



California State University, Sacramento
Office of Graduate Studies

Thesis Format Requirements

The culminating experience for a master's degree in the California State University system can be a thesis, project, or comprehensive examination. Each of the three options is equivalent in academic rigor but different in terms of the final product. There are subtle, yet distinct differences in these culminating products.

This guide is designed to provide graduate students with the formatting requirements for the standard cover pages for all theses. Departments may use other style manuals that do not conflict with the guidelines provided in this document. These style manuals describe rules for manuscript preparation including headings, tables, figures, notes and other matters related to the final production of a written, publishable document. Sample pages for standard cover pages can be found on the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) website: www.csus.edu/gradstudies.

FORM AND STYLE

The single-sided, double-spaced manuscript is to be arranged as follows:

1. Blank Page
2. Title Page. The candidate's name must be the same as name listed on thesis/project receipt form.
3. Copyright Page (optional)
4. Approval Page
5. Format Approval Page
6. Abstract
7. Preface, Dedication and/or Acknowledgment Pages (optional)
8. Table of Contents with page references. Individual listing of preliminary pages (Preface, Dedication, Acknowledgments, if included; Individual listing of Tables, Figures, Illustrations, Software Specifications, if included; List of Chapter or Section Headings; Appendices; Bibliography). Do NOT list abstract.
9. Tables, Figures, Illustrations, and Software Specifications (separately listed)
10. Text (double spaced)
11. Appendices (if included)
12. Bibliography/References
13. Blank Page

Note: One copy of the thesis is required for filing with OGS. We also require an extra copy of signature pages (format approval, approval page and abstract), three copies of **THESIS/PROJECT RECEIPT FORM**, and one paid **MICROFILM AND BINDING RECEIPT FORM**.

PAPER

Use 20 lb. (50 or 100 percent cotton) or 24lb. (100 percent cotton); 8 1/2 x 11 (except for oversized items).

FONTS AND SPACING

The preferred font is Times New Roman or a similar font; acceptable font sizes are 10-12; different typefaces (e.g., italics) may be used only to show differences in captions and special text.

PRINT QUALITY

Use laser printers or minimum 600 dpi inkjet printers.

MARGINS AND PAGINATION

- Text must be double spaced, except for quoted passages that may be indented and single-spaced for emphasis.
- Bottom and right margins of text: one inch from edge of paper.
- Top and left margins of text: one and one-half inch from edge of paper.
- Pages preceding Chapter 1 must have lower case Roman numerals, centered one inch from bottom of page, starting with the approval page that is numbered "ii". Title page is unnumbered, but is the implied number "i".
- First page of text uses the Arabic number "1" and pages thereafter carry consecutive Arabic numbers, including the pages in the Appendices and the Bibliography.
- Arabic numbers are positioned in the upper right-hand corner, one inch from the top and one inch in from the right edge of the paper. Double space to the first line of the text.

COPYRIGHT

Theses receive copyright protection when accepted by the University; students do not need to include a copyright page unless they are formally registering the manuscript. Students registering must submit a copy of the complete document, with a copyright application to Register of Copyrights, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20559.

ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIALS

TABLES AND FIGURES

- Color may be used, however, when it is microfilmed, it will be in black and white.
- If color is used, students must label or number the table or figure so that meaning can be determined in black and white.

OVERSIZED MATERIALS

- Oversize foldout pages may be included, though ample margins for binding must be included. Leave oversize pages unfolded. The bindery will fold and insert them.
- All pages must be appropriately numbered if bound in the text.
- If the oversize pages are bulky, the bindery will place them in a special pocket at the back. If a pocket is required, it must be listed in the Table of Contents, but no page numbers are required.
- A duplicate set of all oversized materials must be submitted.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs may be reproduced on 100 percent cotton paper and placed within the standard text margins.

CDS AND DVDS

Submit in duplicate and identify with title, name of student, and semester.

COMPUTER SOFTWARE

- Describe in separate section in prefatory pages (e.g., list of figures and tables).
- State requirements for the use of the software (e.g., hardware, screen resolution type) and any other information necessary for proper viewing of the software.

SLIDES

Submit in duplicate and identify with student's name, semester, and slide number.

SAMPLE THESIS LAYOUT

The following presents a framework for a thesis. The information is offered as a general guideline. Students should always consult their graduate coordinator and program documents for additional regulations and policies.

Introduction: background; statement of the problem; purpose of the study; theoretical bases; limitations of the study; definition of terms; and organization of the remainder of the study.

Review of the Literature: chronological, categorical or related theoretical viewpoints related to topic.

Methodology: research design or approach (quantitative or qualitative); population and/or sample; collection and tabulation of data; and data analysis procedures.

Analysis of the Data, Results, and Discussion: presentation of the findings and discussion of the findings.

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations: summarize the entire research effort.

Appendices: material too detailed or lengthy for inclusion in the body of the study (e.g., questionnaires, maps, photos, letters of permission).

Bibliography/References: includes all sources used in the study.

