



UNC CHARLOTTE  
The Graduate School

**Manual of Formatting Requirements  
for Theses and Dissertations**

**2014**

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## INTRODUCTION

This guide for the preparation of theses and dissertations at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) is designed to assist graduate students, major professors and other members of graduate advisory committees in understanding the required and optional formatting guidelines of the Graduate School for theses and dissertations. A written thesis is required for most Master of Science degrees and a written dissertation for all Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Education degrees at UNC Charlotte. While individual disciplines may have different ways in which the research at this level may be completed and presented, consistency in certain requirements for formatting is necessary.

In preparing a thesis or dissertation for submission for a master's or doctorate degree, keep in mind that neatness and correctness in form are of importance second only to the accuracy and soundness of the research. This guide will assist you in the preparation of an acceptable thesis or dissertation. It is not intended to be an exhaustive manual or style guide. **The following guidelines are required for all UNC Charlotte theses and dissertations. Do not use another thesis or dissertation as a model for your work, since a particular style or example in a previous work may be incorrect or out of date. The style and format set forth in this manual take precedence over other style manuals and earlier editions of this guide.**

### Continuous Registration

**Students must be enrolled during the term in which they graduate from the University.** Students in graduate degree programs are required to maintain continuous registration for the thesis or dissertation until work is completed. The continuous registration requirement begins with the semester in which the student first registers for thesis or dissertation credit.

### Review by the Graduate School

The Graduate School has staff members who review the formatting of every thesis and dissertation to be sure that they meet the guidelines outlined in this manual. **Make an appointment** as early as possible **before the initial formatting consultation deadline.** All copies of the unbound approved thesis or dissertation **must** be submitted to the Graduate School **by the deadline published on the Academic Calendar** for fall, spring or summer semesters. During the fall and spring semesters, the deadline for submitting the thesis differs from the deadline for submitting the dissertation. The deadlines for the summer sessions are the same for both theses and dissertations. **It is extremely important that you schedule your defense prior to the thesis/dissertation defense deadline as posted on the Academic Calendar. You may not submit the final version of your thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School before completing your defense.**

## PART 1: FORMAT GUIDELINES

**The keys to success in the development of your document are: consistency and following the guidelines in this manual.** Many times it can be difficult and time consuming to correct margins, font changes, tab settings, etc. in the middle of a document. If you set-up your document to agree with the format guidelines listed in this Guide before you begin typing, you will have less risk for error and save time making corrections along the way. See Sample Pages on the Graduate School's website for assistance.

### Type Face and Font Size

**The standard typeface is Times New Roman. Set the font size at 12 point.**

**EXTRA HELP:** Do not use bold, underline or create unusual fonts for chapter titles; do not use running headers or footers. Do not use bold, underline or italics for headings, subheadings, etc. Changes in font style or typeface are not permitted except for inclusion of illustrative or documentary materials such as computer printouts or if required for mathematical expressions. If you are unsure about the acceptability of the typeface you want to use for your final copy of the thesis or dissertation, please verify with the thesis/dissertation reviewer in the Graduate School that it can be used.

### Margins

All copies of a thesis/dissertation must have the following uniform margins:

**Left-hand margin:** 1 ½ inches (to ensure sufficient room for binding)

**Right-hand margin:** 1 inch

**Bottom margin:** a minimum 1 inch

**Top Margin:** 1 inch

**Exceptions:** The copyright page must have a 2 inch Bottom margin, the first page of each chapter must have a Top margin that is 2 inches.

### Spacing and Indentation

- All theses and dissertations are to be typed with **double spacing between lines throughout.**
- Certain sections should be single-spaced, such as: long quotations; table and figure captions, descriptions and footnotes, list of references, literature cited, bibliography, etc. with a double space between each individual reference or computer print-out.
- Tables and figures may appear on the same page with text, separated from the text, above and below, by triple spacing.
- The beginning of each new paragraph must be indented.

**EXTRA HELP:** Be sure to eliminate any extra line spacing that might occur between paragraphs, in front or back of tables, graphs, figures, etc. There should be **no triple or quadruple spacing anywhere** in your manuscript unless specifically listed in this manual.

## Pagination

All pages of the thesis/dissertation, including any appendices, should bear a number except the title page and the first page of each chapter.

### Position of Page Number

- Upper right-hand corner on the margin line at the right
- $\frac{3}{4}$ " from the top of the sheet

## Organization of Parts and Formatting Requirements

Generally, a thesis or dissertation consists of three major parts, but there may be as many as five: the preliminary pages, the text, the reference pages, an appendix, and a vita. The following table contains a list of the required and optional parts, and the order each part should be created within the body of the document.

The optional parts to be included with any thesis or dissertation should be determined by mutual agreement between the student and his or her Advisory Committee. Both required and optional components of the thesis/dissertation are described below.

Parts of a Thesis/Dissertation	Page Numbering Requirements	Formatting Requirements
I) Preliminary pages	lower-case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc)	
a) Title/ Signature Page ( <b>required</b> )	counted as page i, but not numbered	<p>The title/signature page of a thesis or dissertation must bear the following; in the following order:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. a 1" top margin</li> <li>b. The title of the thesis or dissertation typed in all capital letters and centered.</li> <li>c. Skip 3 single spaced lines.</li> <li>d. The word "by"</li> <li>e. Skip 1 single spaced line.</li> <li><b>f. The full legal name of the candidate.</b></li> <li>g. Skip 4 single spaced lines.</li> <li>h. The submission statement single spaced as shown in the sample pages at the end of this guide.</li> <li>i. Skip 1 single spaced line.</li> </ol>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>j. The city in which the committee accepts the work.</li> <li>k. Skip 1 single spaced line.</li> <li>l. The year of graduation.</li> <li>m. Skip 1 single spaced line.</li> <li>n. Approved signature lines as shown in the example at the end of this guide.</li> <li>o. Signatures must be in black or blue ink only</li> <li>p. This page is not numbered but is counted</li> </ul> <p>The title/signature page should follow exactly the spacing and use of capital letters as shown in the sample pages. The title should be centered at the top of the page and, to facilitate interlibrary referencing, it should be pared down whenever possible so it contains only key terms and necessary words. <b>Each copy of the title page must have original signatures in either blue or black ink.</b></p>
b) Copyright Page <b>(required)</b>	lower-case Roman numeral ii	<p>Candidates are strongly advised to register copyright for the thesis or dissertation. Whether or not the copyright is registered, a notice of copyright with the following information <b>must be</b> included with each copy of the thesis or dissertation. Putting the copyright page in your thesis or dissertation notifies the public as to your claim for copyright; however, the legal registration in Washington, D.C. would facilitate litigation if there were ever a case of infringement. Additional information concerning copyright procedures is provided in Part 2 of this manual.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">© 20__ Full Legal Name ALL RIGHTS RESERVED</p> <p>This information should be centered and single-spaced with the <b>last line 2 inches from the bottom of the page</b>. This page is numbered with a small Roman numeral placed ¾" from the top of the paper and 1" from the right edge of the paper. <b>The year of graduation is used on this page.</b></p>

<p>c) Abstract <b>(required)</b></p>	<p>lower-case Roman numeral iii</p>	<p>The abstract page is required, but not listed in the table of contents. The abstract is double-spaced, consisting of the briefest possible summary of the work and conclusions not exceeding one page in length. The heading for the abstract is single spaced and should be constructed as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The word ABSTRACT is centered with a 1" top margin.</li> <li>b. <b>Skip 2 single spaced lines.</b></li> <li>c. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> single spaced line below the word ABSTRACT, type your full legal name in all capitals. Type the title using lower case only except for the first letter of the first word. Type the name of the professor who directed the thesis or dissertation in parentheses and in all capitals. <b>See example</b> in the sample pages at the end of this guide</li> </ol> <p><i>NOTE: The title shown on the abstract page and the title on the title/signature page <b>must</b> be the same.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Skip 2 single spaced lines.</li> <li>e. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> single spaced line below the heading, begin the text of the abstract. The text of the abstract is double spaced. See the example shown at the end of this manual.</li> <li>f. This page is numbered with a small Roman numeral placed ¾" from the top of the paper and 1" from the right edge of the paper.</li> </ol>
<p>d) Dedication Page <b>(optional)</b></p> <p>e) Acknowledgement Page <b>(optional)</b></p>	<p>continue with lower-case Roman numerals</p>	<p>The Dedication page, if used, pays a special tribute to a person(s) who has given extraordinary encouragement or support to one's academic career. The Acknowledgement page should be brief, simple, and free of sentimentality or trivia. It is customary to recognize the role of the advisor, the other members of the advisory committee, and only those organizations or individuals who actually aided in the project. Further, you should acknowledge any outside source of financial assistance, such as GASP</p>

		<p>grants, contracts, or fellowships.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The word DEDICATION or ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS is centered with a 1" top margin.</li> <li>b. Skip 2 single spaced lines.</li> <li>c. On the 3rd single spaced line below the word DEDICATION or ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, begin the text. The text of the dedication is double spaced.</li> <li>d. This page is numbered with a small Roman numeral placed <math>\frac{3}{4}</math>" from the top of the paper and 1" from the right edge of the paper.</li> </ol>
f) Introduction <b>(optional)</b>	continue with lower-case Roman numerals	<p>Depending on the discipline or the requirements of the student's advisory committee, an Introduction may be included as a preliminary page. In this case it should be included before the Table of Contents.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The word INTRODUCTION is centered with a 1" top margin.</li> <li>b. Skip 2 single spaced lines.</li> <li>c. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> single spaced line below the word INTRODUCTION, begin the text. The text is double spaced.</li> <li>d. This page is numbered with a small Roman numeral placed <math>\frac{3}{4}</math>" from the top of the paper and 1" from the right edge of the paper.</li> </ol>
g) Table of Contents <b>(required)</b>	continue with lower-case Roman numerals	<p>The Table of Contents of the thesis or dissertation lists all sections following it, including the List of Tables and List of Figures, if used, and all the headings and subheadings exactly as they appear in the text. <b>Nothing that precedes the Table of Contents should be listed.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. This page should bear the title: TABLE OF CONTENTS centered 1" from the top of the page.</li> <li>b. Skip two single spaced lines.</li> <li>c. On the third single spaced line below the words TABLE OF CONTENTS, list the first entry. The entries are double spaced.</li> </ol>



		<p>d. This page is numbered with a small Roman numeral placed <math>\frac{3}{4}</math>" from the top of the paper and 1" from the right edge of the paper.</p>
<p>h) List of Tables <b>(optional)</b></p> <p>i) List of Figures <b>(optional)</b></p> <p>j) List of Symbols/ Abbreviations <b>(optional)</b></p>	<p>continue with lower-case Roman numerals</p>	<p>If there are any tables or figures appearing in the thesis or dissertation, lists of these may be included. The descriptive titles in these lists must be identical with those in the text, but only the titles and not the explanatory notes, should be included. Each list appears on a separate page. See examples at the end of this guide. When many abbreviations or symbols are used, a separate List of Symbols or List of Abbreviations may be included for the sake of clarity.</p> <p>a. The titles LIST OF TABLES, LIST OF FIGURES, or LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS are in capital letters and centered 1" from the top of the page.</p> <p>b. Skip 2 single spaced lines.</p> <p>c. On the 3rd single spaced line below the heading, list the first entry. The entries are double spaced.</p> <p>d. These pages are numbered with a small Roman numeral placed <math>\frac{3}{4}</math>" from the top of the paper and 1" from the right edge of the paper.</p>
<p>II) Text</p> <p>a) Chapter Title Page <b>(optional)</b></p> <p>b) Text content <b>(required)</b></p>	<p>Arabic numerals <b>(1, 2, 3, 4, etc.)</b></p>	<p>The organization and format of the text should be appropriate to the nature and scope of the research reported. The text must show logical organization; generally, the text includes an introduction or preface, a clear statement of the objectives, an appropriate review of previous research, a description of the materials and methods used in the research, a record of the results obtained, interpretive discussion of results in light of other research, and a summary of the significant findings of the study. Recommendations for future lines of study should also be included.</p> <p>For theses and dissertations of great complexity involving extensive cross-referencing and multiple subheadings, a decimal type of organization is suggested. If the decimal system is</p>

		<p>used for major and minor divisions of the thesis, it must be used throughout the entire thesis or dissertation, including the appendices. It must also be used for numbering equations, tables and figures. Once a suitable system of subdivision is selected, it should be followed <b>consistently</b> throughout the document; combinations of the decimal and the conventional or non-decimal systems are not acceptable. (See example in Table of Contents sample.)</p> <p><i>NOTE: Organizing the thesis or dissertation into chapters is not a Graduate School requirement; however, if you do separate the text into chapters, there is a specific format for the title (heading) of each chapter. See sample pages for examples. <b>Either format is acceptable but be certain to apply one or the other consistently throughout your document.</b></i></p> <p><u>Format for chapter headings:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The first page of each chapter must have a heading that is capitalized and centered with a 2" top margin. <b>The first page of each chapter is counted but the page number is omitted.</b></li> <li>b. Skip two single spaced lines.</li> <li>c. On the third single spaced line below the chapter heading, begin the text. The text is <b>double spaced throughout</b>. The only exceptions are noted within this manual.</li> <li>d. Subsequent pages of the chapter have 1" top margins; page numbers in the text should be placed <math>\frac{3}{4}</math>" from the top of the paper and 1" from the right edge of the paper.</li> </ol> <p>If chapters are not used but the text is still separated into sections (e.g., Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion), each new section must have a heading using the format below:</p> <p><u>Format for non-chapter headings:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Non-chapter headings should be</li> </ol>
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		<p>capitalized and centered with a 1" top margin. The page is counted AND numbered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Page numbers should be placed ¾" from the top of the paper and 1" from the right edge of the paper.</li> <li>c. Skip 2 single spaced lines.</li> <li>d. On the 3rd single spaced line below the heading, begin the text. The text is double spaced.</li> </ul>
III) References/ Bibliography ( <b>required</b> )	Arabic numerals	<p>The thesis or dissertation must include a separate REFERENCES or BIBLIOGRAPHY section. The format of this section must adhere to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The heading of REFERENCES or BIBLIOGRAPHY should be capitalized and centered with a 1" top margin.</li> <li>b. Skip 2 single spaced lines.</li> <li>c. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> single spaced line below the heading, type the first entry.</li> <li>d. All entries are to be single spaced with a double space between entries.</li> <li>e. Pages are numbered with Arabic numerals placed ¾" from the top of the paper and 1" from the right edge of the paper.</li> </ul> <p><i>NOTE: The term Bibliography or References should be used consistently throughout the thesis or dissertation. That is, do not list it in the table of contents as Bibliography and then title it in the body of the text as References.</i></p> <p>The form used for literature citation within the REFERENCES or BIBLIOGRAPHY section of the thesis or dissertation should be determined by the style manual selected by the discipline for which the research is written or by your advisory committee.</p>
IV) Appendices ( <b>optional</b> )	Arabic numerals	<p>The appendices should be used for whatever material you or your advisory committee believes should be included, but would not be appropriate in the text of the thesis or dissertation. Such materials can include:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the original data obtained in the thesis or dissertation research, including computer programs and printouts, surveys, or correspondence;</li> <li>b. detailed descriptions of procedures, which go beyond the general outline of methods and approaches presented in the text;</li> <li>c. a particularly extensive review of the literature and other information that may be useful to future scholars who may wish to delve more deeply into the research topic.</li> </ul> <p>If there is more than one appendix, appendices should be defined both by letters and titles, (Example: APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Appendices must be listed in the table of contents and numbered consecutively following the bibliography/reference pages.</li> <li>b. The title should be capitalized and centered with a 1" top margin.</li> <li>c. Skip two single spaced lines.</li> <li>d. On the third single spaced line below the heading, type the first entry.</li> <li>e. Pages are numbered with Arabic numerals placed <math>\frac{3}{4}</math>" from the top of the paper and 1" from the right edge of the paper.</li> </ul>
<p><b>V) Vita (optional)</b></p>	<p>Arabic numerals</p>	<p>The thesis or dissertation may conclude with a biographical sketch of the author. The sketch should be written in the third person and should indicate birth date and birthplace, where the author earned the bachelor's degree and if applicable the master's degree, professional societies to which the authors belongs, and other professional activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The word VITA is capitalized and centered with a 1" top margin.</li> <li>b. Skip two single spaced lines.</li> <li>c. On the third single spaced line below the heading, begin the text.</li> <li>d. Pages are numbered with Arabic numerals</li> </ul>

		placed $\frac{3}{4}$ " from the top of the paper and 1" from the right edge of the paper.
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### **Inclusion of Photographs and Prints**

Any photographs used in the thesis or dissertation should be of very high quality. Color illustrations are acceptable, but any color photographs, maps and charts included should be as high contrast as possible. Photographs can be photocopied onto rag content-cotton paper if a high-quality copy is obtainable. Color photocopying is also available.

Photographs may be developed on photographic paper cut to 8½ by 11 inches with the correct margins as required throughout the rest of the thesis or dissertation.

Although the above methods for the inclusion of photographs are preferred, you have the option to mount photographs and prints, black and white and/or color, on the same type of paper as that used for other portions of the text. Permanent photo mount spray adhesive, good quality rubber cement or drymounting tissue may be used for mounting. Photo mount corners, transparent tape or staples are not acceptable.

You may discuss these various options with the thesis/dissertation reviewer at the Graduate School during your appointment to review the first version of your thesis or dissertation.

### **Tables and Figures**

Many theses and dissertations include tables and figures either in the text or in the appendices or both. Since the specific purpose and organization of tables and figures may vary widely among the various disciplines, the student should consult the style manual recommended by the advisory committee or the scholarly journals and books in his or her field for guidance in design and organization.

Each table and figure must bear an identifying number and a caption. The caption may consist of a descriptive title or a descriptive title plus explanatory notes; captions may be single spaced.

The term table is used to designate tabulated data; this includes computer printout sheets. The number and caption for the table must be placed above the top line of the table. If any table continues to a following page, the line above the table on the subsequent page should read "Table # (continued)" without repeating the caption.

The term figure is used to designate photographs, half-tone prints, charts, maps, graphs, plates, drawings, diagrams and other mainly nonverbal material. The number and caption for each figure must be placed below the last line or bottom of the figure.

The placement of tables and figures in a thesis or dissertation may be handled in one of the following ways:

- a. Each table or figure may be inserted in the text as near as practicable following the first reference to it in the text;
- b. Tables and figures may be grouped at the end of each chapter;

- c. Tables and figures may be grouped at the end of the thesis or dissertation.

Tables and figures may appear on the same page with text, separated from the text, above and below, by triple spacing. Two or more tables and/or figures may be grouped together on a single page, provided that they fall within the required margins. Tables and figures printed sideways (landscape printing) rather than in the normal upright position (portrait printing) should be oriented such that the top of the table or figure is located at the left or binding side of the paper, and the number and caption should be located at the top of the table or beneath the figure. The page number, however, will remain in the same upright location. In other words, all pages that are numbered would read in order when fanned, with all page numbers being in the same location on each sheet. [Note: Table pages must maintain the 1½" left margin.]

### **Oversized Material**

If you have trouble fitting large tables or figures within the margins of a page, consider the following options:

- a. You may place the table or figure sideways (landscape) on the page, rotating it 90° counterclockwise from its normal position. Place the illustration number and legend sideways also so that all parts can be conveniently read together. Place the page number in the same location as for the other pages, in the upper right corner of the sheet in its unrotated position.
- b. You may place the number and legend on a facing page preceding the table or figure. Type them so that they will be read in the same direction as the illustration (rotated 90° if necessary). Place the page number on the reverse side so that it reads in order with all the other pages. In other words, all pages that are numbered would read in order when fanned, with all page numbers being in the same location on each sheet.
- c. You may photo-reduce the body of the illustration to meet margin requirements. Do not reduce the figure number, legend, or page number.

### **Footnotes/Endnotes**

The student should check with his or her department to determine whether or not the use of footnotes is appropriate form or style for that discipline. If footnotes are used, they should be employed consistently throughout the thesis or dissertation.

It is established practice in some disciplines to place footnotes at the end of each chapter. These are called endnotes and their use is acceptable; however, footnotes are preferred for doctoral dissertations since this allows the paper to be read continuously from beginning to end on microfilm.

For footnotes only, not endnotes, 10 point font is acceptable.

## **Reproducing the Thesis or Dissertation**

Copies or reproductions must be printed single sided on 8½ x 11 white 100% cotton paper. Any duplicating process that is used must produce a permanent, sharp, high-contrast black image suitable for microfilming. Caution should be used in selecting the duplicating process to be sure that the copy produced is completely free of spots, lines, smudges or other blemishes. The Graduate School will refuse any copies, which do not meet the requirements for paper type or are not suitable for binding or microfilming. It is strongly recommended that you select a typist carefully. Students who use more than one typist for the thesis or dissertation run a great risk of various irregularities. You may expect to get a neater copy if you engage a typist who has had experience in preparing theses or dissertations than if you undertake to type your own or entrust your theses to typists with little experience in this area. In any case, an understanding about corrections in the finished thesis or dissertation should be arrived at in advance. The typist should be furnished a copy of these guidelines and informed of the necessity for strict adherence to the regulations herein. The typist also should be furnished a copy of any other published or departmental (or college) rules of style required to be used. The Graduate School will not accept a thesis or dissertation that is incorrect in matters of style and form.

Thesis and dissertation copies are sent for binding at the end of the graduation term.

**See Thesis Submission Procedures and Dissertation Submission Procedures for Further Instructions**

## PART 2: COMMON MISTAKES

To help you in the final submission of your thesis or dissertation, sample pages of various parts of the document have been included in the following pages of this formatting guide.

### **Common Mistakes**

1. Proper usage of the word ‘effect’ versus the word ‘affect’
2. Failure to proof-read
3. Citation errors
4. Formatting of Margins
5. Accurate page numbering
6. Accurate placement of the page number on a landscaped page.

### **EXTRA HELP:**

- ✓ Find out what style manual you should be using to cite your references and give credit where credit is due.
- ✓ Know the difference between the word effect and affect.
- ✓ Proof read your document, and have others proof read your document.
- ✓ Follow this formatting guide.
- ✓ Check the “How To” pages of the Graduate School website for help with margins and page numbering.