

2025-2026

THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
2025-2026

Formatting and Style Guidelines for Theses and Dissertations



Think. Work. Serve.



"Think. Work. Serve."

FORMATTING AND STYLE GUIDELINES FOR THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

The School of Graduate and Professional Studies

Research and Sponsored Programs

Suite 2-B

Approved Style Manuals (APA 7th MLA 9th IEEE ACS)

The main resource referenced throughout this manual, the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition (2020)* is highly recommended for a comprehensive overview of APA Style.

<https://www.tnstate.edu/graduate/thesesdissertations.aspx>

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INTRODUCTION

The Graduate School has prepared this document referred to as *Formatting and Style Guidelines for Thesis and Dissertations* to assist students in the mechanical details of writing a dissertation or thesis.

A paper submitted to the Graduate School as partial fulfillment of the requirements for a degree must report accurate and original research done by the student. It reflects credit to the student, the chairperson of the student's committee, the committee, the department, and Tennessee State University. The quality of the research and the manner in which the research is presented to the Graduate School are the responsibility of the student, the major advisor (committee chair), and the committee.

The aim of *Formatting and Style Guidelines for Thesis and Dissertations* is to assist students develop a format that is consistently, attractively, logically, and mechanically correct. Although *Formatting and Style Guidelines for Thesis and Dissertations* covers most of the general areas in the preparation of a paper, it is by no means complete. It makes no attempt to answer all the specific questions that a student might ask about the preparation of a paper. The student should consult other documents which have been approved by the Graduate School and department in which the student is enrolled.

PARTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ADVANCED DEGREES

DISSERTATION

Description

A dissertation is a written report based on original research which is required to achieve the doctoral degree. It should represent a significant and independent contribution to the field of knowledge, have a unified theme, show mastery of the literature and research tools and techniques, and be worthy of publication. The written dissertation and subsequent oral defense should demonstrate the student's ability to conduct independent research and to interpret in a logical manner the facts and phenomena revealed by the investigation (Poje & Franceschetti, 1997; Painter, 1997).

Preliminaries

All doctoral dissertations are to be prepared in accordance with the guidelines and regulations set forth by the Graduate School. After the first enrollment in dissertation credit, students shall continue to enroll in dissertation credit every semester until the dissertation is complete and accepted by the Graduate School. The number of dissertation hours required for the degree is stipulated in the departmental sections of the current edition of the Graduate Catalog. When the student has accumulated the maximum number of dissertation credit hours allowed for a given program, the student shall register for "Dissertation Continuation" at a reduced fee. Students who fail to register each semester will be considered to have terminated their program and must reapply for

admission. Registration and verification of registration are the responsibilities of the student and his or her academic advisor.

Preliminary steps for the dissertation include:

1. Successfully completing the Comprehensive/Preliminary Examination. Enrollment in dissertation credits is permitted only after the student has been admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree.
2. Forming a dissertation committee by completing the [Thesis/Dissertation Committee Appointment Form](#). The committee must include a chair, and three members. At least three members (chair included) must be members of the department graduate faculty. The other member may be either a graduate faculty member from a closely related discipline or a specialist in the field of the student's minor concentration. All members must have Graduate Faculty Status.
3. Writing a dissertation proposal with the guidance of the dissertation chair and committee members.
4. Obtaining Research Compliance approval (human subjects, animal care, radiation safety, hazardous materials) according to procedures established by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs before initiating data collection.
5. Presenting the proposal at a scheduled meeting of the candidate's committee.
6. Gaining approval of the proposal by the committee, which gives candidate the permission to pursue the study described in the proposal.
7. Transmitting a copy of the approved proposal to the Graduate School.
8. Presenting orally and defending the dissertation.
9. Upon approval of the content of the dissertation by the committee, the chair of the committee will request a link to the TSU ProQuest ETD site on behalf of the student.
10. The manuscript must be formatted using one the Graduate School's approved manuals of style. The four approved style manuals are:
 - [The American Chemical Society](#) (ACS)
 - [Modern Language Association](#) (MLA) 9th
 - [The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers](#) (IEEE)
 - [The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association](#) (APA) 7thAdditional style information can be found on the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) for APA IEEE, MLA.

NOTE: All other style manuals must be approved by the Graduate School and the Office of Academic Affairs.

Dissertation Credits

The candidate must enroll in Dissertation Research continuously until the dissertation is completed and accepted by the Graduate School.

Dissertation Defense

The dissertation defense is required of all candidates for the doctoral degree. The outcome of the defense should be acceptable to the voting members of the candidate's committee.

THESIS

Description

A thesis is a written scholarly presentation of independent research or study that is submitted as a partial fulfillment of requirements for an advanced degree (Painter, 1997). It's the result of a substantial piece of research and scholarly writing executed with a high level of autonomy under the guidance of chair and a committee (Blair, 2016).

Preliminaries

Before writing the master's thesis, the student:

1. Must be admitted to candidacy.
2. Select a Guidance Committee. The committee must include a chair, and two members. At least two members (chair included) must be members of the department graduate faculty. The other member may be either a graduate faculty member from a closely related discipline or a specialist in the field of the student's minor concentration. This committee shall give general supervision to the candidate's research and thesis writing.
3. Enroll in Thesis Writing. After the first enrollment, the candidate must continue to enroll in Thesis Writing until the thesis is completed and accepted by the Graduate School.
4. If applicable, obtain research compliance approval (human subjects, animal care, radiation safety, hazardous materials) according to procedures established by the Office of Sponsored Research Website, before initiating data collection.
5. Write a thesis proposal. A proposal for the thesis is a formal process which involves a hearing before the advisory committee, and which results in filing the appropriate proposal form with the graduate school. The proposal form must be signed by all members of the advisory committee.

6. A reduction in fees for thesis registration occurs the second time a student registers, at which time the student registers for the “Thesis Continuation” section. A break in registration will result in “I” grades for Thesis hours becoming grades of “F”.
7. Present orally and defend thesis.
8. The chair of the committee will request a link to the TSU ProQuest ETD site on behalf of the student upon approval of the content of the thesis by the committee.
9. The manuscript must be formatted using one the Graduate School’s approved manuals of style. The four approved style manuals are:
 - [The American Chemical Society](#) (ACS)
 - [Modern Language Association](#) (MLA) 9th
 - [The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers](#) (IEEE)
 - [The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association](#) (APA) 7thAdditional style information can be found on the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) for APA, IEEE, MLA.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, OF THESIS/DISSERTATION CHAIR, COMMITTEE, THESIS/DISSERTATION STUDENT, COLLEGE DEPARTMENT CHAIR, COLLEGE DEAN

Thesis/dissertation committees play an important role in guiding and directing the graduate student’s research. The quality of the research and the manner in which the research is presented to the Graduate School are the responsibility of the student, the major advisor (chair), and the committee.

THESIS/DISSERTATION CHAIR

1. The Chair is the point of contact for all phases of the thesis/dissertation writing beginning with the development of ideas for a topic; guiding candidate in the selection of committee members; determining the role of each committee member; guiding the candidate in setting realistic timeline for thesis/dissertation completion; approval of drafts for review by the Committee; and the gatekeeper for the online submission of the final manuscript to the TSU ETD ADMINISTRATOR /ProQuest Publication (system).
2. The Chair will assist the student in establishing and conducting thesis/dissertation research.
3. The Chair will assist the student in identifying committee members (aligned to the research), collaborating with committee members on guiding the student in the formulation of the research proposal (review of literature, statement of problem, significance of study, purpose of the study, formulation of research questions and/or hypotheses, methodology), research findings, implications, and recommendations.

4. The Chair is to guide the candidate in the IRB approval process.
5. The Chair is to organize and preside over all committee meetings including meetings to assess candidate's progress at each phase of the thesis/dissertation writing process and the final thesis/dissertation defense.
6. The Chair is expected to be familiar with all program, department, Graduate School, and University policies and procedures governing thesis/dissertation research and ensure that they are followed by the student and the entire committee.
7. The chair is to work with committee members to remove any roadblocks that impede candidate's progress including any conflicts that may arise among committee members (chair should be an advocate for student).
8. The Chair is to ensure that each committee member receives a copy of the candidate's work in advance and that the turnaround time for providing feedback in no more than three weeks from the time candidate submits the document.
9. The Chair is to certify that the final document approved by the committee meets discipline scholarly standards, Graduate School's Formatting and Style Guidelines for Thesis and Dissertations, University academic integrity standards (including IRB approval of research, if applicable).
10. The Chair is to schedule the oral defense for both the thesis/dissertation proposal and the final manuscript.
11. The Chair is responsible for verifying the originality of the thesis/dissertation from Turnitin™, Grammarly, etc. on the '[Final Oral Thesis/Dissertation Defense Form](#)'.
12. The Chair is to assign the final grade for thesis/dissertation ONLY when the student has submitted a manuscript in the ETD ProQuest portal that meets the Graduate School guidelines and the approved formatted style manual (ACS, APA, MLA, or IEEE).
13. The Chair is to submit to the Graduate School the **Graduate School Thesis/Dissertation Oral Defense Form** to denote:
 - Signature of Committee Members
 - Approval or denial (if denial to identify area(s) for improvements
 - Verification originality
 - Adherence to Graduate Writing Format Requirements
 - Signature of Department Chair
 - Signature of College Dean
14. The Chair is to coordinate with the student any updates from the Graduate School regarding ProQuest publication.

15. The Chair is to change “I” (incomplete) grade to a ‘Letter Grade’ upon receipt from the Graduate School of ProQuest approval and fulfillment of degree requirements for graduation (via Degrees Work).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS (Chair included)

1. The Committee is responsible for the overall quality of the thesis/dissertation.
2. The Committee is to determine if the proposed thesis/dissertation topic is feasible.
3. The Committee is to review thesis/dissertation drafts and provide timely feedback to candidate.
4. The Committee is to ensure that the manuscript meets TSU academic integrity standards.

THESIS/DISSERTATION STUDENT

1. The Student is to adhere to the “[Formatting and Style Guidelines for Thesis and Dissertations](#)” as outlined by the specific college/departments and the Graduate School.
2. The Student is to follow and comply with [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\) rules and regulations](#).
3. The Student is to adhere to scholarly methods and ethical standards both within specific discipline and the University as a whole (see Graduate School Academic Integrity Statement published in the Graduate Catalog).
4. The Student is to form a thesis/dissertation committee upon admission to candidacy. Candidate must consult his/her academic advisor in the selection of the advisory (guidance) committee and an appropriate topic for investigation.
5. The Student is to maintain continuous enrollment in thesis or dissertation credits until the semester of graduation.
6. The Student is responsible for crafting and executing the project through all of its phases including the completion of the final manuscript. The manuscript must be properly edited and follow all of the expected conventions described in the [Formatting and Style Guidelines](#).
7. The Student is to share the draft of the manuscript with the entire committee at least three weeks prior to the defense date.
8. The Student is to revise and/or correct manuscript as required by members of the thesis or dissertation committee.

9. The Student is to complete the [Electronic Thesis/Dissertation Checklist](#) with the committee chair to ensure required standards.
10. The Student is to register for the uploading thesis/dissertation to the ETD ProQuest portal after approval from Committee Chair.
11. The Student is to adhere to [thesis/dissertation deadlines](#).
12. The Student is to make corrections to thesis/dissertation for ProQuest Publication in order for the Committee Chair to submit the final grade for graduation.

COLLEGE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

1. The Department Chair is to ensure that all committee members (including external members) are [certified graduate faculty](#) and qualified to assume their respective roles and responsibilities.
2. The Department Chair is to ensure that Degree Works is updated for the candidate's program of study.
3. The Department Chair is to ensure that the candidate applies for graduation during the semester of thesis/dissertation defense and/or graduation.
4. The Department Chair is to ensure that the candidate is registered for thesis/dissertation course continuously until the semester of graduation.

COLLEGE DEAN

1. The College Dean is to convene periodic meetings with the Graduate School to review updates in procedures, process, and confirmation of preferred writing format (thesis/dissertation) to ensure alignment with college/department and Graduate School.
2. The College Dean is to provide opportunities for all faculty members to obtain training regarding the college/department graduate writing format(s) and standards and update meetings presented by the Graduate School.
3. The College Dean is to promote the established writing standards for the college/department (APA 7th, MLA 9th, IEEE, ACS, etc.) to ensure that all graduate classes provide opportunities for publishable documents.

4. The College Dean is to review and sign approval for the completion of the thesis/dissertation on the '[Oral Defense Approval Form](#)' and submit to the Graduate School.

STYLE AND FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

APA 7th edition, MLA 9th edition, ACS, and IEEE may be used

When preparing a dissertation or thesis, for partial fulfillment of the requirements for a graduate degree at Tennessee State University, the student must adhere to the following general style and format requirements:

Page Size, Numbers, and Specifications

Page size must be standard U.S. letter size, i.e. 8.5 x 11 inches or 216 x 279 millimeters. Other standard page sizes such as A4 are not allowed.

The APA Style rules direct authors to start **page numbering at "1" on the title page in the top right** corner of the page, flush right (APA, 2020, p. 44). The page numbers should continue in that position to the last page of the document. Dec 13, 2021. This includes the Dedication, Acknowledgements, Preface.

Font

The acceptable fonts are:

- a. Times New Roman 12-point font
- b. Arial 11-point font
- c. Georgia 11-point font

Smaller font size may be used for materials other than the main text such as footnotes.
Refer to APA 7th Edition, page 44 Section 2.19

Running Head

The running head is located under the 1-inch margin and flushed left. A running head can be up to 50 characters (including spaces) and written in All CAPITAL LETTERS. It is left-aligned and appears on all pages, including the title page. It is not necessary to put the label "Running head" in front of the title. **Refer to APA 7th Edition, page 37 Section 2.8**

Margins and Spacing

- a. Digital Copy: 1-inch top/bottom/left/right
- b. Bound Copy: 1.5 inches left, 1-inch top/bottom/right
- c. 1 space after punctuation marks.

Refer to APA 7th Edition, Page 45 Section 2.22

White Space

White space within the manuscript should be avoided. Tables and figures should be incorporated as close to the text as possible

Orphans and Widows

Avoid orphans (first line of a paragraph at bottom of page) and widows (a single line ending a paragraph at the top of a page) throughout the manuscript.

Tables

Format and label tables correctly. Tables should be numbered consecutively using numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.) in the order they appear in the text. **Reference: APA 7th Edition, Page 200, Sections 7.10 and 7.11**

Figures

Format and label figures correctly. Figures should be numbered consecutively using numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.) in the order they appear in the text. **Reference APA 7th Edition, Chapter 7, Page 225, Section 7.22**

References (References should not be older than 10 years unless approved by committee or referencing historical data).

The reference list provides a reliable way to locate cited works by authors. The format for the reference list should start on a new page after the text and before any tables, figures and appendices. The reference list should be labeled “**References**” in bold, and centered. All references are double -spaced. **Reference: APA 7th Edition, Page 40, Section 2.12**

Appendices

The appendix follows any references, footnotes, tables, and figures. Give each appendix a label and a title. If there is more than one appendix, then a single page with Appendices must precede the individual appendix that is labeled: Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.

Reference APA 7th Edition, Page 41, Section 2.14

Note: The Graduate School requires IRB approval and CITI Certificate

ORDER AND COMPONENTS OF DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

Title Page (required)	• The title page is required for all APA 7th edition. • In addition to other required elements, the title page should include the graduation month and year (December, 20 --, May, 20 --, or August, 20 --). • No more than 12 words in the title. • Centered, bold and title case. • Running Head 50 spaces flushed left all CAPS (Do not use the words Running Head to start the Running Head) • Page number upper right hand corner, starting with number 1. • <i>Keywords</i>: Italicized, no more than five words. Do not italicize the keywords. • Capitalize the first word if it has at least 4 or more letters regardless of its value (for example, When, What, Which, etc.) Refer to APA 7th Edition, Page 30, Figure 2.3
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Copyright Page (optional)	INCLUDE THIS PAGE ONLY IF FEES WERE PAID TO ETD PROQUEST FOR COPYRIGHT • If the copyright page is inserted and the fee is not paid, the page will need to be removed and resubmitted through ProQuest. Reference APA 7th Edition, Page 384, Section 12.14
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Committee Page (required)	The Committee Page must include To the Graduate School: We are submitting a dissertation by <u>Name of Student</u> entitled “xxxxxxx”. We recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, [INSERT PHRASE FOR THE DEGREE FROM PREVIOUS PAGE]. NOTE: COMMITTEE NAMES MUST BE FLUSH TO THE RIGHT MARGIN Note: Graduate Dean line lower left flushed
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Dedication (optional)	Limited to one page. Bold the word dedication.
Acknowledgements (optional)	Limited to one page. Bold the word acknowledgements.
Abstract (required)	The abstract addresses the following (no more than 250 words). Do not indent the paragraph. • key aspects of the literature review • problem under investigation or research question(s) • clearly stated hypothesis or hypotheses • methods used (including brief descriptions of the study design, sample, and sample size) • study results • implications (i.e., why this study is important, applications of the results or findings) Refer to APA 7th Edition, Section 2.9 and 2.11, pages 38 -39
Contents (required)	Titles must be worded exactly as they are in the text although capitalization may be different. The Contents should cover the entire manuscript.
List of Tables (required if there are 5 or more tables)	Refer to APA 7th Edition, Chapter 7: Tables and Figures for specific information regarding the design, selection and generation of tables, figures and graphs for displaying data). • Tables: pp. 197-224 • Table Notes: pp. 202-204 If a table is longer than one page, repeat the heading row on each subsequent page of the table. It is best to use the automated table-formatting tools of your word-processing program rather than manually retyping the headings. See example in APA 7th: p. 212.

List of Figures (required if 5 or more figures)	Refer to APA 7th, (Chapter 7: Tables and Figures) for specific information regarding the design, selection and generation of tables, figures and graphs for displaying data). • Figures: 224-232 • Figure Legends and Notes: p.228
List of Illustrations	Illustration in APA is treated as either a Table or a Figure. Tables are numerical values or text displayed in rows and columns. A Figure is any type of illustration (chart, graph, photograph, drawing maps ...) other than a table.
List of Abbreviations	The abbreviations should be listed in alphabetical order and include all abbreviations used in the text.
List of Symbols (optional)	Student should consult with the major advisor before including a list of symbols. If the symbols are unfamiliar, they should be explained.
Chapters 1 – 5 Headings Centered, Bold, Title Case	
Chapter 1: Introduction	Introduction: This is the first chapter of the thesis/dissertation. It should describe the purpose of the study, statement of the problem, its significance, research questions, and provide an overview of the basic components of the research in a coherent manner. It should also include an overview of the theoretical foundations, methods, a list of definitions, if applicable assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and definitions.
Chapter 2: Review of Literature	Literature Review: Divide chapter into subheadings/sections – e.g., Introduction, Review of Literature, Remember the use of headings and subheadings.

Chapter 3: Methodology	Methodology: Divide chapter into subheadings/sections – e.g., Research Purpose, Rationale, Design, Instrument, Population, Data Collection, Methods, Data Analysis, Limitations, and Delimitations.
Chapter 4: Findings	Findings: This chapter reports the study results. The findings should be organized on the basis of the research questions. Tables may be used to summarize information and detailed information presented in an appendix.
Chapter 5: Conclusion	Conclusion: This chapter concludes the study. It covers integrated findings, implications, and future directions that result from the entire study. The chapter underscores the study's major findings, contributions, recommendations, limitations, and raises new questions and directions for future research.
References	References for the entire manuscript and any supplementary materials should be included in this section and should conform to the APA style manual or the same style and format as the articles. Note: the references should be within 10 years unless approved by committee or historical data.
Appendices	All research instruments used and other related items as required by the student's committee. Each item should be given a letter and listed in the Table of Contents. Please see items needed below: Curriculum Vitae (If required by the department.) IRB Approval (If applicable) CITI Certificate Instrument Letters (if applicable)

CONCISE GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION OF DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

Order and Components of Dissertation or Thesis: Student/Chair	
APA 7, MLA 9 th , IEEE, and ACS are the required manuals.	
A. Preliminary Pages: The preliminary pages must follow the order below beginning with the title page. The page count or numbers for the preliminary pages must be adjusted as appropriate if some of the optional parts are not included in the document. Page numbers must be placed on the upper right corner of each page.	
Title page (required) This page is numbered '1'	
Title (Centered/No more than 12 words/Title Case which means first letter is capitalized GRADUATION DATE: The title page should include the graduation month and year (December, 20 --, May, 20 --, or August, 20 --).	
Copyright (optional)	
INCLUDE THIS PAGE ONLY IF FEES WERE PAID TO ETD PROQUEST FOR COPYRIGHT If the copyright page is inserted and the fee (\$75.00) is not paid, the page will need to be removed and resubmitted through ProQuest.	
Committee (required)	
The Committee Page a. Committee Members line up (right side) and signatures b. Graduate Dean Line	
Dedication (optional)	
Acknowledgements (optional)	
Abstract (required)	
The Abstract must be brief and concise summary of your research (all articles). Its purpose is to recap the most important findings and methods of the study. It should provide readers with a clear overview of the problem of the study, methods, results, and conclusions. It should not exceed 250 words and written in past tense.	

Contents (required)
Titles must be worded exactly as they are in the text
List of Tables (required if there are 5 or more tables)
List of Figures, Charts. (required if 5 or more figures)
List of Abbreviations (optional)
The abbreviations should be listed in alphabetical order and include all abbreviations used in the text.
List of Symbols (optional)
Student should consult with the major advisor before including a list of symbols. If the symbols are unfamiliar, they should be explained.
B. (Chapters 1-5) The text must be divided into five (1-5) chapters and be used to designate chapters.
Chapter 1: Introduction (required)
This is the first chapter of the thesis or dissertation. It should articulate the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, its significance, and the research questions, all presented in a coherent manner. Additionally, it should provide an overview of the theoretical foundations, methods, and a brief explanation of the contents of the subsequent chapters. The first page of Chapter 1 is numbered. Similarly, the beginning page of the remaining chapters (1, 2, 3 ,4,5)) are included in the page count
Chapter 2: Review of Literature
The Review of the Literature chapter should be divided into subheadings or sections, such as Introduction, Review of Literature, Conceptual Framework, and Summary, or adjust them as needed based on the content.
Chapter 3: Methodology
The Methodology chapter should be divided into subheadings or sections, such as Research Purpose, Rationale and Design, Data Collection Methods, Data Analysis, and Limitations and Delimitations.
Chapter 4: Findings
This chapter presents the study's results, organized according to the research questions. Tables may be utilized to summarize key information, with detailed data provided in an appendix.

Chapter 5: Conclusion
This chapter wraps up the study by summarizing the integrated findings, implications, and future directions that emerge from the research. It highlights the study's major findings and contributions, offers recommendations, discusses limitations, and raises new questions and avenues for future research.
C. References. APA 7 th , MLA 9 th , IEEE, ACS
D. Appendices. The appendices should conform to the APA 7 th edition, MLA 9 th , IEEE, ACS
E. Curriculum Vitae (C.V.) Curriculum Vitae Continue page numbering from Appendices (listed only in the Guidelines PDF document, page)
F. IRB Approval (if applicable)
G. CITI Certificate (if applicable)
H. Instrument (if applicable)
I. Letters (if applicable)

Sample Documents

Running Head

The running head is located under the 1-inch margin and flushed left. A running head can be up to 50 characters (including spaces) and written in All CAPITAL LETTERS. It is left-aligned and appears on all pages, including the title page. It is not necessary to put the label “Running head” in front of the title.

Title of Paper –

placed two inches from the top of the page

The title page is numbered (1) in the far right corner

Title (Centered/No more than 12 words/Title Case which means the first letter of each word in the title should be capitalized except for certain small words like “a,” “the,” and “of.”

IF MORE THAN ONE LINE,

USE INVERTED PYRAMID FORM

A Thesis or Dissertation

Submitted to

The School of Graduate and Professional Studies

Department Name

Tennessee State University

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Your Degree Name

Your Name

Date of Graduation Month Year (May, August, or December)

Keywords: [Italicized, no more than 5 words, which are not italicized, but titled case.]

Copyright

(If applicable)

COPY AND PASTE THE TITLE
EXACTLY THE SAME AS FOUND ON
THE TITLE PAGE INCLUDING
THE USE OF THE
INVERTED PYRAMID
FORM

Graduation

Month Year

Your Name

© Year

All rights reserved

NOTE TO STUDENT: this page can only be included if the copyright fee was paid,
otherwise this page is not to be included.

To the Graduate School:

We are submitting a dissertation by Name of Student entitled, (italic) Leadership Awareness and Attitudes of Open Educational Resources (OER) for Educational Access and Affordability. We recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership with a concentration in Higher Education Leadership.

NOTE: COMMITTEE NAMES MUST BE FLUSH TO THE RIGHT MARGIN

Professor Chair, Ph.D./Ed.D.

Chairperson

Professor 1, Ph.D. /Ed.D.

Committee Member

Professor 2, Ph.D. /Ed.D.

Committee Member

Professor 3, Ph.D. /Ed.D.

Committee Member

Accepted for the Graduate School:

Trinetia Respress, Ed.D

Dean of the Graduate School

Dedication

The dedication is a brief statement or note dedicating the thesis or dissertation to someone in token of affection or esteem. Usually, students' express appreciation to their families (nuclear and extended), their spiritual traditions, spouses, or parents. Since it is usually a no more than two or three lines, center the word **Dedication** in Title Case, **Bold, and Centered.** (limited to one page)

Acknowledgements

In this section, acknowledge those who have been helpful during your matriculation and thesis or dissertation research process. Before deciding to include this section, determine your specific indebtedness to others for information and assistance. The signatures usually adequately recognize the committee members and the major advisor on the approval page.

However, if they have given more than the required assistance, they should be tactfully and specifically acknowledged. The acknowledgments should be brief. Type the word **Acknowledgements** in Title Case, Bold, and Centered.

Start the content of acknowledgements one space below the title.

Acknowledgments page is optional (for a single author thesis/dissertation) and required if there are coauthors.

Abstract

[Centered bold and written on the first line of the page]

Text is one line below the section label, not indented, single paragraph, double-spaced)

The Abstract must be brief and concise summary of your research (all articles). Its purpose is to recap the most important findings and methods of the study. It should provide readers with a clear overview of the problem of the study, methods, results, and conclusions. It should not exceed 250 words and written in past tense. (Not more than 250 words using past tense)

Contents

(Required)

Titles must be worded exactly as they are in the text although the capitalization may be different. Student should follow the example below or consult with major advisor and follow the directions in the approved manual for the discipline.

Title	Page number
Copyright.....	Page number
Committee Page	Page number
Dedication	Page number
Acknowledgements.....	Page number
Abstract	Page number
Contents.....	Page number
List of Tables	Page number
List of Figures	Page number
Chapter 1	Page number
Level 1 Heading	Page number
Level 2 Heading.....	Page number
<i>Level 3 Heading</i>	Page number
Chapter 2	Page number
Level 1 Heading	Page number
Level 2 Heading.....	Page number
<i>Level 3 Heading</i>	Page number

Chapter 3	Page number
Level 1 Heading	Page number
Level 2 Heading.....	Page number
<i>Level 3 Heading</i>	Page number
Chapter 4	Page number
Level 1 Heading	Page number
Level 2 Heading.....	Page number
<i>Level 3 Heading</i>	Page number
Chapter 5	Page number
Level 1 Heading	Page number
Level 2 Heading.....	Page number
<i>Level 3 Heading</i>	Page number
References	Page number
Appendices.....	Page number
Appendix A.....	Page number
Appendix B	Page number
IRB Approval	Page number
CITI Certificate	Page number
Instrument	Page number
Letters	Page number
Curriculum Vitae (Optional)	Page number

List of Tables

Note: only include if you have five (5) or more Tables

Table 1. Caption for Table 1 Page number

Table 2. Caption for Table 2 Page number

Table 3. Caption for Table 3 Page number

Table 4. Caption for Table 4 Page number

Table 5. Caption for Table 5 Page number

- There are two options for the placement of tables (and figures) in a paper. The first is to embed tables in the text after each is first mentioned (or “called out”); the second is to place each table on a separate page after the reference list.
- Margins at least 1 in.
- Tables may use single-spacing or one-and-a-halfspacing

Note: (only include if you have five (5) or more Figures)

List of Figures

Figure 1. Caption for Figure 1.....Page number

Figure 2. Caption for Figure 2.....Page number

Figure 3. Caption for Figure 3.....Page number

Figure 4. Caption for Figure 4.....Page number

Figure 5. Caption for Figure 5.....Page number

Chapter 1: Introduction

Title Case, Bold, Centered

This page is numbered

Second Level Subheading: Flush Left, Bold, Title Case

The first line of every paragraph must be indented ½-inch or 0.5-inches from the left margin that is set for every page as 1.5-inches ONLY if manuscript is to be printed as a bound copy—otherwise the left margin is 1.0-inch. No exceptions and no extra spacing after each paragraph.

Third Level Subheading: Flush Left, Bold, Title Case

The first line of every paragraph must be indented ½-inch or 0.5-inches from the left margin that is set for every page as 1.5-inches ONLY if manuscript is to be printed as a bound copy—otherwise the left margin is 1.0-inch. No exceptions and no extra spacing after each paragraph.

Fourth Level: Indented, Bold, Title Case, Ending with a Period. The text continues on the line following the period.

Fifth Level: Indented, Bold, Title Case, Ending with a Period. The Text continues on the line following the period.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Title Case, Bold, Centered

This page is numbered

Second Level Subheading: Flush Left, Bold, Title Case

The first line of every paragraph must be indented ½-inch or 0.5-inches from the left margin that is set for every page as 1.5-inches ONLY if manuscript is to be printed as a bound copy—otherwise the left margin is 1.0-inch. No exceptions and no extra spacing after each paragraph.

Third Level Subheading: Flush Left, Bold, Title Case

The first line of every paragraph must be indented ½-inch or 0.5-inches from the left margin that is set for every page as 1.5-inches ONLY if manuscript is to be printed as a bound copy—otherwise the left margin is 1.0-inch. No exceptions and no extra spacing after each paragraph.

Fourth Level: Indented, Bold, Title Case, Ending with a Period. The text continues on the line following the period.

Fifth Level: Indented, Bold, Title Case, Ending with a Period. The text continues on the line following the period.

Block Quotes:

Block quotes are used for direct quotations that are longer than 40 words. They should be offset from the main text and do not include quotation marks. Indent the entire quote ½ inch or 5-7 spaces; the block quote **double-spaced**.

The block quote should be double spaced. Block quotes can be cited in either a narrative or parenthetical form. The citation information at the end is not considered part of the sentence and comes after the period. Use p. for a single page number (Example: p. 15) and pp. for multiple page numbers (Example: pp. 125-126).

For quotations of fewer than 40 words, add quotation marks around the words and incorporate the quote into your own text—there is **no** additional formatting needed. Do not insert an ellipsis at the beginning and/or end of a quotation unless the original source includes an ellipsis.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Title Case, Bold, Centered

This page is numbered

Second Level Subheading: Flush Left, Bold, Title Case

The first line of every paragraph must be indented ½-inch or 0.5-inches from the left margin that is set for every page as 1.5-inches ONLY if manuscript is to be printed as a bound copy—otherwise the left margin is 1.0-inch. No exceptions and no extra spacing after each paragraph.

Third Level Subheading: Flush Left, Bold, Title Case

The first line of every paragraph must be indented ½-inch or 0.5-inches from the left margin that is set for every page as 1.5-inches ONLY if manuscript is to be printed as a bound copy—otherwise the left margin is 1.0-inch. No exceptions and no extra spacing after each paragraph.

Fourth Level: Indented, Bold, Title Case, Ending with a Period. The text continues on the line following the period.

Fifth Level: Indented, Bold, Title Case, Ending with a Period. The text continues on the line following the period.

Chapter 4: Findings

Title Case, Bold, Centered

This page is numbered

Second Level Subheading: Flush Left, Bold, Title Case

The first line of every paragraph must be indented ½-inch or 0.5-inches from the left margin that is set for every page as 1.5-inches ONLY if manuscript is to be printed as a bound copy—otherwise the left margin is 1.0-inch. No exceptions and no extra spacing after each paragraph.

Third Level Subheading: Flush Left, Bold, Title Case

The first line of every paragraph must be indented ½-inch or 0.5-inches from the left margin that is set for every page as 1.5-inches ONLY if manuscript is to be printed as a bound copy—otherwise the left margin is 1.0-inch. No exceptions and no extra spacing after each paragraph.

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Fifth Level: Indented, Bold, Title Case, Ending with a Period. The text continues on the line following the period

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Title Case, Bold, Centered

This page is numbered

Second Level Subheading: Flush Left, Bold, Title Case

The first line of every paragraph must be indented ½-inch or 0.5-inches from the left margin that is set for every page as 1.5-inches ONLY if manuscript is to be printed as a bound copy—otherwise the left margin is 1.0-inch. No exceptions and no extra spacing after each paragraph.

Third Level Subheading: Flush Left, Bold, Title Case

The first line of every paragraph must be indented ½-inch or 0.5-inches from the left margin that is set for every page as 1.5-inches ONLY if manuscript is to be printed as a bound copy—otherwise the left margin is 1.0-inch. No exceptions and no extra spacing after each paragraph.

Fourth Level: Indented, Bold, Title Case, Ending with a Period. The text continues on the line following the period.

Fifth Level: Indented, Bold, Title Case, Ending with a Period. The text continues on the line following the period.

References

[bold and centered]

Poje, L. & Franceschetti, D. (1997). *Components of Quality in Doctoral Degree*

Programs. Tennessee Conference of Graduate Schools.

Painter, L. (1979). *A Glossary of Terms in Graduate Education*. Tennessee

Conference of Graduate Schools.

Blair, L. (2016). *Writing a Graduate Thesis or Dissertation*. Rotterdam: Sense.

“Thesis and Terminal Project.” *Thesis and Terminal Project | Graduate*

School, [gradschool.uoregon.edu/policies-](https://gradschool.uoregon.edu/policies-procedures/masters/thesis-terminal-project)

[procedures/masters/thesis-terminal-project](https://gradschool.uoregon.edu/policies-procedures/masters/thesis-terminal-project).

Appendices

[bold and centered]

If there is only one appendix, then there is no need for the single page titled Appendices
Reference APA 7th Edition page 41 Section.

Appendix A

Curriculum Vitae

A curriculum vitae (CV) is a short account of one's academic history, career and qualifications prepared typically for a job, grants, publication submissions, professional presentations, etc.

Appendix B

IRB Approval

Step 1: You MUST complete the on-line CITI Training. There is no cost to TSU students and faculty. Here is the link: <https://www.citiprogram.org>. Make sure you save your certificate on your computer.

Step 2: You'll need to determine whether to submit an EXEMPT or a non-EXEMPT application. See the checklist below to help you determine the type of review for your Application Packet. You'll need to have a clear understanding of the research activities and population involved before making this decision. If you're still not sure after completing the checklists, please contact IRB Administration at irb@tnstate.edu.

- [Checklist - Determination of Exemption from IRB Review](#)
- [Checklist - Determination of Expedited IRB Review](#)
- [Informed Consent Document](#)

Step 3: Complete the IRB Application and Assemble the Application Packet. Start your IRB Application by completing the survey located at the following address: https://tnstateu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3ga0a2dKuFrRGHX. This will provide basic information regarding your protocol. An Application Packet must be assembled and must be submitted electronically for review (irb@tnstate.edu). All instruments used to collect data, including list of interview questions and the actual surveys, should be included in the IRB Application Packet along with your training certificate. Letters of Cooperation and Letters of Permission should be typed on institutional letterhead and scanned to your computer. If your research involves collecting data at another institution or in partnership with another institution, you should include documentation.

- [IRB Application](#)

Your IRB Application Packet, when finished, should include one copy of each of the following:

- [Human Subjects Form \(2019\) - Standard](#) or [IRB Form - Exempt \(Non-HumanOnly\)](#)
- Instrument
- Recruitment Tools
- [Consent Form](#) (if applicable)
- [Sample Letter of Consent](#)
- Letters of Cooperation and/or Letters of Permission (if applicable)
- [IRB Amendment Form](#) (APPLICABLE FOR AMENDMENTS ONLY)

Step 4: Submit the packet. The electronic packet should be compiled in PDF format and forwarded to irb@tnstate.edu.

IRB Approval only lasts for one year. If you need to extend the project for an additional year, you'll need to submit an [IRB Amendment Form](#) and indicate that you need to extend the IRB Approval for one more year.

Appendix C

CITI Certificate



Basic Learner Instructions

The following are basic learner instructions to logon to your CITI site for the first time.

- User should be instructed to go to www.citiprogram.org to register for CITI online training.
- Once there, they simply click on "New Users Register Here".
- Under "Select your institution or organization" page they should select your institution in the "Participating Institutions" drop down box.
- Next they should proceed to create their own username and password and select the Learner group.
- After going through registration process they should be ready and setup as CITI Learners under your Institution setup requirements.

The file: ([Steps to registering with CITI.ppt](#)) will also help you and the users of your institution to register with CITI for the first time

Additionally, our [knowledgebase](#) is an excellent source of information.

Please contact citisupport@med.miami.edu in case of any question.

Appendix D
Instrument
(if applicable)

Appendix E
Letters
(if applicable)

ELECTRONIC THESIS & DISSERTATION CHECKLIST

This Checklist is used to simplify the review of your document by the Graduate School. It is to ensure that student has met all thesis/dissertation completion requirements. This form must be completed, signed by student and Chair of the Thesis/Dissertation Committee, and deposited to the Graduate School along with other documents specified in the Checklist. Do NOT submit your electronic thesis/dissertation if you have not met any requirements on this “Checklist.”

PRELIMINARY STEPS

☐	☐	Enrolled in thesis/dissertation credits this semester.
☐	☐	Successfully defended my thesis/dissertation.
☐	☐	Read and followed the “ <i>Formatting and Style Guidelines for Thesis and Dissertation</i> ” (visit: 2023 Thesis Dissertation Guidelines Updated.pdf).
☐	☐	Followed style manual of my discipline: American Psychological Association (APA) 7 th edition, MLA 9 th , ACS, IEEE
☐	☐	My thesis/dissertation consistently followed one of the above style manuals.
☐	☐	My thesis/dissertation meets the university’s academic integrity standards (see <i>Graduate Catalog</i>).
☐	☐	Committee Chair has checked my thesis/dissertation with plagiarism using Turnitin [®] , Grammarly.

ORGANIZATION

☐	☐	Title Page a. Title Page is the first page in your document and is Page Number1(Required) 2 inches from top of paper b. Title (Centered/No more than 12 words/Title Case which means first letter is capitalized and the other letters lower case, c. Keywords: (italicized, no more than five words) d. Running Head no more 50 spaces
☐	☐	Copyright Page (Optional and included only if the \$75/00 fee is paid)

☐	☐	Committee Page (required)	a. Committee Members line up (right side) and signatures b. Graduate Dean Line
☐	☐	Dedication Page (Optional)	
☐	☐	Acknowledgments (Optional)	
☐	☐	Abstract (not to exceed 250 words)(Required)	
☐	☐	Contents (Required)	
☐	☐	List of Tables (Required if there are five or more)	
☐	☐	List of Figures, Charts, etc. (Required if there are five or more figures or charts)	
☐	☐	List of Abbreviations (Optional)	
☐	☐	List of Symbols (Optional)	
☐	☐	Text is divided into chapters designated (Chapter 1: Introduction, Chapter 2: Review of Literature, Chapter 3: Methodology, Chapter 4: Findings, Chapter 5: Conclusion)	
☐	☐	References conform to style manual of my discipline: APA 7 th ACS, MLA 9 th edition, IEEE	
☐	☐	Appendices conform to style manual of my discipline	
☐	☐	Curriculum Vitae (required)	
☐	☐	IRB Approval (if applicable)	
☐	☐	CITI Certificate (if applicable)	
☐	☐	Instruments (if applicable)	
☐	☐	Letters (if applicable)	

Font and Size

☐	a. Times New Roman 12pt b. Arial; 11pt c. Georgia 11pt
--------------------------	--

MARGINS

☐	a. Digital Copy: 1-inchtop/bottom/ <u>left</u> /right
☐	b. Bound Copy: <u>1.5 inches left</u> , 1-inchtop/bottom/right
☐	c. 1 space after punctuation marks. (checking 5 times throughout page)

SPACING

☐	All text is double spaced with no extra before or after paragraphs.
☐	One space after period.

PAGINATION

☐	Every page should be assigned a number
☐	The APA Style rules direct authors to start page numbering at "1" on the title page in the top right corner of the page, flush right (APA, 2020, p. 44). The page numbers should continue in that position to the last page of the document. Dec 13, 2021. This includes the Dedication, Acknowledgements, Preface.

MISCELLANEOUS

☐	There are no widows or orphans. Move any widow or orphan line to the next page.
☐	All page numbers in the Contents correspond with page numbers in the text.
☐	All citations in the text are included in the Reference section.

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

☐	After a successful defense and after the requested changes are made to the thesis/dissertation, then convert the Word file to a PDF file and upload to Tennessee State University ETD ProQuest website: https://www.etdadmin.com/cgi-bin/student/etd?siteId=52 .
☐	Included and typed names of committee members with each member's degree noted on the Committee Page as page ii (second page) of your manuscript.

ITEMS TO SEND TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL (*After Electronic Submission*)

☐	☐	Signed Report on Thesis/Dissertation Final Oral Examination (Defense)
☐	☐	https://www.tnstate.edu/graduate/Updated%20Thesis_Dissertation%20Form2022.pdf
☐	☐	Degree Works approved by advisor to verify and validate programs of study.
☐	☐	Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) “Certificate of Completion” (Ph.D. candidates only). Open https://sed-ncses.org/login.aspx to access the SED send to Graduate School.

I, the thesis/dissertation student have checked the manuscript for all of the above items.

Student's name (please print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____ E-mail Address: _____

I, the thesis/dissertation chair have checked the manuscript for all of the above items. I understand that I am responsible for verifying that the manuscript meets the university's academic integrity standards and the Graduate School's Formatting and Style Guidelines.

Thesis/Dissertation Chair's Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Additional Resources

APA 7th Edition: <https://youtu.be/Pm-hDUC2Hgo>

Literature Review APA 7th: <https://youtu.be/wKE8URDOYT8>

Section Headings APA 7th: <https://youtu.be/oPvvikR-zZA>

Citations APA 7th: https://youtu.be/F_yHfsX3SG8

Purdue Online Writing Lab. (n.d.). *APA Tables and Figures*. Purdue Online Writing Lab. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_tables_and_figures.html

APA 7th Edition <https://youtu.be/Ae6mQBUVqVE>

APA 7th Edition for Tables and Figures: <https://youtu.be/ytnies1s65o>

Catches plagiarism more accurately than any other checker
https://www.scribbr.com/plagiarism-checker/?scr_source=knowledgebase&scr_medium=in-text&scr_campaign=plagiarism&src_content=what+is+your+plagiarism+score

Approved by Graduate Council: 09/10/02

Revised: 10/08/2002

Revised: 06/23/2014

Revised: 06/25/2018

Revised: 02/12/2022

Revised: 12/13/2023

Revised: 03/22/25

ARTICLE STYLE THESIS AND DISSERTATION

In some academic units, a thesis or dissertation may include, as chapters, articles that have been published or submitted for publication to scholarly journals. This style (also referred to as “article style”) has been approved by the university in Spring 2025. Graduate programs may choose to allow this format if deemed suitable by graduate faculty and approved by the department chair. The dean must notify the School of Graduate Studies in writing of their decision.

Graduate students in good standing, enrolled in research-based M.S. or Ph.D. programs, may adopt an article-style format for their thesis or dissertation. This option requires **prior approval** from the thesis/dissertation chair and committee members. Students who fail to obtain approval must use the traditional format. We advise the committee chair and students to follow the guidelines below.

A. Prior Approval

Students must obtain approval from their advisory committee before beginning to write in the article-style format.

B. Cohesive Theme

A thesis or dissertation developed under the article-style format should have a goal of creating a single cohesive document, with a sequence of several scholarly manuscripts or journal articles addressing a common theme:

- Minimum of two manuscripts/articles for a thesis
- Minimum of three manuscripts/articles for a dissertation

C. Required Chapters

Thesis – requires at least 4 chapters

Dissertation – requires at least 5 chapters

Required sections:

- **Introductory chapter:** It should provide sufficient detail about each manuscript, describe the studies and their importance, outline how chapters are related within a chosen theme, and explain the merits and significance of the chapters.
- **Manuscript chapters:** At least two full length research articles for thesis and three for dissertation, each article should serve as a standalone chapter; however, there must be a bridge between the chapters, and they must all work together under the umbrella of the chosen common research theme.
- **Final summary chapter:** it should summarize major findings and include a discussion of the implications for the overall research, along with future perspectives.

D. TSU Residency and Research

All manuscripts or articles must be based on research completed while enrolled at Tennessee State University.

E. Authorship

- Student must be sole author or first author
- Student responsible for at least 90% of the work
- Co-authors and their contributions must be identified in the "Preface" section

F. Publication Requirement

At least one manuscript must be submitted, published, or accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal recommended by the advisory committee.

G. Formatting

Articles must conform to this guideline "Guidelines for Preparation of Article-Style Thesis and Dissertation" as recommended by the School of Graduate Studies. However, it is advised to use following additional formats while writing Thesis or Dissertation.

- a) Each manuscript needs a cover page that includes Title, authorship, contributions from each author and publication details (Published Article: Journal Name, DOI, volume, issue and page number, reprint here with permission of the publisher; Accepted Article: Journal Name, accepted date, reprint here with permission of the publisher, Submitted Manuscript: Journal Name, submitted date, submission notification from publisher, To be Submitted Manuscript: Journal Name)
- b) Figures and tables must include a chapter and figure/table designation (e.g. Figure 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2 etc.) in both text and caption so that no more than one Table or Figure number occurs more than once.
- c) Continuous page number is required throughout the Thesis or Dissertation
- d) A consolidated reference list should be generated using a reference style adopted by your discipline e.g. APA or MLA or IEEE or ACS
- e) The advisory committee shall ensure that the student has developed a comprehensive Thesis or Dissertation Research proposal that includes a thorough literature review, problem statement and hypotheses if applicable.

H. Copyright Permissions

Students must obtain appropriate copyright clearance from publishers for published manuscripts included as chapters.

I. Additional Requirements

- Students may switch to traditional format with thesis or dissertation advisory committee approval
- All degree requirements must still be satisfied

J. Definitions

- **Article:** Peer-reviewed, accepted, and published manuscript
- **Chapter:** Individual manuscripts or articles within the thesis/dissertation
- **Manuscript:** Draft form of an article to be submitted for publication

Examples of Article Style Dissertations

Example 1: Montclair State University



Example 1 -
Montclair State Univ

Example 2: East Tennessee State University



Example 2 - East
Tennessee State Uni

Example 3: University of Idaho



Example 3 -
University of Idaho.