

American University  
Guide to  
Preparation of Theses and Dissertations

American University  
Office of the Provost  
Washington, DC  
1995  
Revised 2002

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Responsibilities	
Responsibilities of a Student Preparing a Thesis/Dissertation.....	2
Responsibilities of the Thesis/Dissertation Chair.....	2
Responsibilities of the College or School.....	2
Responsibilities of the University Library.....	3
Requirements for the Submission of the Thesis/Dissertation Proposal.....	3
Requirements for the Preparation of the Thesis/Dissertation.	
Style Manual.....	4
Consistency and Clarity.....	4
Author’s Name.....	4
Title.....	4
Copyright Compliance in the Thesis/Dissertation.....	4
Document Order and Contents	
Title Page.....	5
Copyright Notice Page.....	5
Dedication Page.....	5
Abstract.....	5
Preface.....	5
Acknowledgements.....	5
Table of Contents.....	5
List of Tables.....	5
List of Illustrations.....	6
Text.....	6
Appendices.....	6
Bibliography.....	6
Format	
Paper.....	6
Type.....	6
Margins.....	7
Spacing.....	7
Pagination.....	7
Footnotes and Bibliography.....	8
Headings.....	8
Charts, Graphs, Tables, and Photographs.....	8
Media, Computer, and Other Nonprint Materials.....	9
Copies.....	9
Copyright Protection for your Thesis/Dissertation.....	9
Appendices	
Sample Letter to Copyright Owner.....	10
Sample Pages.....	11
Thesis Title Page.....	12
Dissertation Title Page.....	13
Copyright Page.....	14
Abstract Page.....	15
Table of Contents Page.....	16

## INTRODUCTION

Graduate students, undertaking their theses and dissertations, embark upon the culminating research experience of their degree programs. The written thesis or dissertation reflects their commitment to scholarship and creative endeavor. After publication, the thesis or dissertation reflects the quality of research contributions made by American University.

Responsibilities, requirements, and procedures for the preparation and submission of theses and dissertations are described in this guide, which complements the assistance given to students by their advisory committees and their schools or colleges. It is intended to be used in conjunction with Publishing Your Dissertation or Publishing Your Thesis issued by University Microfilms, Inc. (UMI) which publishes in microformat all theses and dissertations approved by American University. For additional information, student writers of theses and dissertations should consult the designated advisors in their schools and colleges.

Many individuals have contributed to the development of the guide. Special appreciation goes to:

George Arnold, University Archivist, Library  
Mary Barton, Manager, Graduate Program, SIS  
Gary Bossert, Office Manager, Library  
Donald Bunis, University Registrar  
Janice Flug, Acquisitions Librarian, Library  
Laura Langbein, Professor, SPA  
Kathleen Lavery, Reference Assistant, Library  
Jeffrey McCafferty, Special Assistant, Provost's Office  
Mary Mintz, Senior Reference Librarian, Library  
Sue Neilson, Cataloging Librarian, Library  
John Richardson, Professor, SIS  
Kendra Rowe, Reference Assistant, Library  
Russell Stone, Associate Dean, CAS  
Patricia Wand, University Librarian  
Jamie Wyatt, Administrative Coordinator, CAS

## **Responsibilities of the Student Preparing a Thesis/Dissertation**

- The student adheres to the University requirements for the preparation of theses and dissertations as described in this guide.
- The student complies with U.S. copyright law with respect to using previously published material in the thesis/dissertation.
- For any research activity which involves or will involve observing, surveying, interviewing, or experimenting on human subjects, the student should consult with his/her department/school representative to the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for guidance. Copies of American University regulations regarding human subjects are available from the department chair or the chair's designee and the Compliance Administrator, Office of Sponsored Programs.
- The student makes modifications to the thesis/dissertation as required by the thesis/dissertation chair and other committee members.
- The student prepares a thesis/dissertation acceptable to University Microfilms, Incorporated (UMI), which is the publisher of University theses and dissertations. The student uses University Microfilms' Publishing Your Dissertation or Publishing Your Thesis, as appropriate. The UMI guides are available in the library or through the college or school.
- The student presents the document to the head of the teaching unit or to the dean of the college or school, depending on the structure of the academic unit.
- After the college or school has accepted the thesis/dissertation, the student carries it and the Thesis/Dissertation Completion Form to the Office of Student Accounts and the Office of the Registrar for appropriate clearances and then delivers the original document and the required forms to the University Library.

## **Responsibilities of the Thesis/Dissertation Chair**

- The chair of the thesis or dissertation committee (or his/her designee) reviews the manuscript to ensure that the University requirements are met and to advise the student about any necessary modifications to fulfill these requirements.
- The chair approves the final document before the student forwards it to the head of the teaching unit or to the dean of the college or school, depending on the structure of the academic unit.

## **Responsibilities of the College or School**

- The college or school distributes this guide to students who undertake the preparation of a thesis/dissertation.
- The college or school may provide guidance or workshops to assist students with the preparation of theses and dissertations. The college or school may request assistance from library faculty to provide these workshops.

## **Responsibilities of the University Library**

- The library may provide students with guidance on document preparation.
- The library receives the document on behalf of the University and arranges for its publication by University Microfilms.
- The library preserves a bound copy in the archival collections of the library.
- The library provides access to the published thesis/dissertation as requested by users.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF THE THESIS/DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

A student who proposes a topic for a Master's thesis or Doctoral dissertation must substantiate, in concise written form, the feasibility of the proposed project by presenting evidence of the soundness of the proposed methodology for accomplishing the research. This process is accomplished by means of a formal typewritten proposal that is submitted for approval to the thesis/dissertation committee, the department/school, and the academic officer designated by the dean of the college or school.

A proposal should contain the following elements:

- The proposal cover sheet, which is identical to the title page (see examples) but does not include the dean's signature
- The body of the proposal:
  - Statement of the problem (thesis) and/or the hypotheses to be tested.
  - Statement of the probable value and importance of the study for the field by relating the thesis to the literature already in the field.
  - Statement of the research methodology indicating its appropriateness for treatment of the problem/data.
  - Statement of the tentative outline and/or chapter titles of the thesis/dissertation.
- Selected bibliography.
- Appendix of supporting instruments and documents.

The student should follow the procedures of the school or college when writing and submitting the proposal.

Acceptance of the proposal does not commit the department/school or the college or school to accept the thesis/dissertation itself. The completed work is subject to the review of the thesis/dissertation committee and the dean of the college or school.

It is recognized that during the course of research the scope of the project might be altered significantly by the findings. This might include, for example, the rejection of the methods originally proposed but should not change the nature of the major problem. In the event of a fundamental change in the major problem, a new proposal will be required.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE THESIS/DISSERTATION**

- **Style Manual**

A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, *the most recent edition*, by Kate L. Turabian, is the official University manual to be used in the writing of theses and dissertations. Some academic units may specify a particular method of citation appropriate to the discipline, and the student may use the authoritative manual of style for that discipline.

- **Consistency and Clarity**

Author's Name

The name of the author of the thesis/dissertation must remain consistent on the title page, copyright page, abstract, thesis/dissertation completion form, and signed copy of the University Microfilms agreement form. A full form of the author's name is preferred; for example, a given name, a middle name or middle initial (not both), and a surname.

Title

The thesis/dissertation title must remain consistent on the title page, abstract, thesis/dissertation completion form, and signed copy of the University Microfilms agreement form. The thesis/dissertation title should clearly describe the content of the document. Words should be substituted for any symbols or formulas.

- **Copyright Compliance in the Thesis/Dissertation**

The student certifies by signing a University Microfilms agreement form that s/he is not infringing or violating the rights of other authors. Accordingly, the student must obtain written permission from the copyright owner if the student quotes repeatedly from the same work or quotes material that is relatively lengthy by comparison with the total work.

Letters of permission are also required for:

- Poems
- Song lyrics
- Musical scores
- Surveys or portions of surveys
- Standardized tests
- Questionnaires
- Responses to questionnaires
- Interviews
- Letters
- Speeches
- Previously published portions of the thesis/dissertation
- Trademarks or logos
- Materials already reproduced in another work

Letters or permission are strongly recommended for:

- Maps
- Tables
- Charts
- Cartoons
- Newspaper articles
- Illustrations

Each letter of permission must give the thesis/dissertation author permission to use the materials and University Microfilms permission to sell copies of the thesis/dissertation containing those materials. Copies of permission letters must be attached to the University Microfilms agreement form except when such letters must be retained to maintain confidentiality of survey or questionnaire respondents. In the latter case a letter informing University Microfilms that the letters of permission are in the author's possession is acceptable. University Microfilms will not publish thesis/dissertation pages containing material for which permission is not available.

The waiting period for obtaining requested letters of permission may be lengthy, and the thesis/dissertation author is advised to begin this process early. Sending a letter that includes a form with signature and date lines to the copyright owner may expedite the process.

See sample letter to copyright owner in Appendix A.

- **Document Order and Contents**

The appropriate order for the thesis/dissertation is:

Title Page

Two copies of this page should be included with the final document. See attached examples.

Copyright Notice Page

A copyright page must be included following the title page if a request for registration for copyright has been made. See example.

Dedication Page (Optional)

Abstract

A second unnumbered copy of the abstract should be included with the final document. A thesis abstract must be 150 words or less; a dissertation abstract must be 350 words or less. University Microfilms will include only the maximum number of words. The abstract should provide a succinct summary of the text and contain a) statement of the problem, b) procedures and/or methodology, c) results, and d) conclusion. (Content may vary according to discipline). Since the abstract will be published in Dissertation Abstracts International or Masters Abstracts International without editing or revision, it must appear on one side of the page only and must be double spaced. Formulas, symbols, and foreign words and phrases must be printed clearly and accurately. Mathematical formulas, diagrams, and other illustrative materials are not recommended for the printed abstract.

Preface (Optional)

Acknowledgments (Optional)

Table of Contents

Every thesis/dissertation must contain a table of contents and, if appropriate, a list of tables, maps, and/or illustrations. See examples in Turabian's Manual.

List of Tables

List of Illustrations (include all figures, maps, etc. with titles and page references)

Text

Begin page numbering with 1

Appendices

Bibliography

• **Format**

Paper

The paper must be of an appropriate quality for long-term preservation of the thesis. At minimum the paper must be acid-free with a content of at least twenty-five percent cotton rag. The paper should measure 8 ½ inches by 11 inches. Acceptable paper is available for purchase at the University's campus store. Paper in the submitted thesis/dissertation should not be bound or stapled.

Type

A clean, easily-read typeface is acceptable with either ten or twelve characters per inch (ten or twelve point). Script typefaces are not acceptable. Italic typefaces are acceptable only if they remain clearly and cleanly legible after photocopying. The print must be black and letter-quality. All print must appear on one side of a page with no print on the verso of any page. If few in number, accent marks may be hand-printed in permanent black ink.

Margins

The margins must conform to the specifications below. These specifications apply to all pages, including those with tables, figures, and illustrations.

<u>Side</u>	<u>Margin</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Left	1 ½ inch	This margin is wider to allow for binding. This margin also applies to horizontal tables and figures.
Right	1 inch	Unless the font is proportional, do not justify the right margin.
Bottom	1 inch	
Top	2 inches	This margin is required on all major heading pages (includes Title Page, Copyright Page, Dedication, Acknowledgments, Abstract, Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Illustrations, each new chapter, Appendices, Bibliography.) On these pages, the heading is in capital letters, centered and not underlined.
Top	1 ¼ inch	This margin is required for pages that do not begin major sections of the manuscript. This top margin of 1 ¼ inch will begin on page 2 of Chapter 1.



All tables, figures, photographs, charts, and graphs should adhere to these margins.

### Spacing

Single spacing must be used for:

- All footnotes
- Quotations which are 4 lines or longer
- Within individual references in the bibliography (double space between each different entry)
- Long titles within the Table of Contents
- Long titles within the List of Tables
- Long titles within the List of Illustrations
- Titles of tables and captions of figures
- Long subheadings within texts

Double spacing must be used:

- For all document text
- Between paragraphs
- Between the page number at the top of the page and the first line of the text even if that text is a subheading
- Between each chapter heading and chapter title, e.g. CHAPTER 1 and the title of the chapter, e.g. INTRODUCTION

Triple spacing must be used:

- Between a subheading and the preceding text

Paragraphs should be indented 6 to 8 spaces, approximately one inch from the left margin. Use the same number of spaces for paragraph indentation throughout the document.

### Pagination

All numbered pages that appear before the text are consecutively numbered with lower-case Roman numerals. Beginning with the text, all remaining pages (including illustrations, appendices, and bibliography) are consecutively numbered with Arabic numerals. A thesis/dissertation of more than five hundred pages will be bound in two separate volumes with a title page in each; a title page must be supplied for each volume. Pagination is consecutive from volume to volume.

Pagination for the thesis/dissertation must follow this pattern:

Title page.....counted, not numbered  
Copyright page.....not counted, not numbered  
Dedication page.....not counted, not numbered  
Abstract..... counted, numbered  
Abstract (second copy).....not counted, not numbered  
Preface.....counted, numbered  
Acknowledgments..... counted, numbered  
Table of Contents.....counted, numbered  
List of Tables..... counted, numbered  
Text .....counted, numbered  
Appendices.....counted, numbered

Bibliography.....counted, numbered

The page number position must remain consistent throughout the manuscript and remains the same even if tables or figures are horizontal. With the exception of the major heading and preliminary pages, all pages are numbered at the top of the page within the 1¼ inch top margin, and the page numbers are either centered or flush with the right margin.

For major heading pages and preliminary pages, page numbers may be centered and at the bottom of the page. Page numbers appearing at the bottom of the page must be centered within the margins, that is, within the center of the text. Page numbers appearing at the bottom of the page must be just above the one-inch margin. Nothing should be printed in the one-inch margin at the bottom of the document. For preliminary pages (the abstract, acknowledgments, list of tables, list of illustrations), numbering begins with “ii” on the abstract page.

Pagination in the table of contents must accurately correspond to pagination in the text. Also the page numbers printed in the table of contents must be flush right (see example).

#### Footnotes and Bibliography

Footnotes must be arranged in numerical order at the bottom of the page. Footnote numbering may start over on each page, at the beginning of each chapter, or continue throughout the document. The bibliography appears last in the thesis/dissertation. Turabian’s Manual provides more information about footnotes and bibliography.

#### Headings

Headings and subheadings must be distinguished in a clear and consistent manner. The following style, which is drawn from Turabian, is always acceptable. Major headings are centered, capitalized, not underscored, and, if longer than 48 spaces, they are double spaced and put into inverted pyramid style.

First level subheadings are centered and underlined and if longer than 48 spaces they are single spaced and put into inverted pyramid style. Second level subheadings are the same as the first except that they are not underlined. Third level subheadings are flush left and underlined.

See Turabian’s Manual for additional information about other levels of subheadings.

#### Charts, Graphs, Tables, and Photographs (Illustrations)

All charts, graphs, tables, and photographs must be mounted or printed within the specified margins on 8½ inch by 11 inch paper of the kind specified previously. All illustrations must be placed as closely as possible to the text which refers to them. Figures are numbered in a logical and informative sequence. (‘Figures’ include all graphs and illustrations). Tables are numbered in a logical and informative sequence. Important equations should be numbered. Equations referred to in the text are numbered. Numbered equations are numbered in a logical and informative sequence. Illustrative material drawn in ink will reproduce satisfactorily in the published microform version of the thesis/dissertation, provided the ink is opaque and dark in color. Since all colors other than black appear gray in microform, use of crosshatching rather than varying colors is recommended for maps. Similarly, graphs are clearer if reproduced with symbols rather than colors. Photographs should be originals. Black and white is recommended; color photography is acceptable. Photographs must be

mounted (dry mounting is recommended) within the margins. Materials which exceed the standard paper size should be reduced if it is possible to reproduce them and retain their legibility. Materials which cannot be reduced may be folded in with as few folds as possible. Folded materials must have margins at least one inch from the right edge and 1½ inches from the left edge. Lengthy descriptions of any illustrations that cannot be placed on the same page with the illustrations must be placed on a counted, half-title page immediately preceding the numbered page with the illustration.

#### Media, Computer, and Other Nonprint Materials

Materials such as computer disks, audiovisual tapes, microforms, or other formats must be submitted in appropriate storage containers. The containers must be labeled with a description of the contents and instructions for use such as equipment needs or software and hardware requirements.

#### Copies

The original manuscript must be submitted to the University Library. A department, school or college may require a second copy.

#### • **Copyright Protection for Your Thesis/Dissertation**

The student is strongly encouraged to register the thesis/dissertation for copyright protection directly through the U.S. Copyright Office or through University Microfilms for a fee and after completion of an agreement form. A copyright page must be included for any thesis/dissertation to be copyrighted.

APPENDIX A

**Sample Letter to Copyright Owner**

Date  
Name  
Address

Dear Mr/Ms:

I am writing to request permission to reprint the following material from your publication:

Author/Title/Date of publication:  
Pages as they appear in your publication:  
Other identifying information and remarks:

This material is to appear as originally published (any changes or deletions are noted on the reverse side of this letter) in my thesis/dissertation which I am writing at American University and which will be published by University Microfilms, Incorporated.

Author (Editor)/Title:  
Proposed date of publication:  
Remarks:

If you are the copyright holder, may I have your permission to reprint the above material in the thesis/dissertation **and UMI be given permission to sell copies of the thesis/dissertation containing the indicated material?** If you do not indicate otherwise, we will use the usual scholarly form of acknowledgment, including publisher, author, title, etc.

If you are not the copyright holder, or if additional permission is needed for world rights from another source, please so indicate.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please sign the form on this letter and return it to me at your earliest convenience. A duplicate copy of this letter and form is enclosed for your files.

Sincerely yours,

[signature]  
[printed name]

---

The above request is hereby approved on the conditions specified below, and on the understanding that full credit will be given to the source.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

### Sample Pages

Thesis Title Page .....	12
Dissertation Title Page.....	13
Copyright Page .....	14
Abstract.....	15
Table of Contents.....	16

TITLE OF THESIS TYPED IN CAPITAL LETTERS DOUBLE-SPACED  
AND CENTERED ON THE PAGE

By

John William Doe

Submitted to the

Faculty of the [College or School]\*

of American University

in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts [Science]

In

[Discipline]

Chair:

\_\_\_\_\_  
[chair's signature here]

[chair's name typed here]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[committee member's signatures]

[alternating with typed names here]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of the College or School

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

20xx

American University

Washington, D.C. 20016

\*College of Arts and Sciences  
School of International Service  
School of Public Affairs

Margins must conform to the rest of the thesis, and faculty must sign in black ink within those margins.

TITLE OF DISSERTATION TYPED IN CAPITAL LETTERS DOUBLE- SPACED

AND CENTERED ON THE PAGE

By

Jane Willa Doe

Submitted to the

Faculty of the [College or School]\*

of American University

in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree

of Doctor of Philosophy [Education]

In

[Discipline]

Chair:

[chair's signature here]

[chair's name typed here]

[committee member's signatures ]

[alternating with typed names here]

---

Dean of the College or School

---

Date

20xx

American University

Washington, D.C. 20016

\*College of Arts and Sciences  
School of International Service  
School of Public Affairs

Margins must conform to the rest of the thesis, and faculty must sign in black ink within those margins.

© COPYRIGHT

by

[Name]

[Year]

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



TITLE TYPED IN CAPITAL LETTERS DOUBLE-SPACED

AND CENTERED ON THE PAGE

BY

[Name]

ABSTRACT

[Body of Abstract]

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iii
LIST OF TABLES.....	v
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....	vi
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. TRADITIONAL RESEARCH.....	18
3. THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING.....	42
4. ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK.....	73
Rationale for the Research Method	
Empirical Data and their Collection	
Data Analysis	
5. SOLUTIONS.....	130
6. CONCLUSION.....	185
APPENDICES.....	200
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	220