



College of Communication and Information

**STYLE GUIDE AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING
THESES AND DISSERTATIONS**

Revised August 2021

CHECKLISTS FOR THESIS AND DISSERTATION PREPARATION

Electronic Thesis

- A. Signed Approval of Thesis Topic form accompanied by a description of the topic and methodology must be submitted to the CCI Dean's Office before the start of the graduation term (the dean will not sign the final signature page without this form)
- B. Standard typeface or font and point size between 10 and 12
- C. Text, tables, and graphs should be in black except where color improves the document
- D. No running heads
- E. Margins: 1.0 inch from top, bottom, left and right edges. This includes all figures, tables, appendices, references, and signature pages
- F. Format of tables, figures, footnotes, and references within the text should follow guidelines in the *APA Publication Manual (Seventh Edition)* and conform to the margins as listed above
- G. Page numbers placed 0.5 inch from top and right edges - flexibility based on specific software parameters is acceptable
- H. All front matter in correct format (see p. 7 for information about front matter)
- I. Document submitted electronically **according to guidelines** (www.library.kent.edu/etd) by deadline
- J. Submit to the CCI Dean's Office by deadline:
 - a. One signature page, printed on approved paper (see p. 6 for information about paper), signed in black ink by advisor and school director, to be signed by dean
 - b. Any optional forms (www.library.kent.edu/etd > forms) with appropriate payments

Electronic Dissertation

- K. Signed Approval of Dissertation Topic form accompanied by a description of the topic and methodology must be submitted to the CCI Dean's Office before the start of the graduation term (the dean will not sign the final signature page without this form)
- A. Standard typeface or font and point size between 10 and 12
- B. Text, tables, and graphs should be in black except where color improves the document
- C. No running heads
- D. Margins: 1.0 inch from top, bottom, left and right edges. This includes all figures, tables, appendices, references, and signature pages
- E. Format of tables, figures, footnotes, and references within the text should follow guidelines in the *APA Publication Manual (Seventh Edition)* and conform to the margins as listed above
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- I. Submit to the CCI Dean's Office by deadline:
 - a. One signature page, printed on approved paper (see p. 6 for information about paper), signed in black ink by committee members and school director, to be signed by dean
 - b. Email confirming completion of the [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#)
 - c. Any optional forms (www.library.kent.edu/etd > forms) with appropriate payments

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PREFACE

This is the official style guide for theses and dissertations in the College of Communication and Information. When variations between statements in this document and the *APA Publication Manual (Seventh Edition)* occur, students should consult with their thesis or dissertation advisors.

Reasons for Regulations

The rules presented here are necessary because theses and dissertations are catalogued by University Libraries and submitted in an electronic format to OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations Center. Therefore, they must be produced with the same care as printed books. Margins, style and formatting must be uniform.

Responsibilities

Degree candidates are responsible for the accurate preparation of all aspects of the thesis or dissertation and submission of the document. Candidates should not expect their advisors to edit their theses or dissertations for errors.

Approval

Certification that a thesis or dissertation is correct with regard to mechanical style and format is made by the student, the thesis or dissertation advisor, and the school director. Such certification is made through submission of one copy of the signed signature page to the College of Communication and Information Dean's Office (with all signatures secured in black ink except the college dean's).

DOCUMENT PRODUCTION

Master's and Ph.D. students are required to submit theses and dissertations electronically. Information about electronic submission is available at www.library.kent.edu/etd.

Approved Paper for Signature Page

Use black print on 8.5-inch by 11-inch 20-24 pound acid-free archival-quality white laser paper for signature pages. If incorrect or unapproved paper is used, reprinting of the signature page will be required.

Margins

Allow one inch for the top, bottom, left and right margins. Double spacing down from the line the page number appears on is preferable; however, flexibility based on specific software parameters is acceptable. Use only a ragged right margin (unjustified). Take special care to insure that illustrations, graphs, tables and pictorial materials do not extend beyond top, bottom, or side margins. When necessary, reduce image size before importing it to the page.

Spacing

Double-space the text throughout. Hyphenation of words at the end of a line is discouraged. Division is permitted to avoid short lines that end considerably more than one inch from the right margin. To obtain proper spacing for front matter, refer to the Appendices of this manual.

Pagination

Every page in the thesis or dissertation must be assigned a page number, and numbers should appear on all pages except for the title page of the document and the title page of the appendices.

Use lower case Roman numerals for page numbers on pages containing front matter (e.g., table of contents, list of figures, list of tables, preface, acknowledgments, abstract, etc.). Center page numbers on front matter approximately 0.5 inch from the bottom.

Use Arabic numerals for the text beginning on page one of chapter one. Place page numbers in the top right-hand corner approximately 0.5 inch from the right and top edges.

Numbering must run consecutively throughout the front matter, text, and appendices with no missing numbers. Each number may be used only once; use of numbers such as 9a, 9b, and so forth is not allowed.

Font

A single font style must be used throughout the text. Standard font sizes are 10 and 12. As necessary, a smaller font may be used in tables and charts.

Underlining in the text, unless part of a formula or equation, is discouraged. For adding emphasis, use italics, boldface or all caps.

Use of italics and boldface is permissible. Italics can be used to replace underlining throughout the document, including headings and references. Guidelines for headings are shown in the *APA Publication Manual (Seventh Edition)*.

FRONT MATTER

The format for pages containing front matter is shown in the Appendices of this document. Prepare those pages exactly as shown. The month and year appearing on the title page and abstract should correspond with the date on which the degree is conferred (not the date of the defense of the thesis or dissertation).

Organization of Front Matter

The front matter must be presented as follows:

1. Title Page (page i, page number does NOT appear)
2. Signature Page (page ii, page number does NOT appear)
3. Table of Contents (starting with page iii, numbered in sequence)
4. List of Figures (if applicable, numbered in sequence)
5. List of Tables (if applicable, numbered in sequence)
6. Preface, including Acknowledgments or Acknowledgments alone if there is no Preface
7. Abstract (the abstract must be approved by the thesis/dissertation advisor)

Title Page

The title page must be prepared as shown in the Appendices. The date listed is the month and year of graduation, not the oral defense. All material is centered.

Signature Page

Sample signature pages for the thesis and for the dissertation are shown in the Appendices. The signature page must include the names and titles of all approvers, including suffixes that show approvers' terminal degrees. This page must be signed with original signatures in black ink. The student is responsible for obtaining all signatures except the dean's. The dean's signature is obtained after the final edited version of the thesis or dissertation is approved in OhioLINK. Candidates should include an unsigned signature page within the electronic document and submit one signed original (on paper) to the College of Communication and Information Dean's Office by the deadline.

Table of Contents

All parts of the thesis or dissertation, except the title page and signature page, are listed in the Table of Contents. The titles of major divisions (acknowledgments, list of figures, list of tables, list of illustrations, titles of chapters, appendices, and references) should be presented in the Table of Contents in capital letters. If more than one level of heading is used in the Table of Contents, each level should be indented three spaces (or one standard tab) to the right of the preceding higher level. Each level of heading used in the Table of Contents must appear in the order of its rank.

As shown in the Appendices of this document, page numbers in the Table of Contents should be right justified and aligned vertically. A line of leader dots should be used to guide the reader's eye from each entry in the Table of Contents to the corresponding page number. Candidates who are unable to format material correctly may hire a typing service for assistance.

Figures

Any type of illustration, photograph, drawing, chart, or graph is referred to as a figure. All figures must fit inside the regular margins of the paper. Oversize materials should be reduced to conform to the margins.

If more than three figures are used, a List of Figures should follow the Table of Contents. Wording of entries in the List of Figures should agree exactly with the captions and the wording used in the body of the document. A sample List of Figures is provided in the Appendices.

All full-page figures must have page numbers in the upper right corner. Each figure should be labeled as "Figure 1," "Figure 2," and so on, consecutively throughout the document, including the Appendix. The figure number and caption should appear below the figure.

Tables

Tables are any organized arrangement of facts or data in rows and columns. Every table in the document should be referred to in the text. If more than three tables appear in the paper, a List of Tables must follow the List of Figures in the Table of Contents. The List of Tables is arranged on a page in the same way as the List of Figures.

Tables must be labeled as "Table 1," and so on, consecutively throughout the document, including the Appendix. Each table must also have a title set above the body of the table. Wording of entries in the List of Tables should agree exactly with the wording used in the table titles. The general instructions regarding margins of figures also apply to tables.

Acknowledgments

An Acknowledgments page is used to thank individuals or organizations that have helped the writer carry out the project. The generic heading *Acknowledgments* should be centered one inch from the top of the page. Margins for the text of this section should be the same as for the body of the thesis or dissertation.

Abstract

The Abstract provides a concise summary of the thesis or dissertation. It should be no longer than approximately 500 words and must be reviewed and approved by the thesis/dissertation advisor before submission to OhioLINK. More information on the abstract can be found on page 10.

THE BODY OF THE PAPER

Levels of Headings

Theses and dissertations are complex projects that may require multiple levels of headings throughout the body of the paper. The author has considerable latitude in determining the number of levels to include. Authors should use the system of headings in the *APA Publication Manual (Seventh Edition)*, and levels of headings must be consistent throughout the document.

Quotations

Refer to the *APA Publication Manual (Seventh Edition)*.

Appendices

Appendices are used to present detailed information which, if included in the text, would obstruct clear presentation of the argument. The name of the appendix (Appendix A, etc.) should be placed in the center of a blank page preceding the appendix or on the top of the first page of each appendix. Each appendix should be independent of others. In most cases, an appendix should not have footnotes (documentation can be inserted in the text). Materials placed in the appendices must meet the same standards of pagination, margins, etc., as other parts of the document.

References

In a dissertation or thesis, the term *references* implies a list of sources used in preparation of the document. Scholarly ethics require that authors not list works that have not actually been consulted. Only works that have been cited in the footnotes or in the text should be included in the references.

References may be single- or double-spaced within a single entry and must be double-spaced between entries. References are placed last in the document, after the appendices. All references should be in hanging paragraph form (first line on the margin, other lines are indented).

THE ABSTRACT

Abstracts should be no longer than 500 words but can be shorter if appropriate. The abstract should describe the problem or topic, any important or distinctive methods used in the research, and the principal conclusions reached. It should be written without formulas or symbols and in language understandable to a reader outside the discipline. The doctoral dissertation abstract must conform to the requirements of Dissertation Abstracts International without further editing or revision.

After the thesis/dissertation advisor reviews and approves the abstract, the candidate must type the abstract in space provided on the OhioLINK website as part of the submission process. The abstract should not be included as part of the thesis or dissertation document.

DEFENSE COPY

The "defense" copy is a basis for the questioning of the candidate. As such, all parts (Table of Contents, List of Figures, List of Tables, Abstract, all data, Appendices, and References) that are part of the document must be included as they will appear in final form. All pages must be numbered appropriately. Although it is assumed that changes in the final copy may result from the oral defense, the defense copy should be in as complete and final form as possible, including content, grammar, style, and format of the manuscript.

A copy of the completed thesis or dissertation must be submitted to the examining committee at least 10 working days before the oral defense. For dissertations, the document must be submitted to committee members at least 10 working days prior to the pre-oral defense meeting.

PREPARATION OF THE FINAL COPY

Some schools prefer that students not prepare the final copy until after the student's final oral examination. Copies of the thesis or dissertation supplied to examination committees, however, must be neat and legible. Consult your school or advisor concerning their preferences. Students may have professionals produce the final copies. Since these individuals cannot be expected to be completely familiar with the stylistic requirements of all disciplines, copies supplied to a professional typing service should adhere closely to the expected final versions.

Because theses and dissertations represent the highest level of research and scholarship produced by students of a university, scholars throughout the country and the world may refer to these documents. Thus, it is important that the style, format, and mechanics are handled in a highly professional manner as outlined in other sections of these guidelines. The final copy should be error free.

Production of a high-quality dissertation or thesis document is the responsibility of the degree candidate. Careful attention to details such as punctuation, vocabulary and coordination of

headings with tables is necessary if the document is to reflect well upon the candidate and the committee. Asking trusted acquaintances to review the final written work can be helpful in identifying errors and inconsistencies. An alternative is to employ a professional editor who is familiar with the style standards identified for the discipline and the format requirements described in these guidelines.

Submission

In order to be officially cleared for graduation, a student must submit the document according to guidelines available on the University Libraries ETD website (www.library.kent.edu/etd). The deadline date for each term for filing final copies is published in [KSU's official academic calendar](#). The deadline can be expected to fall approximately four weeks prior to the date of the graduation ceremony. Once the submission deadline passes, the student should check one's KSU email account daily for messages regarding required revisions until final approval is granted.

REGISTRATION AND COPYRIGHT OF THE DISSERTATION

Doctoral dissertations incur a publication fee charged by UMI, but the university absorbs it. PhD graduates can choose to purchase other optional services from UMI (copyright registration and bound copies of the dissertation).

The College of Communication and Information Dean's Office will be notified of your electronic dissertation submission, will review it, and will notify you if any changes need to be made before approving it for publication in OhioLINK. After the college approves the submission, OhioLINK will release your document on the OhioLINK ETD Center website. At some point after that, usually within a month or so, OhioLINK will forward a copy of electronic dissertations to UMI. It may take UMI multiple months to add the ETD to their database.

The optional UMI copyright registration form (www.library.kent.edu/etd > forms) is only completed if you are copyrighting (KSU does not recommend this option as OhioLINK does this), you need a publisher's permission, or you are ordering copies from UMI. If you choose to have UMI to act as an agent in securing a copyright, the copyright registration form must be submitted with a certified check or money order made out to ProQuest Information and Learning Company. This fee covers the copyright registration and the two copies required by the United States Copyright Office.

Upon completion of the doctoral degree, graduates receive emails from the Division of Graduate Studies with information about completing the [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#).

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Sample Electronic Thesis Format

Students' Perceptions of the Electronic
Thesis Submission Process

A thesis submitted to the College of Communication and Information of Kent State
University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

by

Susan K. Sample

May, 2016

Thesis written by

Susan K. Sample

B.A., Arizona State University, 2014

M.A., Kent State University, 2016

Approved by

Peter D. Sample, M.A., Advisor

Joseph T. Sample, Ph.D., Director, School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Samantha N. Sample, Ph.D., Dean, College of Communication and Information

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Acknowledgments

I want to thank my wonderful partner, who has stood by me through all of the difficult, late nights. I want to thank the faculty in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication who had a positive impact during my time at Kent State University, especially my advisor. I want to thank my family for being patient.

Chapter I

Introduction

This is a sample introduction. This is a sample introduction. This is a sample introduction. This is a sample introduction. This is a sample introduction. This is a sample introduction. This is a sample introduction.

Research Questions

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Assumptions

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Chapter II

Review of Related Literature

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Theory

These are relevant theories. These are relevant theories. These are relevant theories.

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References

- Anderson, D. A. (2007). The unforgettable thesis: A study. *Journal of Sample Theses and Dissertations*, 46, 229-252.
- Douglass, F. P. (2008). The forgettable dissertation: A history. *Journal of Sample Theses and Dissertations*, 28, 168-192.

Appendix B

Sample Electronic Dissertation Format

Students' Perceptions of the Electronic
Dissertation Submission Process

A dissertation submitted to the College of Communication and Information of Kent State
University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Susan K. Sample

May, 2016

Dissertation written by

Susan K. Sample

B.A., Arizona State University, 2010

M.A., Kansas State University, 2012

Ph.D., Kent State University, 2016

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Accepted by

Joseph T. Sample, Ph.D., Chair, Doctoral Studies Committee

Samantha N. Sample, Ph.D., Dean, College of Communication and Information

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Assumptions

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