



# Master's Thesis Format Manual

Revised October 2025

The rules in the formatting guidelines of this manual take precedence over all other manuals and must be used in conjunction with programs' preferred style manual.

This manual is provided by the University of Northern Colorado Graduate School. No publication manual can anticipate all potential questions that students may have. Staff in the Graduate School are happy to respond to students' questions. Please direct inquiries to:

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## **General Information**

This manual is organized by topic areas to facilitate easy location of information needed to format and submit a final thesis. Most the formatting requirements are the same regardless of whether a student is writing a traditional or journal format thesis. Differences among the types of documents are noted in the formatting manual where relevant. Refer to the Appendixes for examples. For more information on how to set up your document in Microsoft Word, check the Thesis, Scholarly Project and Dissertation Resources page of the Graduate School Website <https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/student-resources/current-students/thesis-capstone-dissertation-resources.aspx>.

### **Hiring a Typist**

If you choose to employ a typist or editor you are responsible for selection of, payment to, and communication with the contracted individual or company. The Graduate School maintains a list of individuals who have extensive experience with our guidelines. This implies no endorsement of listed typists, nor are students restricted to hire only those on our list; however, whomever you hire must follow the UNC Graduate School guidelines. It is your responsibility to clearly define the work you expect done, whether it is a full proofreading, formatting, or somewhere in-between. Before hiring a typist, see the list of questions to ask yourself and prospective typists/editors on the Graduate School website.

A competent typist has up-to-date equipment in good repair and works with the author to ensure reflection of the Graduate School specifications for the thesis. Make your instructions precise and include the title and edition of the style manual your program follows, as well as the style manual from the Graduate School. It is your responsibility to ensure that they have the appropriate style manuals required by the school and content area. We expect ongoing communication to define the role of the typist or editor. The student must approve and proofread the work prior to turning it into the Graduate School.

### **Research and Publishing Standards and Academic Integrity**

#### ***Use of Copyrighted Materials***

At least one semester before graduation, students should obtain permission to include any borrowed or adapted figures, images, scales in their thesis. Example of a permission request letter [https://libguides.unco.edu/ld.php?content\\_id=62001472](https://libguides.unco.edu/ld.php?content_id=62001472)

- Author must include permission to reuse or adapt copyrighted material from the copyright holder in the Appendix of final document.
- Examples include scales, instruments, questionnaires, photos, figures, images, tables, musical examples, extended quotes, etc.
- Cite all copyrighted material according to the program's style manual (APA, MLA, Turabian, etc.).

For additional information regarding requirements for copyright permission and definitions of “fair use,” search the following websites (links included, however they can change frequently):

- Copyright Law <https://www.copyright.gov/title17/title17.pdf>.
- Overview of Copyright Basics <https://libguides.unco.edu/copyright, www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html>.
- APA Copyright and Permissions Information, <https://www.apa.org/about/contact/copyright>
- APA Stock Photos <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/clip-art-references>
- Turabian in the Chicago Manual of Style <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/book/ed17/part1/ch04/toc.html>
- ProQuest provides a description of copyright regulations specifically for theses and dissertation as well as an example of the content to include in a copyright permission letter in the following document:  
[http://media2.proquest.com/documents/UMI\\_CopyrightGuide.pdf](http://media2.proquest.com/documents/UMI_CopyrightGuide.pdf)

### ***Plagiarism***

To encourage and foster academic excellence, the University expects students to conduct themselves in accordance with generally accepted norms of scholarship, research, and professional writing. As such, the University does not tolerate any form of academic misconduct. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, copyright infringement, and knowingly or reckless unauthorized collaboration. Academic misconduct is an unacceptable activity in scholarship and directly conflicts with academic and professional ethics and morals.

The related issue of self-plagiarism (also referred to as text recycling, duplicate publishing) occurs when students reuse material or content from previous works without appropriate quotation, citations, and inclusion of your previous work in the references. Students found to have plagiarized material or text within their thesis may be subject to an “F” on the work in question or other academic penalties as explained in the Dean of Students Code of Conduct and may result in revocation of the graduate degree. (UNC Dean of Students Office Code of Conduct; <https://www.unco.edu/dean-of-students/pdf/Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>.)

### ***Policy on the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Theses and Dissertations***

As the culminating work of academic writing and research produced by a student in fulfillment of the requirements of a doctoral or master’s degree program, a thesis or dissertation is expected to be the student’s original work. A student must not submit a thesis or dissertation that contains written content, images, tables, references, or data generated by artificial intelligence (AI) tools. Students who violate this policy will be subject to university disciplinary procedures for academic misconduct and possible termination of their degree program. (If a thesis or dissertation is on the subject of generative AI and requires the use of examples, the

student must properly identify the material as products of generative AI and appropriately cite the generative source.)

Generative AI may be used for the purpose of third-party editorial assistance to offer advice on:

- Correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
- Correct formatting of margins, headings, and citations according to the style manual specified by the student (APA, Turabian, MLA).
- Make suggestions on writing style, such as shortening long sentences, without changing the meaning of the text.

The student is responsible for checking that the formatting revisions suggested by generative AI are correct.

Generative AI may **not** be used to:

- Create content for any part of the thesis or dissertation.
- Change the text to clarify or develop ideas or arguments.
- Correct the accuracy of information in the text (including tables, formulas, or other non-prosaic elements)
- Reduce the length of the document.

The generative AI policy also applies to written comprehensive exams in all graduate degree programs.

### ***Research with Human Participants***

All research projects conducted under the auspices of the university (e.g. by faculty, students, or staff) involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Faculty, students and staff planning human research must submit requests for IRB approval prior to any data collection.

If your research involves human participants, refer to the Office of Sponsored Programs website for application and IRBNet instructions, <http://www.unco.edu/research/research-integrity-and-compliance/institutional-review-board/>. Download your IRB Approval letter from Streamlyne and include them in the appendix of your thesis.

### ***Research with Animal Subjects***

If your research involves animal subjects you are required to submit an application to the Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC), signed by their Research Advisor, and receive approval prior to beginning research involving animal subjects. If you are doing animal-related research, refer to the website for Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC) <https://www.unco.edu/research/research-integrity-and-compliance/iacuc/>. Include official documentation of an approved IACUC application in an Appendix of your thesis.

## ***Maintaining Confidentiality in Research***

Unless specifically allowed by IRB approval, confidentiality of participants and location of research must be maintained. Be careful not to publish enough information that the participants or location of your study can be identified. Remove all information that links you to the participants, which identifies the school, your relationship or employment to the research location as it could narrow down the participants. Include the permission from the school or institution where you did research, redacting any information that would make the school identifiable, such as a logo, name, address, town or other identifying abbreviations or characteristics.

## **Format Structure Options**

Below are brief descriptions of the three options currently available at University of Northern Colorado for structuring a master's thesis. If the traditional five-chapter model does not fit your study, you may consider the options below. Work closely with your committee to determine the appropriate structure for your thesis. If your program has a specific layout or structure which has already been approved by the Graduate School, you are expected to follow the program's guidelines.

### **Traditional Format**

The body of the traditional format for a study consists of five chapters (titles of chapters may vary to fit discipline. If this is the case, you do not need to turn in a request for an Alternate Format.):

- Chapter I –Introduction to the Study
- Chapter II – Review of the Literature
- Chapter III – Methodology
- Chapter IV – Results
- Chapter V – Discussion and Conclusions

### **Journal Manuscript Format**

This format contains one or more chapters as separate journal manuscripts, with each manuscript addressing separate identifiable, underlying themes or lines of research within the overall study. It will include five to six chapters:

- Chapter I – Introduction, explains how the individual studies (if including two or more journal manuscripts) are related. If you are only including one, thoroughly explain the topic, rationale for the study, and research questions you are exploring.

- Chapter II – Review of Literature, a comprehensive exploration of the framework underlying the thesis research. Alternatively, the material from Chapters I and II may be combined into a single chapter, e.g., “Introduction and Review of Literature.” If so, change the subsequent chapter numbers accordingly.
- Chapter III – Methodology, an in-depth description of the research design(s) and methods.
- Chapter IV and V – Journal Manuscript Title/s will be specific to your study or studies - a minimum of one stand-alone manuscript chapters is required for a master's thesis using the journal manuscript format. Text in the manuscript chapter/s will likely duplicate material included in the first chapters of your thesis. The goal is to have a journal article "ready to go" to a journal for consideration.
- Chapter V or VI – Results, provide a summary of the work and a synthesis of results of the overall study.

### ***Unique Considerations for the Journal Manuscript Format***

Manuscript chapter/s included within UNC thesis must represent work conducted by the student while enrolled in a UNC graduate program and cannot have been used to obtain another degree.

**Abstracts.** Include an overall abstract for the thesis which explains the overall study and how the separate studies are related. You have the option of including a separate abstract in each journal article chapter specific to that study. The journal article abstract would be more focused on one topic than the broader spectrum of the overall thesis abstract.

**Acknowledgements.** Include only at the beginning of the thesis and not in the separate chapters or manuscripts.

**Authorship.** The student must be the sole author, or first co-author of each article submitted as a manuscript chapter. Works co-authored with one or more faculty must include a summary of the contributions made by the student and by the faculty author(s) on the chapter title page. If you include a previously published article that has multiple authors, you, the student, must obtain permission from all co-authors before including the article in the thesis. Include co-author permissions in the thesis appendix and retain copies of such permissions for your personal records.

**Copyright Release.** Before including published or accepted articles for publication in your thesis, obtain a copyright release or permission from the journal or publisher. Include a note on the first page of chapter acknowledging previous publication of the material. The Graduate School will not accept a thesis for final submission without receipt of the copyright release(s). Manuscripts under review or that have not been submitted for publication do not need a copyright release.



**Table of Contents.** List the Contributions of Authors (first page of journal chapters) and correlating page numbers in the main thesis table of contents. You will not include a table of contents within the journal manuscript chapter/s.

**General Formatting.** All formatting requirements for the manuscript chapters are identical to those of the non-manuscript chapters. For example, apply the same margins, line spacing, heading styles, and editorial styles (e.g., APA style, Chicago, Geological Survey of America, ASA, MLA, etc.) throughout, regardless of the editorial style guidelines in targeted journal(s). Maintaining uniform formatting throughout the document establishes that the UNC thesis represents a unified body of work as well as facilitates a professional appearance of the overall document. Digital reproductions or reprints of previously published manuscripts are not acceptable in the thesis.

**Reference List.** Include a comprehensive reference list at the end of the thesis which includes all references cited in the entire thesis. You may choose whether or not to include separate journal manuscript reference lists in the manuscript chapter(s) which include only the sources from that article.

### **Alternate Format**

Some researchers prefer to organize and present their work in formats that are either unique to a certain discipline or that more effectively communicate the research based on a particular paradigm. For example, a student conducting a critique of an artist or an artistic style or a dramaturgical study may request a presentation format that is unique to that student's discipline.

At least one semester prior to plans to graduate, the student's research advisor must send an email explaining the alternate style, including rationale and an outline or pertinent examples, to the Thesis and Dissertation Specialist at the Graduate School. Obtain approval from the Graduate School *before* writing begins. Format and other guidelines within this manual apply to the alternate format unless specified in the Alternate Format Request.

### **Overall Formatting Requirements**

Typeface affects the physical appearance of a manuscript more than any single element. The following style parameters are mandatory for all UNC Graduate Publications, even though they may conflict with program style manuals. *Do not copy* format from a previously published thesis in lieu of an up-to-date style manual and the current version of the *Master's Thesis Format Manual*.

### **Page Size and Layout**

- Standard pages should be 8.5" x 11" on Portrait Layout.

- Larger page size (8.5" x 14", 11" x 17", or custom sizes) may be used for large tables, figures, musical scores, and maps. They must all follow the same margins and pagination rules as the rest of the dissertation.
- Landscaped Pages - Format landscaped pages so electronic readers do not need to turn their device to read.

### **Font Style and Size**

- Use the same size and style font throughout the entire document, including page numbers, size 12, Times New Roman or Arial are preferred.
- Within long tables, you may use no smaller than 8-point font. Keep the table number, title, and figure number and captions the same size as the rest of the thesis.
- Use bold and italicized font sparingly within the body of the thesis, saving them for use in headings and titles or for the first time introducing a key term, as required by style manual guidelines.

### **Margins**

- Apply 1-inch margins on all pages of the thesis including the preliminary pages, main body of the document, reference list, tables, figures, and appendices.
- Exceptions: the first page of each chapter and new section start 2 inches from the top of the page, 1 inch below the 1-inch margin setting. (Space down, don't change the margin on these few pages):
  - Signature Page,
  - Abstract,
  - Acknowledgments,
  - Table of Contents,
  - Lists of Tables/Figures,
  - Chapters (first page only),
  - References, and
  - Appendix title pages.
- Bottom margin may appear larger due to moving widowed or orphaned lines.
- Do not justify the text - keep right side of text jagged rather than even.
- Do not use a running head (the title or author name at the top or bottom of each page).

## **Paragraph Settings**

- Double-space (only 1 blank line between lines of text.) Do not add extra space between paragraphs or above or below headings. (In MS Word Paragraph Settings, set Before and After to 0 pt. throughout document.)
- Paragraph indents, bullets and numbered lists should be set at ½ inch.
- Block indents – most styles require ½ inch indent, but if style manual allows a different setting, follow those settings.

## ***Widowed and Orphaned Lines***

- When you must divide a paragraph at the end of a page, place at least two lines at the bottom of the page and at least two lines at the top of the following page.
- Do not leave a heading at the bottom of a page without the related paragraph – move heading to the following page so it stays with the paragraph.

## ***Line Spacing***

- Double-space the narrative of the manuscript (one blank line between lines of text.) with these exceptions:
  - Two or more-line headings (single-space).
  - Block indent and single-space Hypotheses, Research Questions, Aims, Goals, and Objectives.
  - Single-space footnotes, table titles, and figure captions.
- Remove “extra” space between paragraphs and above and below headings. (In MS Word Paragraph Settings, set Before and After to 0 pt.)

## **Figures, Examples and Tables**

- Figures, examples, and tables follow within one page of the related discussion.
- Text and tables, figures or examples may appear on the same page, however, do not break into the middle of a sentence or paragraph to insert it, place it at the end of a paragraph.
- Align all figures, examples, tables, and their correlating names and labels with the left margin.
- Neatly organize tables. Do not combine multiple tables into one long table; keep them simple and clean.

- Do not include “raw data” in tables such as unedited interview transcripts or computer output.
- Short tables - begin and end on the same page.
- Long tables – always start at the top of the page, single-space table content, and continue to the following page(s) if necessary. If the table goes on to more than one page, include “Table #, continued” at the top of each subsequent page. Repeat column headings on each subsequent page.
- Make titles of tables, examples, and figures concise. Include all in a list of tables, list of examples, or list of figures worded exactly as they appear in the body of the thesis. If explanatory information is added to the title, do not place this material in the List of Tables, List of Examples, or List of Figures (each list starts on a new page in the preliminary section, after the Table of Contents).
- Table, Figure, and Example title/label and Note location are placed according to your program’s style manual.
- Table and figure numbering: Choose one of the following numbering styles, and use throughout your document:
  - numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals throughout the manuscript.
  - chapter or appendix prefix in the table number, with table numbering starting again with table 1 in each chapter or appendix, such as:
    - tables in Chapter II would be Table 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, etc.
    - tables in Appendix C would be Table C.1, C.2, C.3
  - Include appendix table titles in the List of Tables
  - Do not include chapter numbering if tables only appear in one chapter.
- Place table and figure titles outside the borders of the table or figure (not in a table cell, for example).
- Wide tables must use landscape orientation, allow for the 1-inch margin at the "top" of the table and the title oriented to read above the table.
- Larger page size (8.5” x 14”, 11” x 17”, or custom sizes) may be used for large tables, figures, musical scores, and maps.

### ***Chapter or Section Heading Format***

- Style, format, and position of headings should follow rules in the publication style manual you are using, e.g., APA, Chicago, Geological Society of America, MLA, etc. Consistent use of heading formats simplifies creating a table of contents. These rules also apply:

- Chapter title is not counted as a “level” in determining the heading format. The “First-Level Heading” starts after the title. Start over with “First-Level” in every new chapter.
- Do not use acronyms or abbreviations in title or headings. Spell them out.
- If two (or more) headings appear together (without a paragraph between), leave 1 blank line between the headings, and double-space (one blank line) between the heading and the text that follows. Consistently format headings throughout the document. See examples in the appendices.

### ***Title and Heading Length Limits***

- Centered titles and headings longer than 4 inches, divided into multiple, single-spaced, first lines longer than the next in all cases.
- Side headings longer than 4 inches, divided into multiple lines and single-spaced, first lines longer than the next in all cases.
- Apply to all centered and flush left titles and headings. Do not apply to paragraph headings (such as 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> levels in APA format.)

### **Page Numbering**

- Set page numbers inside a page header or footer, within the margin so the number does not overlap into the text of the dissertation.
- Use the same font size and style in page numbering as used in the body of the document.

### ***Preliminary Pages - Roman Numerals***

- Do NOT insert page numbers on the copyright, title and signature pages.
- Number the preliminary pages with lower-case Roman numerals, bottom center of the page.
- Start showing page numbers on the Abstract, beginning with the number iii and continue until the first page of the thesis.

### ***Body of the Thesis - Arabic Numerals***

- Arabic numbers begin with the first page of the Preface or Chapter I, and continue throughout the study, references, and appendices in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

- Use the same font size and style on page numbers as the rest of the thesis.
- Include the page number on the first page of each chapter as this is the page shown in the Table of Contents.

### **Research Hypotheses and Research Questions**

Block indent ½ inch and single-space each question with double-spacing between questions. If you are using guiding questions, aims or assumptions, follow these same formatting guidelines using A1, A2, etc. for Aims or Assumptions, and Q1, Q2, and so on for all types of questions. Use this same format wherever in the thesis you repeat the questions, goals, aims, assumptions, objectives or hypotheses. For example:

- Q1     To what extent does nurse work environment and level of burnout explain patients' satisfaction with care?
- Q2     How do teachers interpret social interactions among children with hearing impairments?

Many investigations include formal statements of research hypotheses in the thesis. Use the same format as used above for research questions. Number research hypotheses H1, H2, etc. and indent as a blocked quotation. Use this same format wherever in the thesis you repeat the full hypothesis. For example:

- H1     Group study will result in higher achievement scores than individual study among graduate students enrolled in introductory level statistics courses.
- H2     Practice of a mental function will produce more rapid future learning of that mental function.
- H3     Attitudes toward occupational roles are related to behaviors and expectations associated with those roles.

Occasionally, a student might state statistical hypotheses, including null hypotheses, in addition to research hypotheses; if so, type them as H01, H02, and so on.

### **Wording of Scholarly Components**

All statements of purpose, aims, objectives, and goals must be worded consistently throughout the document. The Graduate School will allow some variation in wording, but the meaning of the original purpose, aims, objects, and goals must remain the same.

## **Format Requirements of the Thesis**

This section identifies and details the order of the final thesis regardless of which structure you choose. Examples of specific pages are in the Appendix. All pages must follow the 1-inch left margin requirements.

### **Preliminary Pages**

#### ***Copyright Page***

Copyright subsists in accordance with this title, “original works of authorship fixed in any tangible medium of expression, now known or later developed, from which they can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated, either directly or with the aid of a machine or device” (U.S. Copyright Act of 2009, <http://www.copyright.gov/title17/92chap1.pdf>). This means that the Copyright Act protects a thesis as soon as the author creates it. Registration of copyright is not required to protect the work against unrestricted distribution of the manuscripts or significant portions thereof, however, registration may be beneficial if going to court over plagiarism issues or copyright infringement.

Many students register their thesis formally for copyright in order to establish proof of date and source of authorship. Students either register it themselves on the webpage for the U.S. Copyright Office, <http://www.copyright.gov>, or request that ProQuest Information and Learning (PQIL) process the copyright (this requires publishing through ProQuest). Those working with PQIL must have a copyright page and the payment will be made directly to PQIL when uploading the digital thesis to ProQuest. The copyright page should include the student’s name in full since the copyright is a legally binding document.

The copyright page is not numbered and is placed before the title page. It is not required, but is highly recommended. You do not need to register the copyright with the Library of Congress in order to include a copyright page.

#### ***Title Page***

Example of UNC format in the Appendix.

- Follow University of Northern Colorado layout, using the same font size and style as the rest of the thesis.
- Include the full thesis title in all capital letters, centered between the margins.
- If the title is longer than 4 inches, use an inverted pyramid format with the first line no longer than 4 inches and each subsequent line shorter than the previous line. Single-space the title if it requires two or more lines.
- Spell out abbreviations or acronyms in the title.

- If a title begins with an Arabic numeral, spell out the number, e.g., 21<sup>st</sup> Century would be written as Twenty-First Century; the only exception is for chemical compounds, e.g., 8-METHYL-6-THIOPURINE, for which numerals are permitted to begin a title.
- Center your full name as it appears in URSA. Make name changes through the Registrar's Office before submitting thesis for review.
- The title and student's full name must match the name and title on the copyright page, abstract, and signature pages.
- Date should be the month and year that the final degree is awarded (graduation month and year.)
- This page is not numbered.

### ***Signature Page***

Example of the thesis copy may be found in the Appendix. The signature page in the thesis does not include signatures to protect faculty from identity theft.

- The signed signature page with the committee signatures is NOT included in the final thesis that is viewable to the public. *The signed signature page is turned in for official UNC records.*
- Follow the University of Northern Colorado layout of this page.
- The title and author's (student's) full name must match the name and title on the copyright page, title page, abstract, and signature page.
- Type thesis committee member's names and academic credentials (e.g., D.A., D.M.A., D.M.E., Ed.D., Ph.D., or other specific degree) below their 'signature' line.
- Do not use acronyms or abbreviations in the title.
- This page is not numbered.

### ***Abstract***

Example of UNC format in the Appendix.

- Author Citation at the top of the abstract page is single spaced with a hanging indent on second and subsequent lines.



- Unless you will publish your thesis through ProQuest Information and Learning (PQIL), record it as an "Unpublished Master's Thesis."
- Author name and title on the abstract author citation should match those on the title and signature pages.
- Title should be in sentence case in the Abstract since it is a citation.
- The abstract is a brief description of the research topic, significance, methods, results, implications, and conclusions in a concise manner. There is no page or word limit for the abstract (350 words or less are recommended).
- Double space the abstract.
- Number the first page of the abstract with page iii using lowercase Roman numeral at the bottom center of the page, in the footer (within the margin.)

### ***Acknowledgments or Dedication (Optional)***

- This is where the author may record of the author's indebtedness to faculty members, student colleagues, typists, friends, funding agencies, and others who contributed to the study's completion as well as acknowledging the copyright holders and include reference to permission granted to use previously copyrighted materials appearing in the dissertation. Include permissions in the appendix.
- If you include journal manuscripts in your thesis, you may want to go into more detail about the contributions co-authors (if any) made to your research and article.
- Write acknowledgments in a dignified manner and follow the same formatting requirements as the body of the thesis.
- Number the acknowledgements (or dedication) pages sequentially after the Abstract pages and place the lower case Roman numerals in the bottom center of the page, in the footer (within the margin.)

### ***Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures***

An example of a manually created table of contents is in the Appendix and the automatic TOC (MS Word feature) is in the front of this manual.

- The first entry in the Table of Contents either the first page of the PREFACE (if applicable) or CHAPTER I.
- Include every chapter, title, (and its respective page number) and at least one level of heading in the Table of Contents.

- Use Roman numerals for the chapter numbers in the Chapter and the Table of Contents.
- Page numbers should be flush at the right margin while keeping the chapters and headings cleanly aligned at the left.
- Use exactly the same wording in the Table of Contents as the chapter titles and headings that appear in the body of the manuscript.
- If tables and/or figures appear in the thesis, include separate lists for the List of Tables, List of Figures, or List of Examples following the same formatting rules as for the Table of Contents. Start each separate list on a new page.
- Number pages of the Table of Contents (and lists of tables, figures or examples) with lowercase Roman numerals continuing from the previous page, bottom center of the page in the footer (within the margin.)

## **Body of Thesis**

The body of the thesis consists of the study itself. It should conform with the style manual appropriate to the discipline or type of research conducted (e.g., APA, Chicago, Turabian, American Chemical Society, or American Sociological Society, etc.) and this *Master's Thesis Format Manual*. If there is a difference in style between the program's adopted style manual and Graduate School format, the Graduate School format overrides the program style manual. If you have questions, contact the Thesis and Dissertation Specialist in the Graduate School

## ***Preface (Optional)***

Normally, there is no reason to include a preface in the thesis because an introduction is contained within the first chapter. Only in cases where the genesis of the undertaking is important for an understanding of the work, or where the method of research or other aspect of the investigation is out of the ordinary, would you include a preface.

## ***Main Text of Thesis***

Example of UNC format for first page of each new chapter and section in the Appendix.

- The main text of the thesis starts with page 1 of Chapter I.
- Start numbering on page 1 of the thesis with Arabic numerals, top right of the page, in the header (within the margin.)
- Follow up-to-date heading style and format adopted by your program (e.g., APA, Chicago, Turabian, American Chemical Society, Geological Survey of America, or

American Sociological Society, etc.). Remember, the Chapter number and Chapter Title are not first level headings.

- Indicate IRB (Institutional Review Board) and/or IACUC (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee) approval in the methods section if your research involves either human participants or animal subjects.
- Use consistent spacing after end of the sentence punctuation, e.g., using one or two spaces consistently following a period or question mark.

### ***Reference Citations, Reference List, or Bibliography***

- Format citations, footnotes and reference listings in accordance with the program's adopted style guide (i.e., APA, Turabian, Chicago, Geological Society of America, MLA, etc.).
- Check author citations and reference listings for name order, spelling, and year match. Recite ([www.reciteworks.com](http://www.reciteworks.com)) is an independent website (they charge a nominal fee) that is very helpful to find issues with following APA. Recite compares citations to your reference list, checking spelling (including accents), order of authors, and years - what takes me hours, it checks in a few minutes. If you don't wish to pay for the service, it is your responsibility to check them manually.
- Every reference cited must be in the reference list.
- Every author or group in the reference list must be cited in the thesis. If not, remove them from the reference list.
- Do not allow a reference listing to divide in the middle; keep full listing on the same page.

### ***Appendices***

Example of UNC format of Appendix Title page in the Appendix.

- Include a separate title page for each appendix.
- List the appendix title and page number in the Table of Contents.
- Make format consistent with the rest of the thesis, including margins, page numbering, and clarity of scanned images.
- Make reductions clear and readable.

- Include permission letters for any copyrighted materials included in your document.
- Include the IRB or IACUC approval in an appendix, if applicable.

### Final Checklist

Whether or not you employ a typist or editor, it is your responsibility to check the thesis before turning into the Graduate School for review. Turn in the review copy electronically by the “Last day for filing Master’s Thesis...” on the Graduation Deadlines found on the Graduate School website. <https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/student-resources/current-students/> The entire document must satisfy the professional standards maintained by the Graduate School of the University of Northern Colorado.

- \_\_\_\_\_ If you have included figures, scales, data, previously published materials or adaptations of the aforementioned, have you obtained and included appropriate copyright permissions letters in your appendix?
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you are using the journal manuscript format, have you included permission to include a published journal article as one of your dissertation or scholarly project chapters?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do all pages in the document, including preliminary pages and appendixes, have a 1-inch left margin?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is your name identical as shown in URSA on the title page, signature page, and abstract citation and copyright page?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the title match exactly on title page, signature page, and abstract?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the date at the bottom of the title page the month and year that your degree will be awarded?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are all committee members and their committee roles (e.g., Advisor, Committee Member,) listed on the signature page?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the Table of Contents reflect the exact titles, headings, and subheadings as they appear in the text? Does it reflect correct page numbers for all entries? Every time you make changes, recheck the page numbers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do List of Tables, List of Figures and List of Example entries reflect identical titles and page numbers as found in the text?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you changed the proposal wording from future to past tense in the final version of *all* chapters? Have you removed the word "proposal" from the title page and document.?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you numbered the preliminary pages with lower case Roman numerals, and changed the numbering to Arabic numerals on page 1 of the study?

- \_\_\_\_\_ If applicable, did you explain the informed consent process for a study involving human participants (subjects) and indicate receipt of IRB or IACUC approval in your methods section? Did you include a copy of the IRB or IACUC Approval in your Appendix, if using either human participants or animal subjects?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you masked the identity of the participants and/or location of your research to maintain confidentiality?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does every chapter start on a new page and start 2 inches from the top of the page?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you eliminated “widows and orphans” from the document?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you double-checked the spelling, author order, and year of every citation and reference listing? If a source has not been cited in the chapters, remove the listing from the references.

### **Submitting Your Final Thesis**

#### **Defending the Thesis**

- Schedule your defense with your committee and the program office according to program requirements. It is not done through the Graduate School.
- If the committee requests changes to the content, the research advisor may wait to sign the signature page until changes are accepted. The Graduate School will not accept a thesis for review if the committee has not approved and signed the signature pages.
- After the defense, if your advisor has not provided the digital signature page, contact the Thesis and Dissertation Specialist to obtain a copy. Committee members will sign the digital signature page using Adobe Verified Signatures for the Graduate School records. This copy does not go into your final dissertation document.
- If you do not file the thesis with the Graduate School at least four weeks (28 calendar days) before your anticipated graduation date, you may not graduate until the following semester. (Please refer to the Graduate School web site for the schedule of deadlines.)
- Failure to complete Graduate School revisions may cause delays to your graduation.

#### **Submission of Review Copy**

After the committee approves a student’s thesis, email the following to the Thesis and Dissertation Specialist:

- Electronic copy of your thesis (in one MS Word or PDF document)

- Processing Form - indicate the editorial style manual used (e.g., APA, Chicago, etc.) and the name of your typist or editor, if applicable.
- Verification of Research Subject and Participant Compliance Form – completed and signed by you and your committee chair
- IRB or IACUC approval letter
- Signed Digital Signature page – Adobe Verified Signatures required.

Graduate School staff will review the copy for format and to assure that it meets University standards. Corrections are commonly requested at this point, so students must wait for final approval *before* uploading Archival copy to Digital UNC. The Graduate School will keep the review copy and email revision notes to the student.

## **Fees**

The Graduate School charges students' UNC student account (URSA) an \$85 publication fee after all forms and Archival upload requirements are completed. Students make payment through URSA.

## **Required Final Forms**

Please Note: To complete Graduate School forms, download PDF documents and save them to your desktop. Then open with Adobe Acrobat to complete forms. Do not fill out forms in a browser or Mac Preview. *Do not print, hand write/sign forms OR use DocuSign or AdobeSign*, as they remove the digital completion components. [Little red flags indicate the Live Signature fields].

- All Masters Theses are required to deposit the electronic copy of the final thesis with UNCOpen institutional repository for UNC archives. The Thesis and Dissertation Specialist in the Graduate School will provide instructions after the thesis approval.
- Publishing is optional for the Master's thesis. If you wish to publish it with ProQuest Information and Learning, please inform the Thesis & Dissertation Specialist in the Graduate School.

**Format of Appendix Title Page**

(DO NOT include the above heading or blue text on your copies)

**APPENDIX A****EXAMPLE PAGES FOR THESIS**

**Format of Title Page for Master's Thesis**

(DO NOT include the above heading or blue text on your copies)

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

TITLES LONGER THAN FOUR INCHES, FORMAT IN  
TWO OR MORE SINGLE-SPACED LINES IN  
AN INVERTED PYRAMID FORMAT

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts  
Master of Music  
Master of Science

(Only List the Degree Which You Are Receiving)

Student's Full Name as recorded in URSA or DegreeWorks

College  
School or Department  
Program or Department

December 2023  
Month and year that degree is awarded

This page is not numbered but does count as page i



**Example Title Page for Master's Thesis**

(DO NOT include the above heading or blue text on your final pages.)

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

JUDGE BIAS IN RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS: AN  
ETHNOGRAPHIC INVESTIGATION

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Science

Joseph James Smith

Natural and Health Sciences  
School of Sport and Exercise Science  
Sports Coaching

December 2023

## Format of Signature Page for Master's Thesis

(DO NOT include the above heading or blue text on your copies)

Top margin must be 2 inches

This Thesis by: [Student's Full Name as recorded in URSA]

Entitled: *Title of Thesis in Italics*

Fill in the bracketed  
information; remove brackets

has been approved as meeting the requirement for the Degree of Master of [i.e. Science, Arts, Music, etc.] in College of [Natural and Health Sciences] in School or Department of [Sport and Exercise Science], Program of [Sports Coaching]

Accepted by the \*Thesis Committee:

**Do not include signatures**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Professor's Name and Degree, Chair or Co-Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Professor's Name and Degree, Co-Chair (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Professor's Name and Degree, Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Professor's Name and Degree, Honorary Committee Member (if applicable)

Accepted by the Graduate School

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cindy Wesley, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean of the Graduate School

Title page is not numbered but is counted as page ii

**Example of Signature Page for Master's Thesis**  
(DO NOT include the above heading or blue text on your copies)

This Thesis by: Joseph James Smith

Entitled: *Judge Bias in Rhythmic Gymnastics: An Ethnographic Investigation*

has been approved as meeting the requirement for the Degree of Master of Science in College of Natural and Health Sciences in School of Sport and Exercise Science, Program of Sports Coaching.

Accepted by the Thesis Committee:

**Do not include signatures in thesis**

---

Daphne Q. Littleton, Ph.D., Chair

---

Ralph U. Kidding, Ph.D., Committee Member

Accepted by the Graduate School

---

Cindy Wesley, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean of the Graduate School

Title page is not numbered but is counted as page ii

**Format for Abstract Page**

(DO NOT include the above heading or blue text on your final pages)

Top margin must be two inches

## ABSTRACT

Last name, First Name. *Title of thesis is in italics.* Unpublished Master of \* (\*Arts, Science, Music) thesis, University of Northern Colorado, Year.

Leave two blank lines between citation and abstract text

The name used on the title page and the abstract must be your legal name (as it is recorded in URSA) so it will match the name on your transcript. The title on the abstract must match the title on the title page exactly. The year must be year when the degree is awarded. The abstract is a summary of the manuscript and includes the purpose of the project, pertinent findings, and significance of the paper. As a brief overview (usually 1 to 2 pages; however, there is no page limit), an abstract gives the reader concise information that conveys the importance of the manuscript. Center “ABSTRACT” (two inches from the top of the page, one inch below the 1" top margin) above the author citation, and the body of the abstract is double-spaced.

The Abstract is the first page showing a page number. In the footer, insert page number with a lower-case Roman numeral iii.

### Format for Table of Contents, List of Tables & List of Figures

You may create these manually by creating a table, fill in all headings and page number, then remove the lines or you may use the automatic Table of Contents feature in MS Word as done on pages 2 – 3 of this document.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### CHAPTER

I.	INTRODUCTION .....	#
	First Level One Heading .....	#
	Second Level One Heading .....	#
	Level Two Heading .....	#
	Second Level Two Heading .....	#
	Third Level One Heading .....	#
		#
II.	REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....	#
	First Level One Heading .....	#
	Second Level One Heading .....	#
	Level Two Heading .....	#
	Second Level Two Heading .....	#
	Third Level One Heading .....	#
	Level Two Heading, if it's a very long heading, make it single-spaced and align page number with the dots on the second line.....	#
	Second Level Two Heading .....	#
III.	METHODOLOGY .....	#
	First Level One Heading .....	#
	Second Level One Heading .....	#
	Level Two Heading .....	#
	Second Level Two Heading .....	#
	Third Level One Heading .....	#
	Level Two Heading, if it's a very long heading, make it single-spaced and align page number with the dots on the second line.....	#
	Second Level Two Heading .....	#
IV.	ANALYSIS .....	#
	First Level One Heading .....	#
	Second Level One Heading .....	#
	Level Two Heading .....	#
	Second Level Two Heading .....	#
	Third Level One Heading .....	#

	Level Two Heading, if it's a very long heading, make it single-spaced and align page number with the dots on the second line.....	#
	Second Level Two Heading.....	#
V.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	#
	First Level One Heading.....	#
	Second Level One Heading.....	#
	Level Two Heading.....	#
	Second Level Two Heading.....	#
	Third Level One Heading.....	#
	Level Two Heading, if it's a very long heading, make it single-spaced and align page number with the dots on the second line.....	#
	Second Level Two Heading.....	#
	REFERENCES.....	#
	APPENDIX	
A.	TITLE OF APPENDIX A.....	#
B.	TITLE OF APPENDIX B.....	#

The organization and titles of chapters may be different based upon the basis of your study. This is just a sample of the alignment. If you are not using "Chapters" leave this column off your Table of Contents. It is not required that you put pages for each level of heading, but if you do, be consistent. If you do not have level two, three, or four headings in all chapters, do not list second, third, or fourth level headings for any chapters.

## LIST OF TABLES

### Table

1.	Include Title, Demographic Table .....	21
2.	Factor Analysis .....	35
3.		

To create a table of contents manually, insert a 3 column table, insert data, then remove all of the lines. You will need to manually recheck page numbers after all revisions are made, as they will change frequently. Left align the left and center (title or heading) columns and right align the right column so the right side of the page numbers remains flush.

**Sample Format for the First Page of Each Chapter**  
 (DO NOT include the above heading or blue text on your final pages)

Space down on the first page of each chapter so CHAPTER starts 2" from top of paper. (1" down from 1" margin) Don't change margin, as you'll need to change it back at the end of the first page of chapter.

CHAPTER I

TITLE OF CHAPTER IN INVERTED FORMAT  
 AND SINGLE-SPACED IF TITLE IS  
 LONGER THAN FOUR INCHES

**Level One Heading in Inverted Format and Single-Spaced  
 if Title is Longer Than Four Inches**

This is an example based upon the use of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Edition). If the editorial style manual you are using for your thesis does not specifically require bold font for headings, do not use bold font at all. Put the text of the chapter on the same page, double-spaced. Be sure to follow your program's or department's editorial guidelines for actual format for the heading style.

**Level Two Heading in Inverted Format and Single-Spaced if  
 Longer than Four Inches**

If a side heading is longer than four inches, format it in multiple single-spaced lines, in inverted pyramid format. Make sure to remove "extra" space above and below headings. This is a setting in the Paragraph Settings.

**Definition of Terms**

**Self-Efficacy.** Bandura (1986) referred to self-efficacy as “people’s judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances” (p. 391). More specifically, Lent et al. (1994) explained that perceptions of self-efficacy or ability help to determine a person’s choice of activity and environment, effort level, persistence, thought patterns and emotional responses to



obstacles. Self-efficacy is not an inactive or stagnant trait; it is a set of self-beliefs that can change based on environmental, person, behavior, and contextual variables (Lent et al., 1994).

**Outcome Expectations.** According to Lent et al. (1994), outcome expectations are “personal beliefs about probable response outcomes...whereas self-efficacy beliefs are concerned with....

**APPENDIX B**

**JOURNAL MANUSCRIPT EXAMPLE PAGES**

**Example of First Page of Chapter in Journal Manuscript Format**  
 (DO NOT include the above heading or blue text on your copies)

CHAPTER IV

TITLE OF THE CHAPTER/MANUSCRIPT IN ALL CAPS  
 INVERTED PYRAMID STYLE AND  
 SINGLE SPACED

This chapter has been previously published or accepted for publication in *Fictitious Journal*.

**Contribution of Authors and Co-Authors**

Manuscript(s) in Chapter(s) II, III, IV, etc....

Author: Type author name here (First author must be the student)

Contributions: List contributions here, single spaced

Co-Author: Type co-author name here

Contributions: List contributions here, single spaced

Co-Author: Type co-author name here

Contributions: List Contributions Here, Single Spaced

**\*\*Make sure you include all authors and co-authors on this page, individually, and a brief paragraph of what each has contributed.**

**Sample of First Page of Chapter in Journal Manuscript Format**  
 (DO NOT include the above heading or blue text on your final pages)

CHAPTER IV

COMPARISON OF MODEL FIT INDICES IN  
 CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS  
 MODELS ACROSS FIVE SOFTWARE  
 PACKAGES

This chapter has been previously published in *Journal of Applied Statistics*,

**Contribution of Authors and Co-Authors**

Manuscript in Chapter IV

Author: Mary S. Smith

Contributions: Conceived the study topic, developed and implemented the study design.  
 Generated and analyzed data. Wrote first draft of the manuscript.

Co-Author: Dr. Jacob B. Goodwin

Contributions: Helped conceive the study design. Provided feedback on statistical analyses and  
 early drafts of the manuscript.

Co-Author: Dr. Keith L. Little

Contributions: Helped conceive and implement the study design. Provided field expertise and  
 funding. Provided feedback on early drafts of the manuscript.

Co-Author: Dr. Janice J. Johnson

Contributions: Provided feedback on the study design. Provided statistical advice and comments  
 on the manuscript.