

# Formatting & Editing Your Thesis or Dissertation: A Workshop



## Checklist for Thesis & Dissertation Writers\*

- **Submit Application for Degree (pay \$90 graduation fee) and Graduation Checklist forms to the Graduate School Office**

Deadlines: (Deadlines are subject to change; check current academic calendar.)

Fall 2012                      September 4, 2012

Spring 2013                  February 5, 2013

Summer 2013                June 17, 2013

Fall 2013                      September 10, 2013

- **Defend Thesis or Dissertation** preferably at least 1 to 2 weeks prior to submitting defended thesis/dissertation for editing
- **Finalize content of thesis or dissertation** as requested by committee
- **Proofread your thesis/dissertation** and have a trusted friend proofread it
- **Submit defended thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School for editing** preferably 3 to 6 weeks prior to deadline to submit final copies of thesis/dissertation. Also submit a signed Preliminary Approval of Draft of Thesis or Dissertation form (p. 37) and a copyright compliance form (p. 36). Note on the preliminary approval form which documentation style is used. If NOT using the most recent version of your chosen documentation style, i.e., the version that will be posted on that organization's website, then a sample of that style must be provided.
- **Actively participate in thesis/dissertation editing process**  
(Editing process may take from 3 to 6 weeks or longer.)
- **Order cap, gown, and hood from University Bookstore**  
(For current semester deadline, visit <http://admissions.louisiana.edu/registrar/Commencement.shtml>.)
- **Purchase required thesis/dissertation paper** (pp. 12-14)

- **Pay\*\* required binding fee** (p. 14) of \$10 per copy
- **All students:** Submit **ONE (1)** copy of your paper to the Graduate School on high-quality paper.
- **All Students: Dissemination fee** (required) of \$95 for open access publishing through Proquest and **copyright fee** (optional) of \$55 (p. 14)
- **Doctoral Students Only: Complete and submit “Doctoral Dissertation Agreement Form” and “Survey of Earned Doctorate” questionnaire** on or before deadline to submit final copies of dissertation
- **Submit Final Copy of Thesis or Dissertation and other requirements (p. 13-14) including binding fees receipt to the Graduate School**

Deadlines: (Deadlines are subject to change; check current academic calendar.)

Fall 2012	November 13, 2012
Spring 2013	April 22, 2013
Summer 2013	July 26, 2013
Fall 2013	November 19, 2013

- **Attend the Commencement Ceremony**

(Dates are subject to change; check current academic calendar.)

Fall 2012	December 15, 2012
Spring 2013	May 18, 2013
Summer 2013	December 21, 2013
Fall 2013	December 21, 2013



## Choose a Documentation Style

My discipline/major is \_\_\_\_\_. The common style guide or journal used for documentation and referencing in text and in the reference list is

\_\_\_\_\_ . This is not what the Graduate School requires but what is commonly seen from my discipline. I will consult my advisor, my committee, and the discipline standards to choose a documentation style for my thesis/dissertation.

If NOT using the most recent version of your chosen documentation style, i.e., the version that will be posted on that organization’s website, then a sample of that style must be provided when submitting your defended thesis/dissertation for editing. The sample can be EITHER an article copied from a journal that uses the style OR pages copied from your style manual that show how to document both in-text citations as well as works cited entries.



### What to Expect in the Editing Process

- Submit a defended, final draft to the Graduate School 3-6 weeks prior to the deadline to submit final copies.
- The Editor and multiple secondary editors review your thesis/dissertation.
- A letter will be attached to your thesis/dissertation; follow the instructions there. Please do not make any changes to your document other than those requested by the editors.
- You will return the corrected version with the edited version and the sample documentation style.
- The process repeats until your document is deemed “Ready to Print Final Copies.”

Notes:

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- \* All page references are to the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations*, available at <http://gradschool.louisiana.edu>.
- \*\* The Student Cashier's Center in Lafayette Hall no longer accepts credit card payments in person or over the phone. Be prepared to pay graduation and binding fees with a check, money order, or cash.
- \*\*\* Hairston, M., Ruszkiewicz, J., & Friend, C. (1999). *The Scott, Foresman Handbook for Writers* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Longman.



### Top 10 Points Regarding Format\*

- **Margins** (p. 10) - 1.25" left, 1" top, right, and bottom
- **Font** (p. 10) – 12 point font used consistently in text (including headings and page numbers)
- **Spacing** (p. 10) - double space except where noted to single space (e.g., headings 2 or more lines long)
- **Pagination** (pp. 9-10) - located top right corner or centered at the bottom (even if content of page, like a figure or table, is landscape); suppress (omit) page numbers in the preliminary material as instructed
- **Approval Page** (pp. 7 & 24) - follow the example *exactly*; do not use “Dr.” or “Ph.D.” (Refer to pp. 15-16 for title and rank of professors and outside committee members)
- **Table of Contents, List of Tables, & List of Figures** (pp. 7-8, 10-11, 25-28) – spacing and indentation, dot leaders (how to on pp. 18-19), right aligned page numbers



- **Match Things Up** – Do titles and page numbers in table of contents and lists of tables/figures match those in the text? Are key words and phrases consistently capitalized and consistently formatted?
- **Extended Heading Abstract** (pp. 9, 30) - count all pages from title page to biographical sketch; note word limits (thesis≤300, dissertation≤350)
- **Official title of degree** (pp. 17-18) – use on title page, on extended heading of abstract, and in biographical sketch or acknowledgments; official title of a degree should not have the word “degree” after it; the official title stands alone (e.g., incorrect → Master of Science degree, correct → Master of Science)
- **Encouraged NOT to use prior thesis or dissertation as a guide**

Notes:

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## Avoid Common Mistakes\*

- “et al.” (just remember that “al.” is an abbreviation, “et” is not)
- incorrect use of e.g. (for example) and i.e. (that is)
- preferred spelling is “acknowledgments”
- punctuation is placed inside of closing quotation marks; for more information refer to writing guides such as *The Scott, Foresman Handbook for Writers\*\*\**
- third person, singular for the biographical sketch (p. 9) (e.g., After completing a Master of Science in Physics, John Doe will pursue a Doctor of Philosophy at Purdue University.)
- use of “We” – *wrong* “We analyzed the results.” You are sole author of your manuscript. Some exceptions apply. It is *acceptable* to use “We” as a part of a transitional phrase that directly addresses the audience: ex. “Next, we will look at the figures from the latest study.”
- citing sources in text and in reference section is usually chronological or alphabetical; follow your style manual guidelines consistently
- incorrect spacing after an initialized name  
(e.g., incorrect → R.C. Cusimano, correct → R. C. Cusimano)
- justification should NOT be used on paragraphs in text (p. 10)



## Important Topics to Consider

- **Research Compliance** (<http://orsp.louisiana.edu>)
  - Institutional Review Board
  - Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee
  - Institutional Biosafety Committee
  - University Radiation Safety Committee
- **Copyright Issues** (pp. 3-5)
- **Letters of Permission** (pp. 32-35)
- **Accidental Plagiarism** (p. 3)



## **The Writing Center**

Location: Griffin Hall, rooms 107 & 108

Phone: (337) 482-5224

Hours: Monday, Wednesday, & Thursday 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Tuesday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Friday 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Appointments encouraged, Walk-in available