



# INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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## **GRADUATE STUDIES** Thesis and Dissertation Handbook

Approved, Graduate Council, 11/8/95

Revisions Approved, Graduate Council, 9/26/08

Approved with Friendly Amendments, Faculty Senate Executive, 10/70/08

Approved, Faculty Senate, 10/24/2008

Revisions Approved, Graduate Council, 11/3/09

Edited, 6/5/23

## **HANDBOOK POLICIES**

The style selected by the candidate should conform to the standards of the candidate's discipline and should follow a style manual recognized by the discipline. The thesis or dissertation committee, chaired by the candidate's major advisor, shall be the ultimate authority in matters regarding the content of a thesis or dissertation.

The student's home academic college, will be responsible for monitoring adherence to accepted style and final editing before the thesis/dissertation is presented to the Office of the Registrar.

Two basic thesis/dissertation formats will be accepted by the student's home academic college: the *traditional format* and the *publication-ready format*.

All theses and dissertations must be submitted as PDF documents to the Office of the Registrar. The candidate is responsible for providing a publication-ready document that has been carefully edited and reviewed by the academic department and home college.

Doctoral dissertations must be uploaded to ProQuest as the final publication step. Indiana State University formatting requirements are based on ProQuest publication guidelines, with additional requirements for consistency across all Indiana State University manuscripts.

## **ELEMENTS OF A THESIS/DISSERTATION**

### **Order of a Thesis or Dissertation**

CURRICULUM VITA (for Dissertation only), unnumbered

TITLE PAGE (Counted as small Roman numeral i), unnumbered

APPROVAL SHEET (small Roman numeral ii)

ABSTRACT (small Roman numeral iii)

PREFACE (not required; small Roman numeral in sequence)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (not required; small Roman numeral in sequence)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (small Roman numeral in sequence)

LIST OF TABLES (if needed; (small Roman numeral in sequence)

LIST OF FIGURES (if needed; (small Roman numeral in sequence)

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS (if needed; (small Roman numeral in sequence)

CONTENT (Arabic numerals on every page)

DIVISIONS, such as PUBLICATION-READY MANUSCRIPT and APPENDIX, or CHAPTERS, such as INTRODUCTION, METHOD, RESULTS, DISCUSSION, and APPENDIX, or another appropriate arrangement of content into major sections  
HALF-TITLE PAGE(S)\* (if they are used)

BIBLIOGRAPHY (or REFERENCES or other heading as determined by style manual)  
APPENDIX/APPENDICES (may precede BIBLIOGRAPHY)

\* Half-title pages may be used before the Publication-Ready Manuscript, Bibliography/References and Appendix/Appendices. If used before one section, they must be used before the others; however, half-title pages are not ordinarily used before each separate Appendix. The text appears in all caps, centered both vertically and horizontally.

## **THE FRONT MATTER**

The sections prior to the content constitute the front matter of the thesis or dissertation.

### **Curriculum Vita**

A concise curriculum vita (CV) must be included with a dissertation. This CV is a professional rather than a personal biography. Personal information such as address and telephone numbers should not be included in the CV as these are subject to change and the thesis or dissertation will be published. This page is not numbered, nor is there reference to it in the Table of Contents.

### **Title Page**

A title page must be prepared. Points to be noticed are listed:

- Except for the designation of the degree, there is no difference between the title page for a thesis and for a dissertation.
- The title page is centered vertically on a single page.
- If a title must be carried over to a second line, use the inverted pyramid form; i.e., the second line is made shorter than the first and centered below the first line of the title using single-spaced lines.
- No title should ordinarily require more than three lines; if longer, it is recommended that the title be shortened. If four lines are absolutely necessary, keep the inverted pyramid form using single-spaced lines.
- The dividing lines are centered and are approximately two inches in length.
- The date represents the month and year in which the degree will be awarded, not the date of the completion of the paper. Degrees are awarded in May, August, and December.
- The copyright notice (if included) is the last entry on the title page.
- The title page is not numbered.

### **Approval Sheet**

An approval sheet, numbered page ii, must be prepared according to the template provided on the Office of the Registrar's web site.

**Abstract**

An abstract (numbered page iii) should be a concise statement of the content of the paper and (a) present the problem of the investigation, (b) discuss the materials and methods employed, and (c) state the conclusions reached. Your abstract will also be submitted separately as part of the ProQuest upload. More information is available at the [ProQuest site](#).

**Preface and/or Acknowledgments**

Except in the special circumstances given below, either a Preface or Acknowledgments or both may be included in the paper, but *neither is required*. If included they will be numbered sequentially with small Roman numerals. If employed, the Preface should contain a brief statement of the author's aim, scope, or purpose in writing the paper. Acknowledgements should recognize only real indebtedness. It is not necessary (although permissible) to thank family, friends, or the members of one's committee. Acknowledgment *must* be made of any grants or other aid (especially financial) received in support of the investigation. The Preface and Acknowledgments may be combined under either heading if quite brief.

**Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, List of Illustrations**

Every thesis or dissertation must have a Table of Contents, which is numbered with small Roman numerals. A good rule to follow is to include all major headings and all first-level subheadings. Other levels may be included if they facilitate quick reference to specific subsections of the paper. There must be exact correspondence between the entries in the Table of Contents and the text of the paper. There need not be correspondence between formatting, so if a heading appears in italics, the Table of Contents need not have that entry in italics.

The tables and figures used in the paper must be listed immediately following the Table of Contents; moreover, Tables precede Figures. If there are large numbers of one type of illustration, these may properly be separated and listed by themselves, e.g., List of Maps, List of Graphs.

## THE CONTENT

### Divisions or Chapters

All papers must be organized into sections, which are specified in the Table of Contents. There must be exact correspondence between entries in the Table of Contents and the text, including page numbers.

### Bibliography

Any paper of thesis/dissertation caliber must be documented. The form of documentation used depends on the instructions of the particular style manual adopted by a department. It must be remembered that where a style manual, such as APA or MLA, gives alternate forms for documentation, the one selected must be used *consistently* throughout the paper.

### Appendix(es)

An appendix contains material supportive of the paper but set aside because of its bulky nature or because it is presented in a style inappropriate to the narrative flow of the thesis/dissertation.

## THE FORMAT

### Margins and Spacing

Margins will be spaced at 1 inch on all sides. This setting applies to all material except page numbers (see next section for page numbering requirements).

Double space the following: abstract, preface, acknowledgements, table of contents, and chapter/division contents. Single space footnotes/endnotes, bibliographic entries (with double space between entries), and lists in appendices. Lengthy quoted material (i.e., block quotes) captions, and items in tables, lists, graphs, and charts should also be single spaced.

No extra space should appear between paragraphs. You may need to adjust your word processing program's default settings to remove extra spacing before or after paragraphs.

A page must not end with a heading, so the bottom margin of certain pages may be greater than 1 inch if it is necessary to move a heading to the top of the following page.

Major sections will start on a new page. The section heading, such as CHAPTER 1 or CHAPTER 2, will be centered between the left and right margins on the first line. This heading does not appear in the Table of Contents.

In those disciplines using chapter headings such as INTRODUCTION or METHODS or PUBLICATION-READY MANUSCRIPT, the chapter title (all in capitals) appears on the next double-spaced line below the chapter number. The chapter title is included in the Table of Contents. The first line of text begins on the next double-spaced line below the last line of the heading.

Left justification with a ragged right edge should be used in the text. Do not use full justification.

**Font/Typeface**

Either 12 pt. Times New Roman or 10 pt. Arial may be used. Text in figures or appendices may use different fonts; they will be judged suitable if they convey the information intended, are legible, and are neatly presented.

**Order and Pagination**

All page numbers, both Roman and Arabic, are placed in the upper right corner of the page,  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches from the edge of the page. NOTE: These instructions take precedence over all pagination instructions given in other style manuals.

Beginning with the title page and continuing through the entire text, every page must be accounted for and numbered; however, a number *does not* appear on the title page. Pages in the front matter following the title page are numbered with lower case Roman numerals (i.e., ii, iii); pages of the text are numbered with Arabic numerals (i.e., 1, 2, 3). For pages in landscape orientation, page numbers will appear on the upper right corner of the page as well, suitable for viewing electronically.

**Indentation**

Paragraph indentation attained by a tab set at 0.5 inches from the left margin is recommended for the paper.

**Table, Figure, and Illustration Legends**

Tables, Figures, and Illustrations normally appear immediately following their mention in the text. Text may be continued before the insertion of the table or figure if needed to avoid breaking the table into two pages or leaving more than 2 inches of white space at the bottom of the page. Format for tables must come from the style in use. The table or figure number and title will appear in the List of Tables and List of Figures exactly as it appears in the text, except for format features like italics. Some styles require brief or complete explanation in the figure legend. This further explanation should not appear in the List of Tables, Figures, or Illustrations.

**Footnotes/Endnotes**

Footnotes or endnotes should be consistent with the style manual selected for the thesis or dissertation. Single spacing is permitted, but all footnotes must fit within the margins and, if possible, be completed on a single page. As a general rule the default footnotes of your computer program will be acceptable, although the type size must not be reduced.

**Copyright**

Written permission to include copyrighted material in a thesis or dissertation is essential. Images, diagrams, assessment tools, or other materials that the student has produced do not require copyright permission. Images, diagrams, assessment tools, and other material that was not produced by the student is considered to be copyrighted, and written permission to use that material in a thesis or dissertation is required. The use of copyrighted material in a thesis or dissertation does not qualify as “fair use” as it would for a paper turned in for a class assignment. A thesis or dissertation is a published work and the inclusion of copyrighted material in a published work without permission is academically dishonest and illegal. Further guidance on

copyright is available from [ProQuest](#).

**Photographs**

It is imperative that students have permission in writing to use images that have been copyrighted, including any photographs not created by the student. Any identifiable person in a photograph must consent to its publication. This consent will appear in an appendix.

**Plagiarism**

Every thesis or dissertation must be submitted to a form of plagiarism detection software for analysis and all issues of questionable attribution must be resolved. This is the responsibility of the student and the thesis or dissertation chair. Any finding of plagiarism will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Integrity. A confirmed case of plagiarism will result in failure of the thesis or dissertation requirement and may result in rescinding an awarded degree.

**Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Indiana State University requires that theses and dissertations be submitted electronically in PDF/A (PDF Archive) format. Submission guidelines are located on the Office of the Registrar's website.

### Theses and Dissertation Format Check-List

- \_\_\_\_\_ Left Margin 1”
- \_\_\_\_\_ Right Margin 1”
- \_\_\_\_\_ Top Margin 1”
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bottom Margin 1” except to prevent a stand-alone heading
- \_\_\_\_\_ Curriculum Vita
- \_\_\_\_\_ Title Page accurate as per sample
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dates on Title and Approval Page are the month and year of graduation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Approval Page accurate as per sample
- \_\_\_\_\_ Page numbers consistently positioned on all pages except title page
- \_\_\_\_\_ Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures entries and page numbers are exactly as in the text
- \_\_\_\_\_ Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures leading dots are all the same
- \_\_\_\_\_ Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures page numbers are at the right margin
- \_\_\_\_\_ No stand-alone headings at the bottom of the page
- \_\_\_\_\_ Style, such as APA, MLA, or Chicago is applied appropriately and consistently
- \_\_\_\_\_ No spelling or grammar errors
- \_\_\_\_\_ Extra Abstract