

THESIS GUIDE

WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

The following information is intended to summarize the major elements of thesis preparation. Consult your thesis adviser and/or the style manual of your academic discipline when stylistic questions particular to your research arise. If your discipline does not have a preferred manual of style, consult the Graduate School. This thesis guide is formatted throughout by the standards required by the Graduate School.

Thesis Enrollment

If you elect the thesis option,

- You must register for Thesis 6301 when your thesis research begins.
- In each subsequent semester except summer terms you must register for Thesis 6302 until the dean of the Graduate School has accepted your thesis.
- If you are graduating in the summer, you must enroll in thesis in one of the two summer sessions.
- You may only have to pay the current tuition rate for each enrollment of Thesis 6302 as the additional fees may be waived. To qualify, you must contact the Graduate School.
- If you fail to enroll in 6302, you will be subject to a reinstatement fee when returning to the University. Exceptions to the continuous enrollment

requirements are only possible by **prior** arrangement with the department head and the dean of the Graduate School.

Thesis Committee

During your first thesis enrollment, the dean of the Graduate School, in consultation with your program coordinator, will appoint your thesis committee. Ordinarily the committee will consist of a chair, who will be your major adviser, and at least one other member of your academic department. Additional members from outside your academic department may also be appointed as appropriate. Members from outside the University (affiliate graduate faculty) may also be appointed when their expertise will be helpful.

Thesis Deadlines

You should not begin writing your thesis until your subject and your plan (prospectus/proposal) have been submitted to your thesis committee and approved. Your committee will probably wish to examine individual chapters as you write, and revisions are always necessary. The process always takes longer than you expect.

Each semester, the graduate school posts when theses are due that semester. See “announcements” at www.wtamu.edu/graduateschool or the sign at the Graduate School.

1. **NINE WEEKS before graduation:** The preliminary draft of the entire thesis should be in your adviser's hands at least nine weeks before the date of graduation to allow sufficient time for final corrections.
2. **FIVE WEEKS before graduation:** The original and two copies of the final draft should be given to the adviser at least five weeks before the date of graduation.

3. **THREE WEEKS before graduation:** A copy of the thesis should be delivered three weeks before the date of graduation to the secretary of the dean of the Graduate School for preliminary approval of format.
4. Following your successful thesis defense (and approval by all voting members of your committee), three copies of the thesis (all on bond paper) must be delivered to the Graduate School for final review. This must all be completed before the published deadline. Of the three required copies, **one** will be kept in the Library, **one** will be sent to your department, and **one** will be sent to you. If you want more copies bound (for personal use and/or distribution), you must bring them to the Graduate School with the three required copies.
5. After the Graduate School has reviewed and approved your thesis, you must then deliver the required copies of the thesis to the Cornette Library.

If you are planning to finish your thesis during the summer, please keep in mind that faculty members are often not available for consultation during the summer. You should plan deadlines with your adviser very carefully and well in advance if you wish to finish by August graduation.

Thesis Paper and Copies

All bound copies must be computer generated or reproduced on a high quality copier or printer on watermarked 25 percent cotton (rag) content paper. Use 8 1/2 X 11 inch paper, and use paper of the same weight, color, and kind throughout.

The color of the paper must be white, off-white or ivory.

Thesis Print Quality

All Theses must comply with the following standards:

- 12-point fonts should be used for the text of the Thesis.
- 10-point fonts may be used on Charts/graphs to accommodate the standard thesis margins.
- Any variation from these rules requires prior approval of the Graduate Dean.

The Text of the thesis must be in black print only. Color may be used in charts and graphs with approval of the committee.

Thesis Binding and Fees

1. \$10.00 per copy, which includes postage within the continental United States.
2. \$20.00 per copy, for binding and overseas shipping.
3. Special binding (pockets for CD's or maps, or oversize paper) will have an additional fee.

Payment is made at the circulation desk of the Library at the time the thesis is submitted to the Library. The receipt must be returned to the Graduate School as proof that the thesis has been accepted for binding. All theses submitted for the semester are sent in one shipment to the bindery; therefore, several months may elapse before bound copies of theses are available.

THESIS FORMAT

Thesis Page Margins

- Left margins 1.5" on all pages
- Right margins 1" (not justified) on all pages
- All Title pages 2" from top of page
- All Non-title pages 1" from top of page

Thesis Page Numbers

1. All page numbers must be **centered 1" from bottom of page**.
2. On preliminary pages: Use lower case roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, v, etc.).
3. In the body of Theses: Use Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.).

Consider the title page to be roman numeral i, but do not actually number it. The first numeral to appear in your thesis is roman numeral ii on the page that follows the title page. All of your preliminary pages are numbered by centering to the margins the roman numeral **one inch above the bottom of the page**.

Pagination of the body of the thesis will begin with the first page of Chapter I. Consecutive Arabic numerals will continue throughout the thesis, lists of works cited, and appendices. Center the numeral **one-inch above the bottom of the page**.

Thesis Line Spacing

The body of the thesis must be double-spaced, except for block quotations.

ORDER OF THESIS PAGES

The thesis should be arranged in the following sequence:

1. Title page
2. Preface (optional)
3. Abstract
4. Acknowledgments (optional)
5. Approval sheet (If more than three copies of the thesis are requested or desired, the approval page of any extra set may be photocopied; but the three copies submitted to the Graduate School must have original signatures.)
6. Table of Contents
7. List of Tables (if included)
8. List of Illustrations (if included)
9. Text
10. Literature, List of Works Cited, Bibliographies
11. Appendix

(Samples of some pages are included at the end of this guide. Follow your discipline's manual of style for pages not shown.)

Thesis Chapter Titles

Each chapter should bear the title CHAPTER (followed by appropriate roman numerals in capital letters) centered **two inches from the top of the page**. The title should then appear in capital letters a **triple space (two blank lines) below**. If the title contains more than one line, single space and use inverted pyramid form. Other appropriate headings and subheadings may be used at the discretion of your advisor.

Thesis Abstract

Your thesis must include an abstract, the length of which should be appropriate to your discipline. The page should be headed ABSTRACT (**two inches from the top of page**) and its margins and spacing should be the same as in the body of the thesis. Ordinarily an abstract will include at least three elements: a statement of the problem or purpose of the study, a statement of the procedures followed in the study, and a summary of the conclusions.

Thesis Quality Control

You alone are responsible for the mechanical correctness, typing accuracy, and general neatness of each draft of your thesis. You should carefully proofread each page of your thesis in both preliminary and final drafts. Check for typographical errors, for correct spelling (with special notice to uncommon words and scientific terms), and for proper syllabic division of words at the end of lines. You, and not your typist or your advisor, are solely responsible for the final proofreading before your finished thesis is presented to your committee members for their approval and signatures. Check all pages of your final copies to insure that none are missing and that all pages are free from dark striations.

Photographs and Illustrations

If you are including photograph illustrations, they should be scanned and printed into your text. Any variances must have prior approval of the graduate dean.

PROFESSIONAL PAPERS

Professional research papers are defined as major research papers produced in fulfillment of the master's non-thesis option. Deliver the professional paper to the office of the Graduate School for review and approval before carrying the paper to the library for binding. Three copies of each professional paper are required to be deposited in the library for commercial binding by the library in a standard color other than thesis maroon at the expense of the student.

All professional research papers to be deposited in the library are subject to uniform requirements of form. Follow the consistent format established by the Thesis Guide for paper and print quality, approval page, page margins, and pagination. Title page format for the professional paper is the same as that required for the thesis, except substitute the phrase "A Professional Paper" in place of "A Thesis....". The title and approval pages are to be complete, pagination and text prepared in good order, and all sheets collated in proper sequence for binding.

THESIS FINAL CHECK LIST

- ___1. Body of thesis is double-spaced.
- ___2. Margins are correct. (Top, sides, bottom)
- ___3. Page numbers are consecutive and centered 1" from bottom of page (No pages missing).
- ___4. Title pages have 2" margin from top of pages.
- ___5. Non-title pages are 1" margin from top of page.
- ___6. Page numbering and wording on Table of Contents, List of Tables, Illustrations, etc. match what is in the text of the thesis.
- ___7. Photographs are properly scanned, placed, and are of good quality.
- ___8. Thesis is printed on white, off-white, or ivory 25% cotton bond paper.
- ___9. Original signatures on at least three signature sheets.

SAMPLE PRELIMINARY PAGES BEGIN ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

EXPLORING THE EVALUATION PROCESS AND ASSESSMENT
OF WEB-BASED CLASSROOMS

by
K. Diane Hall

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
MASTER OF ARTS
Major Subject: Communication

West Texas A&M University
Canyon, Texas
May 2002

ABSTRACT

With the World-Wide Web being the fastest growing instructional medium in higher education today, there is a great need to know how to properly evaluate web-based instruction. The literature suggests that web-based instruction is an area that requires a different set of evaluation questions to accurately measure instructor communication, performance, and student learning. Since student ratings have been shown to be valid in a traditional classroom, it was determined to test the validity in a web-based environment. Data results of a student evaluation instrument from a southern university were evaluated by factor analysis and model validation. The factor analysis of online student evaluations resulted in the emergence of three factors rather than five identified in earlier literature by the instrument's developer. Additionally, factor analysis was conducted of the entire dataset of student evaluations, both online and traditional. In comparing the two, the analysis indicated differences in factor three where no questions were the same as opposed to factors one and two that loaded with almost identical questions. Therefore, it was determined that student evaluations of web-based courses need to provide differences in questioning. The model validation of the student evaluation instrument also provided evidence that web-based courses need to be evaluated differently. The fact that three factors emerged from the factor analysis and not the five identified by the instrument's developer, calls into question the validity of this particular evaluation instrument even for traditional instruction.

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This thesis is dedicated to my family: my husband, Jeff, for his unending love, support, and encouragement; my son, Joshua, for being my motivation; and my parents for their encouragement and instilling in me high values and a great work ethic.

Approved:

Chairman, Thesis Committee

Date

Member, Thesis Committee

Date

Head, Major Department

Date

Dean, Graduate School

Date

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