



Thesis and Dissertation Preparation Manual

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General Guidelines

“I write because I don’t know what I think until I read what I say.” Flannery O’Connor

Overview of the Master’s Thesis, Doctoral Essay, and Doctoral Dissertation

Students seeking higher degrees traditionally have submitted theses or dissertations to the graduate faculties of American universities in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation. The term *thesis* has come to be used to designate the document submitted to the master’s degree program, while the term *dissertation* has been applied to the doctorate. The difference between them has become the difference between the degrees themselves and varies somewhat in different academic fields. Traditionally, the doctoral dissertation has been the written record the candidate’s individual, original research and scholarship that has successfully advanced the limits of human knowledge. The topic must be appropriate to and significant in the academic field, require a mastery and exhaustive exercise of research techniques, and demonstrate critical thought and facility of expression. The dissertation must, in the professional opinion of the graduate faculty, make an original contribution, and it must demonstrate the candidate’s fitness to continue the advancement of knowledge in the student’s competency.

In one sense, the master’s thesis is a less comprehensive doctoral dissertation. In the master’s thesis, the candidate demonstrates ability to accomplish a research project of more limited scope and far less originality than that demanded of the doctoral candidate. Inevitably, the research and study that culminates in a master’s thesis will be less comprehensive and less complicated than that for the doctorate because the master’s candidate cannot be expected to have the mastery of the field that the doctoral student has attained. Ideally, the master’s candidate will find a research project of limited scope that will result in contribution to knowledge, but often the contribution of a master’s candidate relates more to a perceptive critique of existing knowledge than to the kind of original research accomplished by the doctoral student. In the master’s program, the emphasis in the thesis is placed more upon the candidate’s ability to handle the techniques of research and to communicate results than upon the discovery of new knowledge. The master’s thesis must at the same time represent a peak in the advanced education of the student and furnish the training through which to advance to the doctorate. In all other respects, particularly the care with which the research is accomplished and the results prepared for publication in the thesis, the master’s thesis should be identical with the doctoral dissertation. Although the specific nature and scope of the doctoral essay (sometimes called a thesis) written for the Doctor of Arts degree varies from department to department, the doctoral essay differs significantly from both the master’s thesis and the doctoral dissertation. Since the difference is one

of kind and not degree, the doctoral essay should not be viewed as a composition midway between the thesis and dissertation. The candidate in the Doctor of Arts program seeks to develop the capacity to read, understand, and apply disciplinary research for the benefit of students. Doctoral essays may take several forms. They may become the evaluation and synthesis of academic or disciplinary knowledge, comparative studies, creative intellectual projects, expository dissertations, or significant research in teaching problems and the organization of new concepts of course work. Likewise, they may become the evaluation and synthesis of materials and academic content that may be potentially valuable in college teaching. The research or independent investigation, however, should be closely related to academic subject matter and demonstrate the scholar's mastery of academic content and research skills as attributes of effective teaching. In other words, the candidate's objective in writing the Doctoral essay is the development of research skills that permit the application of scholarship to teaching rather than the generation of new knowledge.

Language

All manuscripts should be written in English, but a foreign language may be used where it is appropriate to your major and approved by your committee. All abstracts, however, must be in English.

Electronic File and Submission

Beginning in 2011 the Graduate School has required that theses and dissertations be submitted in electronic format to ProQuest/UMI. Directions for creating the electronic file (the final format being pdf) will be provided on the Graduate School's web site. Prior to converting the final document into a pdf file, you may use any modern word processing software to write the text. A variety of multi-media files can be embedded into the electronic file or can be attached as a Supplemental Files. You should see the ProQuest/UMI web site for specific details.

The Graduate School and UM Library no longer require a bound paper version of the thesis or dissertation. If you wish to prepare a bound version, you may do so using the services of ProQuest/UMI or other publishers, such as the University Printing Service. Your advisory committee may wish to have you submit paper versions of your work for their review.

Graduate School Review and Approval

After the student successfully completes the Final Oral Examination and finalizes his or her thesis or dissertation, the student then submits the final document to the Graduate School by uploading to the ProQuest/UMI system. Instructions for this step are provided on the Graduate School's website. The Supervisor of Graduate Records will then review the document for completeness and style. If any modifications are needed,

the Supervisor of Graduate Records will contact the student. If the document requires no further revisions, the Supervisor of Graduate Records will approve the thesis or dissertation. This approval means that the thesis or dissertation will then be published online by ProQuest/UMI.

Deadlines

See the list of deadlines posted on the Graduate School's website.

Parts of a Thesis or Dissertation

The following is the standard order of components of either an electronic thesis or electronic dissertation. The components will be explained below.

Preliminary Pages (see Example Preliminary Pages.pdf)
• Title page (required; do not number this page)
• Copyright page (required; do not number this page)
• Abstract (required; number this page ii) - must not exceed 350 words
• Dedication page (optional)
• List of abbreviations or symbols (required when symbols are not self-explanatory)
• Acknowledgments (optional)
• Table of contents (required; number this page, but do not list among the contents)
• List of tables (required when tables are used)
• List of figures or illustrations (required when figures are used)
Body of Manuscript
References
Appendices
Vita
Supplemental Files (audio or video files that accompany the text/pdf file)

Preliminary Pages

Title Page

The title of the thesis or dissertation (in all caps) should be as brief and concise as possible and should be used consistently in every respect. Word substitutes should be used for Greek letters and symbols that appear in the title. Abbreviated terms should be spelled out. Phrases such as “AN EXAMINATION OF ...” or “A STUDY OF ...” should be avoided.

The official designation of the degree (i.e. Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Science, Master of Fine Arts, Master of Business Administration, etc.) must be used on the title page. The department or program should be added following the name of the degree. The name on the title page must match exactly the name under which the student is registered at The University of Mississippi. The date used on the title page must be the month (August, December, or May) and year of the commencement at which the degree will be awarded. Note that this date is not necessarily the month of completion of the final exam and document.

This page is assigned Roman numeral 'i,' **although the number does not appear on the page.**

Copyright Page

This page is a simple declaration that the student author claims copyright of the document. This page is included whether or not the student pays the additional fee to register copyright through ProQuest/UMI. Note that there is a fee to register copyright. This page is not numbered.

Abstract

Every thesis or dissertation must include an abstract. A typical abstract includes a short statement of the project, a brief exposition of the methods and procedures used in gathering data, a condensed summary of the findings, and conclusions reached in the study. The abstract **must not exceed 350 words** (about 35 lines or 2,450 total characters counting spaces and punctuation). The 350 word limit is an absolute requirement when you submit your electronic file to ProQuest/UMI. You will include the Abstract as part of the document AND you will enter the abstract into a text box when submitting the document online. For this reason, you need to have the Abstract readily available (for cutting and pasting) when you upload your electronic file to ProQuest/UMI.

The first page of the Abstract is numbered "ii."

Dedication Page

This is an optional page. If included, the dedication page should be brief. It must be centered, left to right, and top to bottom, on the page, and must be numbered "iii" (or "iv", depending on the number of pages in the Abstract).

List of Abbreviations or Symbols

If you use abbreviations or symbols that typically require definition, you should also define these abbreviations or symbols on this preliminary page. The format of this list should conform to the appropriate documentation style. The page should be numbered "iv" (or sequentially from the previous page).

Acknowledgements

This page is optional. Acknowledgements, if included, must be written in complete sentences. Avoid direct and informal address (e.g., Thanks Doc!). On this page a student might thank those who have helped in the process of obtaining the graduate degree. Permissions to quote copyrighted material are also listed here, as well as any acknowledgements for grants or special funding. This page should be numbered “v” (or sequentially from the previous page).

Table of Contents

The Table of Contents may vary in style and amount of information included. The preliminary pages (any of the pages that have been assigned Roman numerals) are included in the Table of Contents, except that the Table of Contents itself is not listed. The preliminary pages are then followed by the text of the thesis or dissertation, the first page of which is given Arabic number “1.” Chapter or section titles should be listed in the Table of Contents exactly as they appear in the text. A page number should be supplied for each item listed. Page numbers given for the References/Bibliography and Appendix should be those assigned to the separation sheet preceding each of those items.

The Table of Contents must include chapter or section titles, the Bibliography or List of References, and any Appendices. Generally, it is not necessary to include subheadings in the Table of Contents. However, if they must be listed, a logical system of indentation should be followed. Consistency must be preserved. If a particular level is included at any point in the Table of Contents, all headings of that level must be included.

Each page of the Table of Contents is numbered by a Roman numeral, sequentially from the previous page.

List of Tables

Include a List of Tables if there are five or more tables. Any tables appearing in the Appendix must be included in this list. The title of each table should be unique, and all titles must be entered in the list exactly as they appear in the manuscript. A page number should be supplied for each table listed.

Each page of the List of Tables is numbered sequentially by a Roman numeral.

List of Figures or Illustrations

Include a List of Figures or List of Illustrations if there are five or more figures or illustrations. Any figures appearing in the Appendix must be included in this list. The title of each figure should be unique, and all titles must be entered in the list exactly as they appear in the manuscript. A page number should be supplied for each figure listed.

Each page of the List of Figures is numbered sequentially by a Roman numeral.

Body of the Manuscript

The body of the thesis or dissertation is usually organized into chapters, with the chapter title (in all caps) numbered with either Roman numerals or Arabic numbers (e.g., II. EXPERIMENTAL METHODS). Each chapter may then be subdivided into sections, which are again organized by a combination of Roman numerals, Arabic numbers, and letters.

The first page of the body of the thesis or dissertation is assigned page number “1.” If the document is divided into separate parts (see [Multi-Part Dissertations](#)), you may either continue to number the pages sequentially or you may renumber beginning with the second part (e.g., pages A-1, A-2, A-3, etc., in part “A,” and pages B-1, B-2, B-3 etc., for part B). You will eventually have to convert your document into a single pdf file. This will be easier if you use continuous page numbering.

All matters related for formatting and style, placement of tables and figures, etc., are addressed in the next section, Preparation of the Manuscript.

Bibliography/References

The Graduate School does not require a specific citation style. However, usage must be consistent for all entries. The style used for notes, references, and bibliography should be the preferred style of the discipline in which the student is engaged. For instance, MLA is the preferred guide for candidates in the English Department. If in doubt, the student should consult his or her committee.

Whatever style is used, the Bibliography or List of References must be preceded in the manuscript by a numbered page with the title – **Bibliography** or **List of References**—centered vertically and horizontally.

The Bibliography or List of References is a vital part of every thesis or dissertation. Care should be taken to properly document every source. Failure to document references in a consistent and acceptable style necessitates that the manuscript be returned to you for modification by the Supervisor of Graduate Records.

Appendix

The Appendix may include materials that are inappropriate for inclusions in the body of the main text, but that still can be converted to a pdf format. Some students choose to place large tables and figures into the Appendix to avoid interrupting the main text.

If an Appendix is included, it should be preceded by a numbered page with the designation – **Appendix or List of Appendices** -- centered vertically and horizontally between the margins.

All Appendix material must conform to the margin and font requirements, to the extent possible, used the rest of the manuscript.

Vita

Each degree candidate must include a vita as a component of his or her thesis or dissertation. The Vita is the last item in the manuscript and appears with no preceding separation page. The heading, VITA, should be centered, typed in full capitals, and should not be underlined. All vita entries should be listed chronologically. The vita includes the dates of degrees and names of colleges or universities (exclude the degree for which the dissertation is written), academic or relevant professional employment, and may, at the student's discretion, include military service, honors, awards and distinctions. For your protection, do not include your social security number, mailing address, or other such personal information.

Supplemental Files

Supplemental files refer to audio and video files that you wish to submit to ProQuest/UMI as part of your electronic thesis or dissertation. You should avoid including links to web sites, since there is no guarantee that these links will be maintained.

Preparation of the Manuscript

The final manuscript must be a flawless document of professional quality.

Style

Departments often prescribe a particular style of writing that is appropriate for the discipline. If the department does not specify a particular style, the student may consult one of the following sources for guidelines:

- A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Seventh Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing), 7th ed., by Kate L. Turabian, Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, 2007. Isbn 978-0226823379.
- MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed., New York, Modern Language Association of America, 2009. Isbn 978-1603290241.
- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th ed., American Psychological Association Press, 2009. Isbn 978-1433805615.

The above style guides determine such matters as acceptable reference sources and their mode of citation, acceptable abbreviations and their use, use of italics and boldface type, and use of font attributes in figure captions and table titles. The Graduate School's determines such matters as page margins, line spacing and indentation, page numbering, and the required parts of the document. The following table gives a partial list of items determined by the style guide.

Item in text	Question for style guide
Abbreviations	Can abbreviations be used for elements, chemicals, or procedures without spelling out the term first? Is there a list of standard abbreviations (for the discipline) that are not spelled out? Are abbreviations (as either upper or lower case) allowed at the beginning of a sentence?
Figures	How are the title and caption capitalized and indented? Is italic or boldface type used? How are figures referred to in the text? If "Fig.#" is used in parentheses, is "Figure" spelled out in the text? What about at the beginning of a sentence?
Font faces	Are any particular elements, such as gene names, Latin words, or letters used as variables, always represented in italic, underlined, or boldface type?
Hyphenation	Are common prefixes such as pre-, post-, anti-, multi-, and non-hyphenated when they precede a word? When they precede a numeral? What about doubled vowels, as in reentry or re-entry? Are combined numeral-and-measurement modifiers hyphenated when they precede a noun (e.g. a 2-h incubation, a five-minute rest period)?
Mathematical and statistical text	How are equations numbered? If an equation falls at the end of a sentence, is it followed by a period or other end punctuation? Are commas used after equations when grammatically appropriate? How are equations

	referred to in the text (e.g., Eq. 2, Equation 2, equation2, Eq.(2))? Are spaces used around operation symbols (e.g., x=y or x = y)? Around other symbol-and-numeral combinations? Is italic or boldface type used for certain elements, such as Latin letters used as variables? What about capitalization?
Numbers and numerals	When is it correct to spell out numbers and when should numerals be used? Are particular elements (e.g., measurements of time) always expressed in numerals? Can a numeral be used to begin a sentence? Is a comma used with four-placeholder numerals (e.g., 4000 or 4,000)?
References	Is the list ordered by numbers, alphabet, or both? Are unpublished references allowed? In multiple citations, how are the individual entries ordered in the text? In the reference list? What is included in each entry? What order does it come in? How is it punctuated? Is it appropriate to use "et al." in the text? In the reference list? Are journal titles abbreviated in the list?
Tables	How is the title capitalized? Is italic or boldface type used? How are notes formatted? How are tables referred to in the text? Are decimal points aligned in the columns?

Format Requirements and Guidelines

The following formatting requirements are imposed by the Graduate School to be consistent with guidelines for publishing electronic theses and dissertations through ProQuest/UMI. The following formatting requirements supersede any formatting guides described in the above style guides.

Font: Most 12-point non-italicized, serif fonts are acceptable for text and 10-point font for footnotes and subscripts. Fonts less than 10-point are not recommended even for superscripts and subscripts. Generally, "Times New Roman" font in 12-point is an appropriate choice. There must be a consistent font used throughout the manuscript.

Spacing: All standard manuscript copy must be double-spaced. Use a 0.5 inch standard indention for the first line of all paragraphs. Text within a chapter must be continuous. Add extra space following a section or subsection title, but add no more than one extra line of space between paragraphs. (See also the paragraph below about the placement of figures and tables and the spacing around these elements.)

Single spacing may be used for long tables, block quotations, subheadings and chapter titles, figure legends, footnotes or notes, appendix material, and all bibliographic entries.

Margins: Top, right, and bottom margins must be 1 inch. For an electronic thesis or dissertation, **the left margin should also be 1 inch** for all pages beyond the Preliminary Pages. The Preliminary Pages should have a 2" top margin.

The first page of each chapter, including the first chapter, should have a 2” top margin. All other text pages, including those with figures or legends, should have a 1” top margin.

Page Numbers: Page numbers must be centered and should be between 0.5 to 0.75” from the bottom of the page.

Pagination: Every page in the manuscript must be numbered except for two: the title page and the copyright page (which does not count as a page). The title page is counted as Roman numeral page “i.” However, for reasons of appearance, the title page must not show this numeral. Due to this consideration, the first page number to appear on the manuscript will be the lower case Roman numeral ‘ii’ on the first page of the Abstract.

LOWER CASE ROMAN NUMERALS (ii, iii, iv, v) must be used to number the preliminary pages.

ARABIC NUMBERS (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) must be used to number the text through the References. The first page of text must be numbered “1.” The remaining pages will be numbered sequentially using Arabic numbers.

Page Breaks: Start a new chapter or major section on a fresh page. Do not divide words at the bottom of a page and carry them over to the next page. A sentence ending a paragraph should not end as a partial line at the top of the next page.

Running Heads: Do not use running heads.

Consistency

The formatting requirements detailed in this manual must be met throughout the entire manuscript. ANY material included in the thesis or dissertation must fit within the required margins, pagination scheme, font size and style, etc. The thesis or dissertation must be a document of professional quality, one that is consistent in style and format.

Placement of Tables and Figures

Tables and figures can add significantly to the presentation of scholarship. In deciding upon the organization or design of a table or figure, consider how these are presented in other scholarly publications in the discipline.

Tables and figures should be numbered consecutively and should appear near their first mention but not necessarily directly after it. When short tables or figures are included on the same page as text, leave at least one single-spaced blank line before and after the figure or table. Do not include a table on the same page as text unless the table is short enough to be complete on that page.

Figures should have a title and may also have a caption. The title is a brief description of the figure, which is included in the List of Figures (if there are five or more figures in the document). A caption is additional text that describes the information in the figure. The title and caption may both be placed below the figure, or the title may be placed above the figure (typically centered), with the caption placed below. Check the style used in your discipline. An example of a Figure title (“Comparison of...”) and caption (“Data are shown...”) is as follows:

Figure 3. Comparison of Ten-Year Trends of First Year Retention Rates. Data are shown for the period 1999-2009 for the freshmen retention rates at the University of Mississippi (○), Mississippi State University (□), and the University of Southern Mississippi (■).

A figure legend and caption should be single-spaced. Any text or numbers within a figure can be in any type font and size, provided the print is readable. The font and point size used for the title and caption should be consistent with the rest of the document. Figures must be within the margins of the document.

Tables should have a title placed at the top (usually centered). Any additional “legend” information is usually entered at the bottom of the table. This may be done as one or more footnotes to the table. The font and point size used for the title and legend should be consistent with the rest of the document. All text and figures in the body of a table should be readable. It is preferable to use the same font for text in a table as used in the rest of the document. Tables must be within the margins of the document.

Large figures and tables can be displayed as landscape on a separate page(s).

If a figure or table is placed in the Appendix, this should be indicated in the body of the document (e.g., Table 3, Appendix). If all figures or tables are placed in the Appendix, this fact should be stated in a footnote in the body of the text at the first mention of a table or appendix item.

Word Processing Templates and Examples

The Graduate School has created templates to aid in the correct formatting of theses and dissertations. For best results, these template documents should be used while composing and editing a thesis or dissertation. Because word processing programs often copy the original formatting with the text, “cutting” and “pasting” from another

document into one of these templates may change the formatting that is required for all theses and dissertations presented for final approval at The University of Mississippi.

These templates are provided only as helpful tools. Use of these templates does not guarantee that a dissertation or thesis has been formatted correctly. Because of the variations among software features and components, formatting and appearance in these templates may vary for individual users. **To ensure that your thesis or dissertation manuscript meets the requirements outlined in this Manual, you should double-check your manuscript to make sure that all margins, page numbers, and other elements are properly formatted, aligned, and arranged.**

Following the format of someone else's previously submitted thesis or dissertation can lead to problems, if the previous document was prepared using an earlier set of formatting guidelines. The guidelines were changed significantly in 2011, with the advent of the ETD submission process, making it important that you use the most recent formatting guidelines.

The formatting templates can be found on The Graduate School's web page. A link to this site is [HERE](#)

Also at the above link you will find the following file, which shows the formatting details of the [Preliminary Pages](#).

For technical assistance with these templates and other word processing questions, consult the IT Helpdesk at (662) 915-5222 or go to their website at <http://www.olemiss.edu/technology>

Miscellaneous Issues

Creative Writing Theses

All theses, including those in creative writing, are expected to conform to the above basic organizational structure and formatting rules. However, creative writing documents are permitted to deviate from the rules to properly display the work. For example, poems may be entered with customized spacing and margins.

Copyright Page and the Registration of Copyright

Master's and doctoral students and their committees should give careful consideration to the desirability of copyrighting the manuscript. A form must be submitted to the Graduate School showing that the candidate and his/her advisor have considered copyright matters. All students are required to include a statement of ownership of copyright as the second page of each thesis or dissertation. Students intending to register copyright through ProQuest/UMI will do so online when submitting their document electronically. Note that registering copyright requires an additional fee, to be paid to ProQuest/UMI.

Use of Copyrighted Material

Students are required to obtain permission from the author or publishers to quote extensively from copyrighted material. Such permission is usually granted on condition that acknowledgment is made. If payment is required, this is the student's responsibility. Permission for the use of all such materials must be obtained before the thesis or dissertation is submitted to The Graduate School. *ProQuest/UMI* requires each student to certify, when submitting an electronic thesis and dissertation, that any extensive use of copyrighted material in the manuscript has the written permission of the copyright owner, and to "save and hold harmless" ProQuest/UMI from any damages which may arise from copyright violations.

If the copyright owner grants permission to use the material, a letter of release must be obtained and included in the Appendix of your manuscript. Likewise, the copyright owner should be given credit in the acknowledgments of your manuscript.

IRB and IACUC Approval:

Scientific research using human subjects and animals has produced ample benefits, but it also requires attention to important ethical concerns. The University of Mississippi's

Institutional Review Board's and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee ensure that research with humans and animals is conducted ethically, humanely, and in compliance with all appropriate laws and guidelines. In order to comply with University and federal policies, submit all proposals for research with humans and animals to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs IRB or IACUC review committee before beginning your research. The Graduate School does not require the corresponding approval forms to be included in the thesis or dissertation documents.

To determine if your research requires the above approval, contact either the IRB or IACUC at 915-7482 or find the guidelines and applications at the website of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, <http://www.research.olemiss.edu/compliance/> .

Papers within the Thesis or Dissertation

A thesis or dissertation may include manuscript versions of articles submitted to a professional journal. Some guidelines apply, however.

- Individual papers must be integrated into a unified presentation. The thesis or dissertation must be a logical whole, not simply a compilation of individual papers.
- A uniform style of headings, reference citations, and bibliographical format – in compliance with this guide – must be adopted for the entire manuscript. In other words, all parts of the manuscript must be formatted consistently, even if one part of the manuscript was originally submitted to a professional journal in another format. Consistency and uniformity throughout the manuscript are required.
- A single bibliography should serve the entire thesis or dissertation.
- Individual papers may be used as individual chapters within the manuscript as long as the above requirements are met. The above requirements stress the importance of creating a unified document. The Graduate School encourages students to pursue publication of articles in professional journals. However, if those articles are used in a thesis or dissertation, they must be seamlessly integrated into the manuscript.

Multi-Part Theses and Dissertations

With approval from the committee members, a thesis or dissertation may be divided into parts, rather than chapters or sections. This option should only be considered when research has been performed in two or more areas that cannot be practically combined into a single presentation. In this case, each part of the thesis or dissertation should be treated as a separate unit, with its own chapters, figures, tables, Bibliography or List of References, and Appendices. The entire manuscript (all parts) is then unified through the use of:

- A single set of Preliminary Pages
- A single introduction which provides an overview and summary of the entire project.

- A single Table of Contents
- A single List of Tables
- A single List of Figures

Consecutive pagination across all parts is optimum, since you will eventually have to convert the entire document into a single pdf file. However, you can create a separate numbering system for the individual parts, such as numbering part A as pages A-1, A-2, A-3, etc., and part B as B-1, B-2, B-3, etc..

Photographs and Multi-Media Files

A variety of graphical, audio, and video files can be included in an electronic thesis or dissertation. See the ProQuest/UMI web site for guidance. Audio and video files will be uploaded as Supplemental files and can be linked from the text. If you wish to include printed photographs, you should scan these into electronic files.

Writing Center Services

Graduate students seeking advice or assistance during the writing process, should contact the director of the Writing Center at 662-915-7686 or by E-mail at writingc@olemiss.edu

Submitting the Document to ProQuest/UMI

See the instructions given in [The End Game](#) and on the [Thesis and Dissertation Preparation](#) page, which can be found on the Graduate School's web site.

Last Minute Filing

Filing the thesis or dissertation at the last minute can be disastrous. If the final thesis or dissertation is not submitted (uploaded into ProQuest/UMI) by the stated deadline, the student **will not graduate** at the end of that semester and will be required to enroll in a subsequent term and apply to graduate (though a second graduation fee will not be charged). The policies in this manual are University regulations and can never be waived or overlooked. Filing early gives students time to deal with unforeseen problems. Remember, the thesis or dissertation can be submitted at any time during the final semester.

Most Common Errors

As part of the review and completion of your thesis or dissertation prior to submission please make sure that you have avoided the most common errors, which we have identified after many years' experience reviewing submissions! This list is not exhaustive but highlights those errors that should have easily been corrected prior to submission.

1. Title page layout and wording does not follow the preparation guide and specimen examples.
2. Double-spacing is not used throughout the entire document (except as noted above).
3. Do not center-justify the pages within the manuscript. Center-justify only the title and copyright pages.
4. Date (year) of submission of the manuscript must be recorded on the title and copyright pages.
5. The Abstract must not exceed 350 words.
6. Check for spelling errors. Do not rely on your software's spell checker.
7. Acknowledgments can be spelled either way (Acknowledgments OR Acknowledgements), but you must be consistent within your own document, especially between the actual page and the Contents page.
8. Avoid errors in ordering of pages. You must have all of the required preliminary pages and they must be in the order set out in the preparation guide.
9. Common errors in page numbering:
 - All pages must be numbered, except the title page and copyright page.
 - Duplicated page numbers.
 - Omitted page numbers.
 - Page numbers must appear in the bottom center of each page which is numbered.
 - All preliminary pages are numbered using lower case Roman numerals. All manuscript body pages (including References and Appendices) are numbered using Arabic numerals.
 - The pages of the manuscript should be in correct numerical order.
10. Omitting a Table of Contents.
11. Errors in the Table of Contents and the List of Figures, Tables, etc., such as titles that do not match exactly with headings used in manuscript or incorrectly indicated subdivisions. The title of every chapter must correspond with the table of contents.
12. Page number references in Table of Contents, List of Tables, and/or List of Figures do not match the actual page number.

13. Inconsistencies in formatting of headings and section titles for the same level headings. Second level headings must be formatted identically with each other throughout especially upper or lower case formatting of letters.
14. Errors in text references:
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