



## Guidelines

### FOR THESES, DISSERTATIONS, AND RECORDS OF STUDY

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The Thesis and Dissertation Services Office is here to help you produce a high-quality thesis, dissertation, or record of study. Whereas your chair and committee oversee content, we work with you to ensure that your document meets Texas A&M University’s guidelines for formatting and style. We encourage students to use the [Overleaf template](#) to ensure consistency, though a Word version is also available.

The finished manuscript is to be an independent professional effort. Students must cogently express their ideas, show an overall understanding of the literature in the field, and present clearly the method, significance, and results of the research. Full documentation and useful tables and/or figures are important. The document should not be longer than is necessary to present the research thoroughly. Document length can vary widely depending on the research topic, academic discipline, and the degree sought.

Theses, dissertations, and records of study should be presented as a single unit, and continuity from chapter to chapter is important. In a traditional style, students write five chapters, typically titled Introduction, Literature Review, Method, Results, and Summary and Conclusions, respectively. The References or Bibliography follow these chapters. Alternatively, students may choose to follow a Journal Article style, where studies or experiments may be presented in separate chapters. Each chapter may have subdivisions such as Introduction, Literature Review, Method, Results, Summary and Conclusions. References may be at the end of the main text or at the end of each chapter. The Thesis and Dissertation Services [handout](#) on journal article style theses or dissertations provides additional guidance.

All students should plan on attending a pre-submittal conference, with the schedule available at <http://grad.tamu.edu>. The conference includes an overview of submittal and clearance requirements, deadlines and formatting requirements prior to the final defense and before the manuscript is submitted.

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## GENERAL GUIDELINES

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**Style.** The student must consult with the department (see pg. 11) and/or committee to select an appropriate style guide to be used in writing the thesis. Note: Whenever there are differences in format and layout between the specifications of the Guidelines and the style guide, the Guidelines overrule the style guide.

Possible style guides include: American Psychological Association (APA), American Physiological Society (APS), American Medical Association (AMA), Chicago Manual Style, Harvard, Modern Language Association (MLA), and Vancouver, among others. Students may also use the style guide of the scientific journals commonly used in their field.

**Page and Margins.** Students should use 8.5" × 11" page size, with 1" margins.

**Font and Type Size.** Choose one font (type style) and use throughout the entire document. Consult the style guide for appropriate fonts. Use 12-point type size throughout the manuscript.

**Spacing.** The text should be double-spaced. Students should follow their style guides for spacing in block quotations, lists in text, tables, figures, and references. There should be a space between each reference.

**Titles.** Students should follow the style guide for title formatting, including use of capitals and bold font. The formatting of titles should be consistent throughout the manuscript.

**Page Numbers.** The Title Page should not have a page number. Students should use lower case Roman numerals (e.g., i, ii, iii) for preliminary pages: abstract, dedication, acknowledgements, contributors and funding sources, nomenclature, table of contents, list of figures, and list of tables. Students should use Arabic numbers (e.g., 1, 2, 3) for all other pages in the document.

**Illustrations, Tables, and Figures.** All illustrations, tables, and figures should be mentioned in the text (e.g., "see Table 1.1"). Students can include them in each chapter or as an Appendix designation. Students should follow their style guide for formatting and presentation guidelines.

**References.** Each document must contain a formal reference section in one of two locations: at the end of the main text or at the end of each chapter. Each source included in the reference section should be cited in the text. Students should follow the style guide for formatting.

**Language Use.** Students pursuing an M.A. in Hispanic Studies may write their thesis in English or Spanish. All other students should write the document in English, though it is permissible to include other languages when quoting directly from foreign-language sources.

## DOCUMENT CONTENT

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The thesis, dissertation, or record of study should contain the following content:

**Title Page.** The Title Page should include the (1) Title, (2) Author Statement, (3) Committee Member Names and Positions, (4) Department Head Name, (5) Graduation Date, (6) Major Subject, and (7) Copyright Notice. The font and point size must match text within the document. Do not include page numbers on this page. See example on page 8 and the templates.

**Abstract.** Provides a complete, succinct snapshot of the research, addressing the purpose, method, results, and conclusions of the research. Abstracts should be one page not exceed 350 words for dissertations and records of study and 150 for master's theses.

**Dedication (optional).** Limit to one page.

**Acknowledgements (optional).** May also be spelled Acknowledgments. Limited to four pages.

**Contributors and Funding Sources.** In the Contributors, recognize: (1) faculty chair and committee member contributions; and (2) individual student contributions and/or the contributions of others. In the Funding Source section, note all support provided by the university, or any other source, to conduct your thesis or dissertation research and compilation. If you completed all work without outside financial support, indicate this here. See example on page 10.

**Nomenclature (Optional).** An optional page where students list the terms or abbreviations that refer to a person or thing.

**Table of Contents.** The Table of Contents contains the major headings and the first level subheadings. Subordination of subheadings should be indicated by indention. Put the word "Page" above page number column. Include leader dots between listings and page numbers. Double space above and below all major headings. Single space all subheadings. See example on page 9.

**List of Tables (if applicable).** Include list if two or more tables are in main body of text. Each table must have a unique title; no two titles may be exactly the same. Include only the first sentence of title in list.

**List of Figures (if applicable).** Include list if two or more tables are in main body of text. Each table must have a unique title; no two titles may be exactly the same. Include only the first sentence of title in list.

**References (if not included at the end of each chapter).** Format according to the chosen style guide.

**Appendices (if applicable).** Appendixes are optional and used for supplementary material. Place the Appendixes after the reference section. All Appendix pages need to be numbered, and page numbers are continued from the last page of the references.

## COPYRIGHTS

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It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to U.S. copyright laws regarding the thesis and its contents. If you publish material that will be part of your thesis, dissertation, or record of study before you submit the final document (TAMU policy):

The TAMU policy is that graduate students may publish material that will later be used as part of the thesis, dissertation, or record of study. However, students must be aware of the agreement they sign when a journal accepts an article for publication. TAMU Libraries make all manuscripts publicly available on the web. Do not sign any agreement that limits TAMU's rights to provide research results to the public.

If you are using your already published material in the thesis or dissertation (journal policies):

Students should be aware of the publishing agreement they sign when a journal accepts an article for publication. The corresponding author typically transfers copyright to the journal as publisher, and may no longer possess the right to use this material without permission.

The publishing agreement form can be modified before it is signed so that the student retains the right to include the material in the thesis, dissertation, or record of study. The publisher would still have the rights it needs to print, distribute, and sell the work.

When negotiating with the publisher, remember to inform them that the thesis, dissertation, or record of study will be available online. Dissertations and records of study will be sent to ProQuest/UMI and can be purchased through them. TAMU *does not* consider the posting of dissertations in the ProQuest/UMI repository as a commercial venture that the student is pursuing.

If students have not retained the right to use your previously published material in the document, they must get permission from the copyright holder to include it. A written statement of permission (email is accepted) should be provided to Thesis and Dissertation Services. The [Permission to Use Copyright Material](#) document offers more information. If the journal retains the right to an article and does not allow its exact reproduction in your thesis, dissertation, or record of study, we recommend that you contact them to ascertain whether a pre-print version is acceptable, or whether you can revise or reword the printed version.

Regardless of which rights students retain, Thesis and Dissertation Services will require written documentation as evidence they have appropriate rights to include the pre-published material. This evidence might be a copy of the publication agreement, website documentation about author retained rights, emails, or other forms of written permission from the publisher.

If you are planning to use your thesis or dissertation material in a future publication:

Students who plan to publish thesis, dissertation, or record of study material in future articles need to investigate whether the journal of choice will publish material already made available to the public and consider this when choosing an option for making the thesis available after graduation. You have the option to restrict full-text access to your thesis or dissertation for a

period of time before releasing it to the Internet to allow time to publish in journals whose policy is to be first publisher. See the TAMU Copyright and Availability Form and instructions for allowable restriction periods and before choosing an option.

If you plan to include others' copyrighted material in the thesis or dissertation:

If the manuscript contains any material (e.g., figures, tables, text) taken from copyrighted sources, the student has the responsibility to determine if permission from the copyright holder is needed. The student should consider a number of factors when utilizing material from other sources, including whether or not the material is in the public domain or can be used under the provisions of [Fair Use](#). Regardless of whether permission is required, proper credit must be given in the text. For material which requires permission, acknowledgment should be included in the text, per the instruction of the copyright holder or as noted in the [Permission to Use Copyright Material](#) document. An extra copy of the letter (or an email) must be provided to Thesis and Dissertation Services. For additional information regarding copyright and fair use, refer to Texas A&M University Libraries [Copyright Resources Lib-Guide](#).

Registering Copyright. Your manuscript is automatically protected under U.S. copyright as soon as the work is created in a fixed form. Master's and doctoral candidates may wish to take additional steps to register their copyright through the U.S. Copyright Office. Information is available at <http://copyright.gov>. Although it is not required, there are benefits to registering your copyright, including additional legal remedies if you face copyright infringement.

Creative Common License. Students may wish to include a Creative Commons license in the same location as the copyright notice. Creative Commons licenses allow the author to retain copyright, while authorizing specific uses of the work to others. More information about Creative Commons licenses can be found at <http://creativecommons.org>.

To summarize, if using published material:

- Determine if the material is copyrighted. Non-copyrighted material may be reused freely, as long as credit is given to the original source.
- If the material is copyrighted, determine if it may be included in your document under the provisions of Fair Use. If Fair Use applies, do not seek permission.
- If Fair Use does not apply, obtain permission (in either the publisher agreement or in a letter or email from the copyright holder).
- Give proper acknowledgment and citation of all work included in the thesis, dissertation, or record of study.
- Provide Thesis and Dissertation Services with a copy of the permission letter or email (or publisher agreement form).
- Doctoral students must inform the copyright holder that the dissertation will be sent to, and sold on demand by, ProQuest/UMI.

For additional information, see Texas A&M University Libraries Copyright Resources LibGuide. Contact Thesis and Dissertation Services at [thesis@tamu.edu](mailto:thesis@tamu.edu).

## APPROVALS AND REQUIRED FORMS

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**Written Thesis / Dissertation Approval.** After the student has passed the final defense and the committee has approved the written thesis or dissertation, the committee and department head (or chair of intercollegiate faculty) signs the Written Thesis/Dissertation Approval Form. This form is available online from the Forms and Information section of the Graduate and Professional Studies website.

All committee members must sign the Written Thesis/Dissertation Approval Form before the thesis, dissertation, or record of study can be submitted electronically. All signatures are needed before Thesis and Dissertation Services can accept a manuscript for review. Any student who is having trouble obtaining signatures should contact the Graduate Staff Advisor in their department or Thesis and Dissertation Services for guidance.

In certain cases, if a committee member is willing but unavailable to sign at the time of submittal, the student may obtain the chair's or authorized signer's (must be of the same department as the committee member) signature in place of the committee member who is unavailable as a temporary measure. This process cannot be used for the committee chair.

**TAMU Copyright and Availability Form.** All theses and dissertations will eventually be available to the public. At the time of submittal, the student has the option to release the document immediately, have the document held for a limited period of time for publishing purposes (as specified in the TAMU Copyright and Availability Form), or have the full record held for a limited period of time for patent/proprietary issues. Except in cases of full record holds, information about the work (title, author, abstract, etc.) will be made available to the public during the embargo period.

After the student has graduated, the final approved manuscript will be available via the Internet from the Texas A&M University Libraries (<http://library.tamu.edu>) and the Texas Digital Library (<http://repositories.tdl.org/tdl>). Additionally, dissertations will be available from ProQuest/ UMI.

**Survey of Earned Doctorates and AAUDE Survey (for Doctoral Students).** Doctoral students must complete both surveys and provide a printout of the completion certificates. The Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) is the definitive source of information on the nation's new research doctorates. Sponsored by the National Science Foundation and five other Federal agencies and conducted by NORC, the SED is critical to understanding in what specialty areas doctorates are produced and their post-graduation employment plans. Results are used by government as well as academic institutions to make decisions about graduate education funding, developing new programs and supporting existing ones. Texas A&M University has developed the AAUDE Core Graduate Education Exit Survey from a set of core questions in use at a number of member institutions of the Association of American Universities (AAU). Information gained from this survey will be distributed through the Texas A&M University Data and Research Services to AAU and be combined with data from other contributing AAU institutions to help us improve our graduate programs.

## DOCUMENT SUBMISSION

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**Submitting the ETD (Electronic Thesis/Dissertation).** The student converts the thesis, dissertation, or record of study to a PDF. The student then uploads the PDF file to the Thesis and Dissertation Services ETD Submittal System, Vireo (<http://etd.tamu.edu>). The recommended maximum file size is 30 MB. If you have trouble uploading, contact Thesis and Dissertation Services.

**Deadlines.** To maintain eligibility to graduate in a given semester, students must meet the scheduled deadline for submittal of (1) the signed Written Thesis/Dissertation Approval Form, (2) the thesis, dissertation, or record of study in final form as a PDF file, and (3) the signed Copyright and Availability form. This date, along with other dates of interest, is posted on the Graduate and Professional Studies dates and deadlines calendar (<http://grad.tamu.edu>). There are no exceptions for late submittal.

Students should only submit in the semester they are intending to graduate. The thesis/dissertation submittal site is shut down for a few weeks after Deadline Day. Students wanting to submit a thesis/dissertation for the next semester may consult the Graduate and Professional School's dates and deadlines calendar for information about the next semester's first day for submittal.

**Thesis and Dissertation Corrections** Students may make only those corrections required by Thesis and Dissertation Services after the manuscript is submitted electronically. Additional corrections requested by the student, the chair, or other committee members will not be accepted without approval of the Graduate and Professional School.

Thesis and Dissertation Services will contact the student via email after the review of the manuscript. The student will make requested corrections in the original Word (or other) file, convert the revised document to a new PDF file and upload the new PDF to the ETD Submittal System, Vireo.

All corrections must be made promptly and meet the deadlines on the Graduate and Professional Studies calendar (<http://grad.tamu.edu>). Graduation will be postponed if corrections are not made on time. (Keep in mind that the Title page must be changed to reflect the correct date of graduation in the event of a graduation postponement to another semester.)

**SAMPLE TITLE PAGE**

WRITING A QUALITY DISSERTATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS  
AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Double space Title.  
Use all capital letters.

A Dissertation

by

Double space the  
Author Statement.  
Name in all capitals.

SOON TOBE GRADUATE

Submittal Statement  
text is centered,  
single spaced.

Submitted to the Graduate and Professional School of  
Texas A&M University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

List Co-Chair (if  
applicable) after the  
Committee Chair

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Degree in all capitals,  
one double space below  
the Submittal  
Statement.

Chair of Committee,  
Co-Chair (if applicable)  
Committee Members,

Leroy Sterling  
H.Y. Moh  
Dionel Avilés  
Breeja Larson  
Nancy Nielson  
José Angel Ortís

No titles (e.g., Ph.D.)  
included with names.

Head of Department,

Graduation Semester:  
Fall → December.  
Spring → May.  
Summer → August.

December 20XX

Major Subject: Educational Administration

Copyright 20XX Copyright Owner's Name

**There are two double spaces  
between the following:**

- Title and thesis statement.
- Thesis Author Statement and Submittal Statement.
- Degree Name and Approval Listing.
- Approval Listing and Month/Year of Graduation.
- Month/Year of Graduation and Major Subject.
- Major Subject and Copyright Notice.

No page numbers  
on title page



SAMPLE TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Major headings are in all capital letters.

Leader dots connect listings to page numbers.

Include 'Page' above the page number column.

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Use one double space between major headings

Indent and single space subheadings.

No words in page number column.

## **SAMPLE CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES PAGE**

### CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES

#### **Contributors**

This work was supported by a thesis (or) dissertation committee consisting of Professor XXXX [advisor – also note if co-advisor] and XXX of the Department of [Home Department] and Professor(s) XXXX of the Department of [Outside Department].

The data analyzed for Chapter X was provided by Professor XXXX. The analyses depicted in Chapter X were conducted in part by Rebecca Jones of the Department of Biostatistics and were published in (year) in an article listed in the Biographical Sketch.

All other work conducted for the thesis (or) dissertation was completed by the student independently.

#### **Funding Sources**

Graduate study was supported by a fellowship from Texas A&M University and a dissertation research fellowship from XXX Foundation.

FORMAT AND STYLE OPTIONS, BY COLLEGE

College or Campus	Allowable Format or Style Options
Agriculture and Life Sciences	Each student, in consultation with the committee, will follow the style of a single, scholarly journal, well known in the major field.
Architecture	Each student, in consultation with the committee, will follow the style of a single, scholarly journal, well known in the major field.
Education and Human Resource Development	Students will utilize the appropriate style guide based on their departmental affiliation.  EAHR: American Psychological Association (APA) TLAC: American Psychological Association (APA), Modern Language Association (MLA), or Chicago Style (the most recent) EPSY: American Psychological Association (APA) HLKN: American Psychological Association (APA), American Physiological Society (APS), or American Medical Association (AMA)
Engineering	Each student, in consultation with the committee, will follow the style of a single, scholarly journal, well known in the major field.
Geosciences	Students may utilize Harvard or Chicago styles.
Liberal Arts	Each student, in consultation with the committee, will follow the style of a single, scholarly journal, well known in the major field.
Mays Business School	Except for Accounting, each student, in consultation with the committee, will follow the style of a single, scholarly journal, well known in the major field. Accounting students should consult with the department regarding the style to be selected.
Science	Each student, in consultation with the committee, will follow the style of a single, scholarly journal, well known in the major field.
Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences	Each student, in consultation with the committee, will follow the style of a single, scholarly journal, well known in the major field.
Health Science Center	CLMD, SPH, CLDN: Students should consult with the department regarding the style to be selected.
Texas A&M University at Galveston	Each student, in consultation with the committee, will follow the style of a single, scholarly journal, well known in the major field.
Texas A&M University at Qatar	Each student, in consultation with the committee, will follow the style of a single, scholarly journal, well known in the major field.