Formatting your Thesis or Dissertation and Preparing for Final Submission

Janet Witt, Thesis/Dissertation Reviewer, Graduate College
University of Northern Iowa
Updated July 2015
Agenda

Formatting and Preparing your thesis for submission

Item 1  Formatting your thesis
Help! Where do I begin?

Item 2  The Preview Meeting
What is it? How do I know when to schedule? What do I need to have done prior to the meeting?

Item 3  Preparing the Submission Materials
What are the deadlines? What is required for electronic submission? What else do I need to prepare?

Item 4  Corrections
What if I made some mistakes in the formatting? Can I fix them? Will I still be able to graduate?

Item 5  Last Minute Details
Why do I need to fill out a Permission Form for the Library? Why does my Advisement Report still say my thesis requirement is not satisfied after I have submitted it?

Item 6  Final Approval
Time to celebrate! You did it!

University of Northern Iowa Graduate College
Help! Where do I begin?
The Graduate College website is full of useful information!

• www.grad.uni.edu
  • Click on Thesis & Dissertation
    • Important Dates/Deadlines
    • Thesis & Dissertation Manual
    • Thesis & Dissertation Forms
      • Thesis (Masters degrees and Specialist in Education)
      • Dissertation (Doctor of Education and Doctor of Industrial Technology)
Thesis/Dissertation Committee Approval Forms

As soon as you form your committee, you need to submit the appropriate committee approval form. The Graduate College must have up-to-date committee information on file.

**THESIS COMMITTEE APPROVAL FORM**

- Available on the Graduate College website.
- Type the required information on the form and print. (Handwritten forms are not accepted.)
- Obtain the signatures of your advisor or committee chair and your department’s graduate coordinator or department head.
- Send the form to the Graduate College for final approval.
- The form will be signed by the Graduate Dean and returned to the department when approved.

**DISSERTATION COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

- EdD doctoral students: Committee approval form needs the student’s signature in addition to the committee chair, co-chair if applicable, department head, and Dean of the College of Education.
- DIT doctoral students: need signature of graduate coordinator and department head.
Formatting and Style Manuals

Everyone follows the guidelines in the Graduate College Thesis and Dissertation Manual

- Each Department also has an approved style manual to use in addition to the Graduate College Manual. Remember, whenever there’s a discrepancy in formatting requirements, the rules in the Graduate College Manual take precedence over the department style manual.
The first few pages of the Manual include an Introduction; General Nature of the Thesis Option; Responsibilities of the student, the advisor, and the Graduate College; Human Subjects, etc. Please read these sections before you begin writing!

Take special note of the section on page 4, entitled Scope of the Manual. You must follow the style manual in your discipline except where there is a discrepancy with the Graduate College manual. In those cases, the rules in the Graduate College Manual take precedence.
Format and Style – Fonts (page 5)
The next several pages deal with more specifics about format and style.

• Use the same font throughout the entire thesis. Some suggested fonts are Times New Roman, Arial, and Courier. **Do not use script fonts**, wingdings, etc. that may be hard to read. Font size may be either 10 or 12. A smaller size font may be used within a large table, etc. in order to make it fit on the page. All headings and titles must be in the same font as the text.

• The pages within the Appendix may have a different font or a different size font but the headings must be the same font in the same size as the rest of the thesis.

• If you have a question about the acceptability of a font, please contact the Graduate College.
Paper

Page 6

- Paper for the final copy of your thesis must be 24#, white, 8 ½ x 11 inch, acid-free, 25% or 100% cotton. Any brand is acceptable as long as it meets these standards. DO NOT print the draft copy on the special paper. It is more expensive than regular paper.

- UNI has a contract with Copyworks in Cedar Falls. Students will pay a discounted price if they go to the Office of University Relations and obtain a work order prior to printing.

- The final copy should be printed on one side of the paper only. Do not bind, staple, fold, or hole-punch the final copy that you submit to the Graduate College.

- Be sure it is printed with a laser printer.
Margins and Spacing

Page 6

• The following margins must be maintained on ALL pages:
  • Left margin (binding edge) 1 ½ inches
  • Right margin 1 inch (do not right-justify any of the text)
  • Top margin 1 ¼ inches
  • Bottom margin 1 ¼ inches, minimum (sometimes the bottom margin will be wider)

• Nothing except the page number should appear in the margins.
• Set these margins when you first begin writing your paper! It will save a lot of reformatting later.
• Double spacing is required for all of the text.
• Exceptions include block quotes, headings more than one line in length, references, and material within longer tables.
Page Numbering

Page 7

• With the exception of the copyright page, abstract title page, and abstract, all pages must be assigned a page number.

• The preliminary pages are numbered with lower case Roman numerals and all of the pages in the body of the thesis, the references, and appendices are numbered with Arabic numerals.

• Page numbers must be in the upper right hand corner of the page, ¾ to 1 inch from the top edge, and on the 1 inch right margin.

• The thesis or dissertation title page is counted as page i, but does not have a page number printed on it.

• In a thesis, the next page is the approval page and it is always numbered ii.
The complete list of the order of the pages is on page 7. We’ll discuss each one in more detail.

• The Copyright page is first. See page 8. It does not have a page number or a title. Center the following information both horizontally and vertically:

  Copyright by
  YOUR NAME IN CAPITAL LETTERS
  2015
  All Rights Reserved

• Use the same font and size of font as the remainder of your document.
• Though it is optional, you are encouraged to add a copyright page to the beginning of your thesis or dissertation whether you register the copyright or not. It signals to your readers that you are the copyright owner and that you know your rights. It also indicates the year you first published the project.
• The Graduate College does not offer copyright registration service, but you are welcome to do so on your own if you wish.
Abstract and Thesis Title Pages – Masters & EdS degrees

These are described on page 8 with examples on pages 21 and 22.

• The Thesis title is placed just below the 1 ¼ inch top margin, centered, in all capital letters. If it is more than one line in length it should be double-spaced and arranged as an inverted pyramid.
• Make sure to include the correct degree being sought.
• The month and year at the bottom of the page should reflect the semester of approval, not the date of the defense or submission.
• The title pages do not have page numbers printed on them, although the thesis title page counts as page i.
Abstract and Dissertation Title Pages – EdD & DT

These are described on page 8; see examples on pages 23 and 24.

• The title pages for a dissertation differ from the thesis title pages in that they also serve as the approval/signature pages.

The text of the Abstract will follow the Abstract title page.

• It should present a brief account of the thesis or dissertation that is readable, well-organized, and self-contained. The maximum length is 350 words, or approximately 1 ½ pages, double spaced.

• The first page will have the heading ABSTRACT in all capital letters, centered.

• It should not have subtitles or citations.

• It does not have a page number.
Thesis Approval Page (Masters & EdS Thesis only)

Described on page 9; example on page 25

- The thesis approval page must be typed by the student using the same font as the text of the paper.
- It is always page ii of the thesis; page number is printed on it.
- Committee members will sign on the appropriate line when they give final approval after the defense.
- The Graduate Dean will sign upon final approval of the thesis by the Graduate College.
- A doctoral dissertation does not have a separate approval page as the title pages serve as the signature pages.
- On all approval pages, remember to replace (type name) with the name of the committee member who will be signing on that line.
The rest of the preliminary pages:
Both theses and dissertations may contain the following:

• Dedication and/or Acknowledgments
These are both optional. If included, they need lower case Roman numeral page numbers.

• Table of Contents
Use “dot leaders” formatting or an automatic Table of Contents program so the page numbers are perfectly straight along the right margin.
The Table of Contents only lists the parts of the document that follow it. Do not list any previous pages.

• List of Tables/List of Figures (if applicable)
Again, format so the page numbers are straight along the 1 inch right margin.
Tables, Figures, and other Illustrations

Explained in more detail on page 10 in the Graduate College Manual.

- A table contains material arranged in columns.
- Tables may be either vertical (portrait) or horizontal (landscape).
- Tables must have a table number and title, usually at the top, using the same font as the rest of the text.
- Material within the table may use a smaller font if necessary to fit it on the page.
- Insert as soon as possible following its first mention in the text.
- Must not be divided if it would fit on one page.
- Separate the table from the text by leaving 3 blank lines, or two double spaces, both above and below the table.
- The guidelines in the departmental style manual may be followed when formatting tables.
Figures, Illustrations, Graphs, etc.

Page 10 in the Graduate College Manual.

• A figure may be a diagram, drawing, graph, chart, map, photograph, etc.

• Figures must have a figure number and caption, usually below the figure.

• Color may be used in tables and figures. Use a good quality laser printer or color photocopier for the printed copy.

• If a table or figure is placed in landscape position, the top will be on the binding edge. The page number must face the same direction and be in the same position as the page numbers on the rest of the pages.

• Tables and Figures must stay within the same margins as required on text pages.
Headings and Subheadings


CHAPTER 1

CENTERED UPPERCASE CHAPTER TITLE

Centered, Underlined, Uppercase, and Lowercase Major Heading

Flush Left, Underlined, Uppercase, and Lowercase Minor Heading

Indented, underlined, lowercase minor division heading ending with a period. Text for this paragraph follows on the same line as the Minor Division heading.

• Your thesis may not have this many levels of subheadings.
• Each chapter must begin at the top of a new page.
• Subheadings may appear anywhere on the page but must not stand alone at the bottom of a page; at least 2 lines of text must follow.
• If your thesis has an Appendix, it will need a title formatted similar to the chapter titles. Include them in the Table of Contents.
References/Bibliography/Works Cited

Page 12 in the manual

• The reference pages are placed immediately after the final page of the text, and the page numbers continue throughout all of the pages.
• Begin the first page of the references with the appropriate heading in all capital letters below the 1 ¼ inch top margin.
• Single space each entry; leave a double space between entries.
• Use hanging indent format.
• Follow the latest edition of the style manual required by your department (see pages 18-19 of the Graduate College manual) for the information within the entries in the reference list.
• Each reference must have at least one citation within the thesis.
• Each citation in the text must have a matching reference.
Master of Music Recital Abstract

Page 13 in the thesis manual

• Master of Music students in the School of Music perform a recital as part of their thesis requirement.
• A written abstract is required as evidence of the recital.
• The 350-word limit does not apply, although a recital abstract is usually much shorter than a traditional thesis.
• Page numbers are optional.
• A CD of the recital and a copy of the recital program must also be submitted with the final copy of the recital.
• A separate approval form is needed which indicates approval of the recital, in addition to the thesis approval form we discussed earlier which approves the written abstract.
Studio Thesis or Public History Project

See ABSTRACT on Pages 8 - 9, and Studio Thesis on page 13

• A studio thesis consists of a creative visual work rather than a manuscript.
• The 350-word limit for the abstract does not apply.
• The abstract will describe the products or performances represented in the thesis project.
• If an exhibit or performance was presented, information should be given about the location, date, etc.
• Digital images may be included.
• Obtain special instructions from your department.
Languages and Literatures Creative Thesis

Consult with your advisor for more information.

• A creative thesis in the Department of Languages and Literatures may consist of short stories, a short novel, poetry, etc.
• The same margin requirements apply.
• “Chapters” are not required, although a consistent format should be used for the titles of separate works contained in the thesis.
• A Table of Contents is required if the thesis contains more than one work with separate headings.
• Does not usually have a reference list or bibliography.
Submission Requirements


• One copy of the entire thesis or dissertation printed on the special thesis paper

• In addition to one printed copy, the thesis or dissertation must be submitted electronically. It should be formatted in Microsoft Word as a single document (do not convert it to a pdf). Using your UNI email, attach it to an email to janet.witt@uni.edu

• Minimum of 3 approval pages, printed on the special thesis paper, with original signatures of all committee members.

• Three blank sheets of thesis paper.

• Graduate College Submission Form (available on the Graduate College website; no signatures needed)
Submission requirements (continued)

- University Record Sheet (Master and EdS students)
- Dissertation Approval Form (Doctoral students)
- Draft of thesis/dissertation we reviewed during your preview (unless your preview was completed entirely by email)
- Self-addressed label (provided at preview) for return of extra approval pages to the student after final approval
- Agreement and Permission to Preserve Thesis/Dissertation (sent to student at their UNI email after final approval; the Registrar’s Office will not be notified of final approval until this is complete)
- A $25 binding fee will be charged to each student’s Ubill after submission of the thesis/dissertation.
- EdD students only: Survey of Earned Doctorates, to be completed electronically.
Thesis Title Pages – Masters & EdS degree

Take a look at pages 21 and 22 in the manual.

- The Abstract title page and Thesis title page are exactly the same except the first line of the center section. This line indicates whether it is the Abstract or the main body of the Thesis.
- The top line (the thesis title) should rest just under the 1⅛ inch top margin. The bottom line (the semester of submission) should rest just above the 1⅛ inch bottom margin.
- The title should be typed in all capital letters and centered. If it is more than one line long, divide it so that the lines form an inverted (or upside down) pyramid, and double space it.
- The center section should be centered in the middle of the page.
- Make sure you include the correct degree… Master of Arts, Master of Science, Specialist in Education, etc.
- The date at the bottom reflects the month and year of the semester of thesis approval, not when you defend or submit the thesis. It will be either May, July, or December of the current year.
Dissertation Title Pages – EdD & DT degree

See pages 23 and 24 in the Manual. The dissertation title pages also serve as the approval pages.
The thesis approval page is only for Masters and EdS candidates. It is always page ii and comes immediately after the thesis title page. It should be typed as shown with the top, left and right margins set according to the specifications we discussed earlier. The bottom margin will be more than 1 ¼ inches. Add your name on the top line, followed by the title of your thesis and your degree. Insert each committee members’ name under the appropriate signature line in place of (type name). The committee members will sign when they give their final approval following the thesis defense. The Graduate Dean will sign after the thesis has received final approval by the Graduate College.
After the thesis approval page in a thesis, and after the dissertation title page in a dissertation, the next pages may be the dedication and/or acknowledgments, if you choose to include them. They are both optional. If you include them, they will have lower case Roman numeral page numbers.

Next comes the Table of Contents with the next Roman numeral page number.

The Table of Contents should be formatted with “dot leaders” running from the end of title to the page number. The page numbers should be perfectly straight along the right margin. Instructions for formatting the dot leaders are on page 28 of the manual. The dots insert automatically when you hit “tab” after the title. Then you type the appropriate page number.
Even though these examples are shown on the same page in the Thesis/Dissertation Manual, they should be typed on separate pages in your thesis or dissertation, if you have both tables and figures in your document.

The same “Dot Leader” instructions will work to format these pages also.
Instructions for Formatting Dot Leaders

This is the format to follow for right-justifying page numbers for Table of Contents. This also works for the List of Tables and the List of Figures.

Set left margin at 1.5 and right margin at 1.0.

Using Microsoft Word 2010 or 2007, click on Paragraph, and then Tabs (in the bottom left corner of the Paragraph dialog box)

In Word 2003, click on Format, then Paragraph, and then Tabs (in the bottom left corner of the Paragraph dialog box)

Type the tab settings as follows:

0 5  click on alignment left, leader none (1), set
0 5  click on alignment left, leader none (1), set
0 5  click on alignment left, leader none (1), set
6   click on alignment RIGHT, leader (2), okay

After typing the first chapter heading, click on “Tab” and the dots will go in automatically: after which you can type the page number. Repeat for the remainder of the headings.

Following the above format, this is what your Table of Contents will look like:

CHAPTER 1. CHAPTER TITLE ....................................................... 1
  Major Heading ........................................................................ 10
  Major Heading ........................................................................ 23
  Minor division heading .............................................................. 41

Notice the right justification of the page numbers. Typing a row of periods across the page will not result in a straight right margin!

Hint: If you copy and paste the sample Table of Contents from page 28 of this manual into your Word document, you should be able to use it as a template to type in your own headings and page numbers.
Formatting Section Breaks

Section Breaks are necessary to format the document in one Word file and change page numbering styles; some pages have no page numbers, some have Roman numerals, and others have Arabic numerals. Section breaks are also needed if some pages are in Landscape format.

Instructions for both theses and dissertations are included on pages 29 and 30.
That completes our discussion of the Manual.

Now, you’ve been working with your committee, completing your research, writing your paper, and you feel like you’re getting a good draft of your thesis or dissertation written... what comes next?

It’s time to schedule your thesis/dissertation preview with the Graduate College!
The Preview Meeting
How will I know when it’s time to schedule?

• The Department sends the Graduate College a list of the students who are planning to complete their thesis during the current semester.
  • Communicate with your thesis chair and/or the department secretary to be sure your name is on the list of students that is sent to the Graduate College.
  • You will be required to use your UNI email address for electronic submission so make sure you are able to log in to it and then check it regularly. This will ensure you receive other timely communications from the Graduate College as well.
  • Your committee approval form must be on file in the Graduate College before you can schedule your preview.

• The Thesis Reviewer sends information regarding the preview to those students.
  • Deadlines to schedule.
  • Ideally the thesis should be nearly finished prior to the preview meeting.
  • In order to make the best use of our time at the preview, follow the required formatting guidelines from the very beginning!
Preparing for the Preview Meeting
What to do to make the best use of our time during the meeting.

• Previews may be scheduled from the beginning of the semester until 8 weeks before commencement.
• Deadlines are posted on the Graduate College website.
• Schedule early! Dates near the deadline fill up first.

• The more of your thesis you have completed by your preview, the better.
• If it is not completely finished, you should have at least your title pages, approval and other preliminary pages; at least 3 chapters; samples of tables, figures, and references.

• Bring a printed draft copy to the preview. We will look at it together and make notes about the formatting.
• Plan on meeting for about an hour.
Let’s review the Submission Materials
See a more detailed listing in the Thesis Manual (pages 14-17) and also the handout you will receive at your Preview meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One printed copy of entire thesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Special paper required: white, 24#, 25 or 100% cotton, acid-free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Available at Copy Works and other retail stores and print shops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approval pages, minimum of 3 signed by all committee members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Thesis approval page is always page ii of thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dissertation approval page is abstract title page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dissertation title page is also a signature page</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electronic copy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Attach your paper as a Word document to an email to <a href="mailto:janet.witt@uni.edu">janet.witt@uni.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate College Submission Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Record Sheet (thesis) or Dissertation Approval Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• These forms are available on the Graduate College website.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A fee of $25 will be applied to your U-Bill after you submit your thesis or dissertation. This covers the cost of binding your paper document and processing the electronic copy for the UNI Library.

Doctoral students in the College of Education will also need to fill out the Survey of Earned Doctorates. The link for it is in the list of final submission requirements. It needs to be submitted electronically.
The Final Submission
Procedure for you and for the Graduate College:

Before you Submit Your Thesis:
You must complete Preview and Defense, and receive approval of all Committee Members prior to submission.
Plan ahead and don’t miss the deadline! No exceptions!

Thesis Reviewer reviews all theses/dissertations in the order in which they were submitted.
Keep watching your UNI email for status.
You will be notified if any corrections are needed.

Student will be notified if corrections are needed before final approval can be given.
You will have about 2 weeks to make corrections.
Reprint corrected pages using the same kind of thesis paper as used for original.
It is not usually necessary to reprint the entire thesis!

If a thesis or dissertation is submitted after the final submission deadline, it will be held for graduation in the next semester.
Requests for extensions to the deadlines are not granted.

University of Northern Iowa Graduate College
Important Last Minute Details
You’re almost done now...

The printed and electronic copies of your thesis will be retained by UNI’s Rod Library. The printed copy will be bound. You have some options of when and to whom you would like the electronic copy to be available. You can also choose not to make it available electronically if you prefer. You must access the Permission Form in Google Docs by logging in with your CAT ID. The link will be emailed to you when your thesis is ready for final approval.

Corrections
• Corrected pages will be inserted by the thesis reviewer.

• If no additional corrections are needed, the thesis or dissertation is ready for final approval.

Library’s Permission Form
• The link for the Library’s Permission Form will be sent to student’s UNI email address.

• Select the options you wish for the Library to make your thesis available electronically.

• Submit form electronically in Google docs.

Final Approval
• The Graduate Dean signs your approval pages. One will be bound in the paper copy of your thesis, one will be sent to your department, and all extras are sent to the student.

• The Registrar’s Office and department are notified of your final approval.
Common Errors (and how to avoid them)

- Incorrect margins (review page 6 in Graduate College Manual)
- Page numbering (learn to create Section Breaks in Word)
- Incorrect page numbers listed in Table of Contents, List of Tables, and/or List of Figures (do a final check of these pages when all other revisions have been made)
- Citations and references not formatted according to the style manual approved by the department (pay attention to detail)
- Typos in citations/references; incorrect years, misspelled names, etc. (proofread your work)
- No reference to match citations, or no citations to match a reference in the reference list (at least one citation is needed for every reference and a reference is needed for every citation; delete any references that are not cited)
Suggestions for Success

• Plan ahead. Allow enough time for preview and defense. Don’t miss the submission deadline! No exceptions!
• Follow guidelines carefully the first time – eliminate errors before they happen on final copies.
• Read your UNI email so you don’t miss announcements, progress of final review, etc.
• Remember the Graduate College Thesis Reviewer does not read for content and grammar.
• When making corrections, check to see if any corrections made on one page change the following page(s); sometimes it may be necessary to reprint additional pages so the text flows properly from one page to the next. Avoid the need to make corrections twice.
Theses/Dissertations now on UNI ScholarWorks website!

If you’d like to view the theses and dissertations on the website, visit [www.scholarworks.uni.edu/etd/](http://www.scholarworks.uni.edu/etd/)
Final Approval! You made it!

When you receive your signed personal copy of your approval page(s) in the mail you will know your thesis has received final approval. Congratulations!

That completes the presentation.
If you have questions please contact janet.witt@uni.edu