyms must be typed in all capital letters without periods. Again, upon first use, the acronym should be fully spelled out and thereafter the acronym will be sufficient.

The abbreviation "et al." is often confusing when used in references. Keep in mind that the full Latin term is et alli; therefore, "et" does not require a period, but "al." does, as it is the shortened form of "alli."

In referencing the university in the text of the thesis/dissertation, use Texas State University the first time it is mentioned. Thereafter, Texas State may be used if an abbreviation is desired.

Tables and Figures

Tables and figures may be included in the text with the tables/figures placed after their first reference in the text. Spacing before and after the table/figure should be

consistent using at least the standard double spacing between the table/figure and paragraphs. A table/figure may either be included on a page with text or on a page by itself. Two or more tables/figures may appear on the same page.

Alternately, tables and figures may either be placed following the body of the chapter in which they are cited, or grouped together and placed following the last chapter but before an appendix section and/or the literature cited section. In this case, the tables should be grouped together and figures grouped together. Include the list of tables and/or list of figures in the table of contents if there are two or more tables/figures in the document. Tables and figures included in an Appendix Section should not be included as entries in the list of tables and/or list of figures. Illustrations should follow figures.

Tables

- Table title formatting must be consistent throughout the manuscript.
- Each table is titled and numbered using Arabic numbers.
- Table titles and descriptions appear **above** the table and should not extend beyond the document margins.
- Captions must be consistently formatted for all tables. Refer to the recommended style manual in the major discipline for appropriate formatting. Be consistent in punctuation and typography (capitalization, use of bold, etc.).
- The font style for the table and title should match the text of the manuscript. Use 10- or 12-point fonts for the title and caption.
- Font size may be smaller in the body of a table, but no smaller than 10-point.

- Table titles must exactly match what is listed in the List of Tables, including the capitalization of letters. Only the first sentence, or through the separation of text by a period, should be listed in the list of tables.
- See sample tables throughout this guide as formatting examples.

Figures

**Illustrations should follow the figure formatting.*

- Figure title formatting must be consistent throughout the manuscript.
- Each figure is titled and numbered using Arabic numbers.
- Figure titles and descriptions appear **below** the figure and should not extend beyond the document margins.
- Charts, graphs, maps, etc. are considered figures. Text within a figure may be larger than 12-point font and does not have to match the font style used in the body of the text.
- The entire figure should be included on the same page.
- Captions must be consistently formatted for all figures. Refer to the recommended style manual in the major discipline for appropriate formatting. Be consistent in punctuation and typography (capitalization, use of bold, etc.).
- The font style for the figure title should match the text of the manuscript. Use 10-12-point fonts for the title and caption.
- Font size in a figure may be less than 12-point., but no smaller than 10-point.
- Color figures may be used. However, the library copies will be printed in black-and-white and thus labeling within figures should be by means other than color.

- Figure titles must exactly match what is listed in the list of figures, including the capitalization of letters. Only the first sentence, or through the separation of text by a period, should be listed in the list of figures.
- See sample figures throughout this guide for formatting example.

Citations

It is imperative that credit is given for material that is not the student's own.

Credit must be given for direct quotations, paraphrases, information, and ideas. The exact methods of citing sources will vary from one style guide to another, but the underlying principle remains the same.

One style should be chosen for citations within the text for consistency. The most common methods of referencing works are author-date, footnotes, and numbered references. The student should follow recent style manuals in the major discipline for the appropriate formatting.

In the traditional thesis/dissertation structure, all works cited in the text must appear in the References section. Likewise, all works listed in the References section must be cited in the text. Personal communication should be cited in the text. In the article-based thesis/dissertation format, students can have a references section at the end of each chapter, OR one set of references at the end of the entire document.

Use an appropriate style for the References section. Entries may be single spaced with a double space between entries or double spaced throughout. Be consistent with the spacing chosen in the References section.

Computer Use

To avoid complications with the document, it may be advisable to use the same computer and word processing software version throughout the thesis/dissertation process. If different machines or word processing software versions are used to prepare the thesis or dissertation, settings and format may change between edits, which could result in a submission being returned for reformatting by The Graduate College.

Conversion to PDF

PDF is the required format for electronic online submission. It is viewable and printable on any platform, and it preserves fonts, formatting, and graphics of source documents. The primary document of the thesis/dissertation must be in PDF, however supplementary materials in various formats are allowed. Refer to the end of this section for additional details.

If the electronic thesis/dissertation consists of multiple text documents, it is best to consolidate them into one document and convert the consolidated file to a PDF. If complex digital objects (digital video/audio, 3-dimensional multimedia) are to be included they may be submitted separately as Supplementary Materials.

Conversion Tools

Regardless of the conversion tool chosen, the following criteria must be met to create a compliant PDF/A document, suitable for preservation and archiving:

- Embed all fonts.
- Make sure there is no password protection on the PDF.
- Ensure that security settings allow printing.

PDF conversion for PC users. The preferred method of converting is to use the PDF conversion tool included in Microsoft Office for PCs, because this is the most prevalent software on campus.

To save a Word document as a PDF/A file, click on File and point the arrow to Export. By default, Create PDF/XPS Document should be selected under Export. Click on the Create PDF/XPS icon. In the next window, check that Save as type is set to PDF. Choose Optimize for Standard (publishing online and printing), click on Options, check the box next to PDF/A compliant. Make sure the Page range is set to All, then click OK. This setting ensures that all conversion criteria are met.

PDF conversion for Mac users. Mac users must use Adobe Acrobat Pro to convert a text document into PDF/A file. This software is available at all computer labs on campus. To save a document as a PDF/A file simply click on File, point to the arrow next to Save as other, and choose Archivable PDF (PDF/A).

To save a WordPerfect document as a PDF/A file simply click on File, then Publish to PDF. From drop down PDF style menu choose PDF/A-1a-Level A compliance and Save. This setting ensures that all conversion criteria are met.

Make Sure to Check the Final PDF

Regardless of which conversion tool is chosen, make sure the final PDF document has been checked before it is submitted. **Do not assume that if the final Word or other file looks fine, the PDF will be fine.** Look at charts, graphs, and any graphics files that were imported into the document and look for correct conversions of fonts and diacritical marks such as accents.

Supplementary Materials

Supplementary materials may consist of any additional resources that could be used to support a thesis/dissertation. This material includes, but is not limited to, complex digital objects such as images, video, and audio. If supplementary materials are submitted with the thesis/dissertation, please include a list of these materials within the Appendix Section in the document.

Supplementary materials may be uploaded in Vireo to accompany the thesis/dissertation. Long-term preservation and accessibility of the supplementary material may be subject to change due to changing technologies. Choosing standard and commonly used formats will increase the likelihood of successful migration to future technologies. The following formats are recommended for the long term preservation of supplementary material:

- For images: PNG, TIFF, JPEG, GIF
- For audio: WAV, MP3, AIFF, MIDI
- For video: MPEG, AVI, MOV
- For spreadsheets/datasets: comma-separated values (CSV) or other delimited text.

Students are also welcome to submit supplementary material in their original format if the standard formats do not provide the best representation of their work. The standard format copy may be retained as an archival copy, while the student's preferred format will be the accessible copy.

Technical Support

For general technical support please contact the Texas State IT Assistance Center (ITAC). ITAC is available via phone and LiveChat 24 hours a day/7 days a week. Contact information can be found at <https://itac.txstate.edu/>.

For Vireo technical assistance, contact Stephanie Larrison, Librarian, at Larrison@txstate.edu or 512.245.8613.

The Alkek computer lab hours mostly follow the hours of the Library. The computer lab closes 15 minutes prior to the closing of the Library, and the computer lab will remain closed until 10:30 A.M. on Friday mornings for routine maintenance. Please see www.library.txstate.edu/about/hours.html for Library hours.

APPENDIX SECTION

APPENDIX A: Example of Proper Thesis/Dissertation Formatting

Please ensure your document looks similar to the example starting on the next page. This example was created using the [Microsoft Word Template](#) available on The Graduate College [Thesis & Dissertation Resource Guides page](#).

AN IN-DEPTH EXAMPLE OF HOW A THESIS OR DISSERTATION
SHOULD APPEAR WHEN BEING SUBMITTED TO THE
GRADUATE COLLEGE

by

Jane Q. Doe, B.S.

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Council of
Texas State University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science
with a Major in Biology
May 2022

Committee Members:

Andrea Golato, Chair

Eric Paulson

Patti Giuffre

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by

Jane Q. Doe

2022

FAIR USE AND AUTHOR'S PERMISSION STATEMENT

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Duplication Permission

As the copyright holder of this work I, Jane Q. Doe, authorize duplication of this work, in whole or in part, for educational or scholarly purposes only.

DEDICATION

The dedication page is optional. If used, it should have a two-inch top margin.

The word “DEDICATION” is the heading and should be in all CAPS and centered. The page will not be numbered but will count in the overall numbering of the document.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The acknowledgements page should have a two-inch top margin. The word “ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS” is the heading and must be centered in all CAPS.

Many students use this section to thank their committee members, fellow students, family members, or any person they feel has contributed significantly to their document.

Page numbering for the Front Matter will start on this page with the corresponding page number. If there is no “DEDICATION” page, this will be page iv.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | v |
| LIST OF TABLES | vii |
| LIST OF FIGURES | viii |
| LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS | ix |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS | x |
| ABSTRACT | xi |
| CHAPTER | |
| I. TYPE TITLE OF FIRST CHAPTER | 1 |
| II. TYPE TITLE OF SECOND CHAPTER OR DELETE IF DOCUMENT HAS ONLY ONE CHAPTER | 4 |
| Include space between chapter title and subheading | 5 |
| All subheadings should be indented and single spaced | 7 |
| Continue to indent for each level of subheading listed | 8 |
| If indentions conflict with dot leaders, use the “Ruler” tool | 9 |
| Make sure to also include a space after the last subheading | 12 |
| III. TYPE TITLE OF THIRD CHAPTER | 14 |
| You do not have to include any or all levels of subheadings | 16 |
| If you choose to list one or more levels of subheadings, however, be sure to include all titles within that subheading level | 17 |
| APPENDIX SECTION | 21 |
| REFERENCES | 23 |

LIST OF TABLES

| Table | Page |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Type Table Title..... | 11 |
| 2. Only include the first sentence of the title | 12 |
| 3. Title must match exactly with text, including capitalization | 12 |
| 4. If the title is more than one line, indent all lines after the first and single space the entry | 13 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| Figure | Page |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Type Figure Title | 2 |
| 2. Only include the first sentence of the title | 3 |
| 3. Title must match exactly with text, including capitalization | 4 |
| 4. If the title is more than one line, indent all lines after the first and single space the entry | 5 |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

| Illustration | Page |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Type Illustration Title | 15 |
| 2. Only include the first sentence of the title | 15 |
| 3. Title must match exactly with text, including capitalization | 15 |
| 4. If the title is more than one line, indent all lines after the first and single space the entry | 16 |

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| Abbreviation | Description |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| AI | Artificial Intelligence |
| Pubs | Publications |

ABSTRACT

Indent and begin typing the abstract. This is required for all doctoral students and thesis students writing a thesis in a language other than English. The abstract must be in English. Text should be aligned left and double spaced.

I. TYPE TITLE OF FIRST CHAPTER

Begin typing thesis/dissertation. This page restarts the page number to page “1.”