University of Alabama Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Submission Guide

CONTENTS

THE BASICS

Template

 All students are strongly encouraged to use the Graduate School thesis/dissertation template (Microsoft Word), available on the Graduate School's website. Using the template will make the formatting process much easier and ensure that the student's document is correct.

File Name/Format

 In the manuscript's file name, there should be only English letters, Arabic numbers, and underscores. There should be no spaces, periods, commas, @ symbols, dashes, etc.

 The manuscript must be a PDF. Sometimes, when ProQuest converts Word documents to PDFs, the page numbers and spacing are slightly altered in the conversion. Thus, students must double-check the manuscript before and after it is uploaded. Students tend to have fewer problems if the student uploads a PDF copy straight to ProQuest, rather than a Word document.

Font

Font Style

 Every document section must use the same, readable font. Times New Roman is a great choice for this font, though sometimes students in STEM prefer other fonts that are better suited for equations. Avoid comic sans, cursive fonts, sans serif fonts, and any font that may distract a reader. Before submitting manuscripts, students must check every page to ensure that there is only one font used. Sometimes students copy and paste lines of text and forget to standardize the font.

Font Color

The font should always be black. Be particularly careful with the REFERENCES (BIBLIOGRAPHY/WORKS CITED) as often hyperlinks are pasted blue, but even these must be black. Additionally, when text is pasted from AI websites such as CHATGPT it appears a few shades lighter than black (a dark charcoal color). To an experienced reader, this awkward shift in font is obvious. Students' committees decide AI usage (or pasted quotes from elsewhere) in manuscripts. But students must use standardized font. Note: color pictures (tables/figures/examples) are ok, but there should be no color text.

Font Size

The font should always be 12-point size. This includes not only paragraphs of text but also the title page, entries in REFERENCES, headings/subheadings, and headings/titles for tables/figures/examples/equations, etc. Students should follow their chosen style guide for footnote size. Certain style guides make an exception for footnotes to be in a smaller font. Other style guides require them to stay at 12-point, so students must use the standard dictated by their style guide.

Bold Font/Italics

Do not use bold font anywhere on the preliminary pages (Title page, copyright page, and all pages with Roman numeral page numbers). Do not bold headers/chapter titles. Subheadings may be bolded.

Do not italicize major headings/chapter titles, though subheadings may be italicized. But, even if subheadings in-text are italicized, do not italicize their listings in CONTENTS. In general, italics should be used sparingly.

Indentation/Justification

Paragraphs of text in the document should be indented. Check to ensure indentations are a consistent size (one press of the "tab" key should suffice).

The text of the document should be left justified. Page numbers listed in CONTENTS, LIST(s), etc. must be right justified (while their title is left justified).

Certain preliminary pages do not have paragraphs of text and therefore have different rules for justification/indentations. However, the ABSTRACT, DEDICATION, and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS often have paragraphs of text and should therefore be left aligned and indented.

Margins

Each page in the document should have consistent 1-inch side margins on the left and right. Each page in the document should also have a consistent 1-inch bottom margin.

The first page of a major section/chapter (Note: all preliminary sections are major sections, as are REFERENCES and APPENDICES) should have a two-inch top margin. Pages of text that are not at the beginning of a major section should have a 1-inch top margin.

Many students struggle to standardize the 2-inch major section top margins. Students should utilize the template, double-check all major headers, and compare the document to the sample pages before turning in the document. Additionally, many word processors have a sidebar "ruler" function.

Line Spacing

The text in the document should be double-spaced. There should <u>never</u> be extra lines of space between paragraphs of text. Including extra lines of space is a very common

mistake—to remedy this error, settings in the word processor may need to be adjusted to ensure lines of blank space are not automatically added before and/or after paragraphs. Entries in LIST(s), CONTENTS, footnotes, ENDNOTES, and REFERENCES that are longer than one line should be single-spaced within the entry (with double-spacing between separate entries). Copyright information should be single-spaced. Block quotations should be single-spaced. Some parts of the title page should be single-spaced; see the title page section of this document for more information.

Footnotes/Endnotes

Footnotes/Endnotes are not required; however, they may be useful depending on the style guide the manuscript follows (ex: Chicago). Students and their committees determine whether to use footnotes or endnotes, but all footnotes/endnotes must conform to the student's chosen style guide.

Footnotes

Single space footnote entries. Use the same font/font color as the rest of the document and do not use bold font or italics. Follow the instructions of the chosen academic style guide for footnote formatting.

Endnotes

Single space the endnote entries, use the same font/font size as the rest of the document, and do not use bold font or italics. Follow the academic style guide instructions. Treat the endnotes page as a major section/chapter.

Signatures

Any signatures featured in the document should be redacted.

Pagination

All page numbers should be centered exactly at the bottom of the page (not in any of the corners or atop the page). They must be the same font, size, and color as the rest of the document and may not be bolded or italicized.

The page numbers in the text <u>must</u> match the page number listings in CONTENTS, LISTS, etc. Double-check these listings to ensure there are no discrepancies. Converting the document into a PDF or making any edits can cause pagination errors so any new version of the document MUST be double-checked as a PDF before being submitted to ProQuest.

Linking page numbers in CONTENTS/LIST(s) is not required but if done it must link to the correct page (more information on linking in CONTENTS can be found in the "CONTENTS" section of this document).

Roman Numerals on Preliminary Pages

The first page number in the document should be ii on the ABSTRACT. Do not put a page number on the title page or the copyright page. The ABSTRACT MUST start with "ii" not "i" or "iii." Do not add periods after Roman numerals, that is, "iv" is correct but "iv." is not correct. Following the ABSTRACT, Roman numeral numbers must continue throughout the preliminary pages in a proper order. Forgetting these Roman numerals, mixing up the order of them, or using Arabic Numbers on the preliminary pages is a very common mistake.

Preliminary pages also must be listed in CONTENTS with the appropriate Roman numeral page numbers.

Arabic Numbers as Pagination beyond the Preliminary Pages

At the start of the main document (INTRODUCTION or CHAPTER ONE), the pagination must switch to Arabic numbers (1, 2, 3 etc.) starting with 1. The Arabic numbers should then continue throughout the rest of the document (they should not re-start with each

chapter but flow continuously). REFERENCES and appendices also require Arabic page numbers.

Orphans/Widows

Graduate school reviewers often ask students to correct "orphans" or "widows." An "orphan" is a subheading at the bottom of a page with no text following it. A "widow" is a line of text at the top of the page with no text following it.

There should be no orphans and widows anywhere in the manuscript. This includes on the CONTENTS and LIST(s) pages.

Headings/Subheadings

Headings

Headings start each major section/chapter. Each new major section should start on a new page. The heading should be capitalized, centered, below a two-inch top margin, and single-spaced within the entry. There should only be one line of blank space between the header and the main text. As always, headings should be the same font, size, and color as the rest of the text. They should never be bolded or italicized. Text must follow a heading—it cannot be alone on a blank page. Major sections that use headings include: ABSTRACT, DEDICATION, LIST(s), ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, CONTENTS, each CHAPTER/INTRODUCTION/CONCLUSION, REFERENCES, all appendices, and ENDNOTES (if used).

Subheadings

Subheadings can be any style (bolded, italicized, indented a certain way) but they must be the same font and size as the rest of the text. A line of space can be added above/below the subheading or omitted all together. A subheading is not a major heading and should not be

started on a new page. However the subheadings are formatted, they must be consistent. Subheadings must be listed in CONTENTS.

Academic Writing Style Guides

Students may use whichever style guide (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.) suits their manuscript's discipline. It is up to the student and the student's committee to make sure the style is used consistently.

Sometimes, the graduate school's guidelines may slightly differ from the style the student is using. This is because the website ProQuest is an academic publishing company and publishing companies have in-house style rules.

TITLE PAGE

As with anywhere in the document, the title page must use the same 12 pt. black font. Additionally, as with any major section, the page must have a two-inch top margin and one-inch bottom/side margin. There should be no bolding or italics on the title page and no page numbers.

All information on the title page should be center aligned.

The spacing on the title page is very particular, so the graduate school recommends looking at the sample pages and formatting them based on the examples.

Title

The first thing on the title page, under the 2-inch top margin, is the full title of the thesis or dissertation. The title should be in all capital letters, center aligned on the page (centered), and double-spaced. It should be in the shape of an inverted pyramid/triangle. The first few lines are the longest, with each lower line getting shorter. However, if the title is very short, then it may be one or two lines in an inverted pyramid. Below the title are two lines of double-spaced blank

space. The gap ^^^ in this paragraph is the correct size. This space is created by pressing the "return/enter" key twice.

Name and Committee List

Name

After the two lines of blank space below the title should be the word "by." This must be in lowercase letters. Then there will be one line of blank space. This is equivalent to the spaces between the sentences in this double-spaced paragraph. Then, the student's name should be

entirely spelled out, in all capital letters. Then, there will be one line of blank space (Note: the size of the blank space above and below the student's name should match).

Committee List

Below the blank space under the student's name, insert the names of the committee members, single-spaced, in all capital letters. Do not list any degrees after professors' names (incorrect ex: NAME NAME, PhD). Do not list the professors' universities. Do not write "Dr." or any other title. There cannot be two co-chairs; one must be a chair and one is a co-chair. To identify the chair, add a comma after the professor's name then write, in capitalized letters, COMMITTEE CHAIR (or COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR). Under the committee list should be two lines of blank space.

Submission Information

After the two double-spaced lines of blank space under the committee list, in all capital letters, should be either A THESIS or A DISSERTATION (or A DOCUMENT for the Doctor of Music manuscripts). Note: this blank space will match the size of the example on the preceding page. Then, there must be two more double-spaced lines of blank space (note: the space above and below A THESIS should match). After this space, will be the submission information which should be written and spaced as follows:

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of _____ of _____
in the Department of _____
in the Graduate School of
The University of Alabama

Fill in the blanks with the correct information. As with everything else on the title page, this must be centered. The submission information is single-spaced. Below the submission information should be three lines of blank space (the biggest amount of blank space on the title

page). Then, in all capital letters, will be TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA. Below this is one line of blank space then the year of graduation (note: if the thesis is submitted in winter of 2026 but the student will graduate in spring of 2027, 2027 should be on the title page).

COPYRIGHT PAGE

The copyright page is mainly blank. At the bottom of the page, directly above the one-inch bottom margin, will be the copyright information which should be center aligned:

Copyright Jane Smith 2030
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

The student's name and "Copyright" should not be written in all caps, but the second line "ALL RIGHTS RESERVED" should be. There should not be any commas, copyright symbols, or other punctuation on this page. The student's full name must be spelled out. The year listed should be, like the title page, the year of graduation not the year of submission. So, while this example uses 2030 that will likely not be correct. Fill it in with the correct year.

There are no page numbers on the copyright page.

ABSTRACT

The ABSTRACT is the first major section. Therefore, the chapter title (ABSTRACT) should be capitalized, centered, and placed under the two-inch top margin. There should be one line of space between the heading and the text (as there is on this page).

The ABSTRACT should be formatted like the rest of the text: left-aligned indented paragraphs of double-spaced text.

The ABSTRACT <u>cannot</u> exceed 350-words. Check the word count before submitting as it cannot be accepted if it is even one word over 350.

Do not include any graphs, charts, tables, illustrations, or footnotes in the ABSTRACT.

No more than six keywords/phrases may be included at the end of the ABSTRACT.

Page numbers begin on the ABSTRACT with ii and continue chronologically through the rest of the preliminary pages. The page number should be centered at the bottom of the page.

DEDICATION

The DEDICATION is optional. If the manuscript has one, it should be formatted like the rest of the text: left-aligned indented paragraphs of double-spaced text.

The DEDICATION is a major section and should be treated as such.

The page number, which will still be a Roman numeral, should be centered at the bottom of the page.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

The LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS is mandatory only if abbreviations and symbols are used in the manuscript. The abbreviation/symbol in each entry should be left-aligned, with the definition following. The spacing on the list must be consistent.

Entries longer than one line are single-spaced within the entry, but double-spacing should be maintained between separate entries.

The LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS is a major section and should be treated as such.

The page number, which will still be a Roman numeral, should be centered at the bottom of the page.

Viewing the sample pages, and mimicking their format, may help to format the list of abbreviations and symbols.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS page is optional. If there is one, it must be treated as a major section. Format it like the rest of the text: left-aligned indented paragraphs of double-spaced text.

The page number, which will still be a Roman numeral, should be centered at the bottom of the page.

The header may be spelled "ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS" or "ACKNOWLEDGMENTS" (no "e" after the "g") however, make sure the spelling of the CONTENTS listing matches the actual heading (i.e. pick one spelling and stick to it).

CONTENTS

What to Include

CONTENTS must list the page numbers of all major headings and subheadings. Subheadings, though they may seem minor, cannot be excluded. The page numbers MUST be correct; this includes Roman numeral preliminary page numbers. Because the title page and copyright page do not have page numbers, they are not listed in the CONTENTS list. Additionally, do not list the CONTENTS itself as an entry. Always double-check page number listings before uploading a new version of the manuscript.

The spelling, grammar, and capitalization of entries must match what is used in the text. Do not abbreviate or shorten headings in the CONTENTS. The ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS spelling in CONTENTS should match the actual heading. Additionally, appendices are major sections and should be listed in CONTENTS with their full titles. The contents heading should be CONTENTS not TABLE OF CONTENTS. The page numbers of the document may slightly change during the conversion to PDF, so look over all the listings to ensure the information in CONTENTS is still correct.

How to Format

CONTENTS is a major section and should be formatted as one. The page number, which will still be a Roman numeral, should be centered at the bottom of the page.

Headings/Subheading should be left aligned while page numbers are right aligned. There must be a leader (row of at least three periods) stretching between the heading and the page number. If a listing is more than one line, the leader should be attached to the bottom line. Make sure the leader is attached to at least one word and is not on the bottom line without any words.

Subheading listings in the CONTENTS list should be indented hierarchically, with lower level subheadings indented further to the right. Check the sample pages or CONTENTS list in this document for an example.

Entries longer than one line must be single-spaced within the entry with double-spacing between separate entries. Do not split an entry between two pages. Additionally, entries cannot "run over" the page numbers. There should not be words directly above the number.

If listings are hyperlinked in the CONTENTS, review all entries by clicking on them to ensure they take the reader to the appropriate page.

LIST OF TABLES/FIGURES/EQUATIONS/EXAMPLES

Any "LIST" in the preliminary pages is a major section and should be treated as such. It uses Roman numeral page numbers. If tables are present in the manuscript, there must be a LIST OF TABLES. If figures are present in the manuscript, there must be a LIST OF FIGURES. Equations with headers around them need to be listed in a preliminary LIST OF EQUATIONS.

Any list must include CORRECT page numbers for the items listed. The list also must include the item's full title: do not shorten sentence-long titles and do not abbreviate Figure to Fig. or change any other words from the title.

The title of the items listed must be left-aligned, while the page numbers must be right-aligned.

Any Entries longer than one line must be single-spaced within the entry with double-spacing between separate entries. Do not split an entry between two pages. Additionally, entries cannot "run over" the page numbers. There should not be words directly above the number.

Like the listings in CONTENTS, the accuracy of page number listings in any list should be double checked after making any edits. If page numbers are hyperlinked, click on all of them to ensure they take the reader to the correct page.

TABLES/FIGURES

The headings of tables/figures must match the rest of the text: not bolded or italicized and the same font, font size, and font color. The word "figure" can never be abbreviated.

Table headings must be above the table, whereas the figure headings can be above or below the figure depending on the style guide used. For pages in landscape mode, make sure the heading/page number is in landscape mode.

If possible, try not to split a table/figure between two pages, though sometimes this is necessary for larger items. Also, try not to split the table/figure on a different page from its heading. This may create a bit of blank space, but as long as it is not a complete page of blank space, this does not matter.

REFERENCES/WORKS CITED/BIBLIOGRAPHY

The manuscript may have a large REFERENCES section at the very end (treated as a chapter with major section formatting) or a series of References sections after each chapter (treated as subsections of a chapter under subheadings) but not both. The REFERENCES chapter, like the body of the text, uses Arabic numbers for page numbers.

The manuscript may follow any citation style. It is the job of the student's committee to check that citations are properly formatted; however, the graduate school reviewers may point out glaring errors. It is crucial that the student does proper research on how to format citations rather than going by assumptions or using automatically generated citations from various websites (the generated citations are often formatted incorrectly).

As with everywhere else in the manuscript, there should only be one font, in 12 pt. size, and black ink. Change any blue hyperlinks to black.

Citations may or may not be listed with numbers (ex: [1] [2] etc.) depending on the citation style the manuscript follows.

Citations must be single-spaced within a single entry that is longer than one line and double-spaced between separate entries. Do not split a citation between two pages.

APPENDICES

Appendices should be treated as any major section: with a 2-inch top margin, capitalized header, etc. Rather than having one large appendix filled with miscellaneous items, it is better to have a series of appendices (APPENDIX A…, APPENDIX B…, etc.).

Appendices must have a title; for example: APPENDIX A: SUPREME COURT CASES, APPENDIX B: APPEALS COURT CASES, APPENDIX C: TRIAL COURT CASES. Rather than just APPENDIX or APPENDIX A. This title must be written out in the heading as well as in CONTENTS.

IRB Letters

If the research has IRB approval letters they must be included as the final APPENDIX and titled/formatted like the other appendices. The CONTENTS must signify what page has the IRB Approval Letters on it. <u>Any</u> signatures and/or initials must be fully redacted from the IRB letter and everywhere else in the manuscript.