

University of the District of Columbia

Graduate Thesis/Dissertation Guidelines & Procedures

January 2013

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This handbook provides the guidelines and polices set forth by the School of Graduate Studies. Individual departments may have additional requirements, specify requirements in greater details, or occasionally contradict these guidelines. In the latter cases, such departments must request the approval for these requirements from the graduate school. In most cases, the Graduate school will allow such differences if it is dictated by the formatting conventions commonly used by that discipline. Questions regarding formatting issues that are not addressed in this guide should be directed to your academic department.

Part 1: Things You Have to Do to Graduate

Chapter 2: Process and Paperwork

The Semester of Intended Graduation

The students need to file an application for graduation in the semester before the due date published by the Graduate school/University. The application needs to be approved by the thesis/dissertation major advisor, the graduate director and the department chair. The application should list the successfully-taken graduate courses and indicate that the thesis/dissertation topic has been approved. The student should also schedule and pass the oral defense.

The registrar's office audits the application of graduation to ensure that a) all institution graduation requirements have been met; b) all courses in the program of study have been successfully taken; c) no reason exists that may block the student graduate including financial holds.

Rules for Enrollment during Last Semester

The student must be enrolled in the term of their intended graduation.

Waiver of enrollment

The student may request a waiver of enrollment in their last semester if the following conditions are met: a) the student is no longer using faculty time or institutional facilities; b) the student was duly registered in the previous term; c) the student has fulfilled all requirements for graduation before the end of the registration period of the semester, including submitting the approved final and complete electronic thesis/dissertation and all degree-related forms. The waiver form should be signed by the student, their major advisor and the department chair. The waiver of enrollment does not waive the requirement that the student files or reactivates the application for graduation in that semester. A student who does not meet all requirements for the enrollment waiver may enroll in just one credit hour in the term of graduation. This exception to the minimum three credits can be used only once per degree.

Sources for Graduate Information and Deadlines

The student should consult the graduate school handbook and the Graduate school website for all information regarding deadlines for the receipt of all forms, including thesis/dissertation topic

proposal, the application for graduation, submission of electronic thesis/dissertation, and the commencement.

Approval of Thesis Topic

Before starting the thesis/dissertation research, the student must choose a major advisor. The student, in consultation with his major advisor, must form an advisory committee chaired by the major advisor to approve the thesis topic and expected outcomes and deliverables of the thesis/dissertation. The minimum requirements for forming such committees and the scope of their responsibilities can be found in the graduate school handbook. Each department may have additional requirements for forming such committees or expanding the scope of their responsibilities to include, for example, the approval of the student's program of study. The student should consult the department website for such additional information.

The thesis/dissertation topic proposal should, in general, follow the general features of a research proposal. A typical format is as follows:

- **Introduction:** General background, importance of the subject area.
- **Literature Review:** A description of the literature relevant to the subject area
- **Research Objective:** A concise statement of the purpose or objective of the proposed research; this should flow logically from the introduction and be short and specific.
- **Approach/Methods:** General plan, specific methods, sampling or experimental design, duration, and projected procedure for data analysis; these methods should be appropriate for directly addressing the purpose or objective.
- **Necessary Resources:** List all resources needed to complete the proposed research.
- **Expected Results:** Expected results of theoretical investigations, experiments, field sampling, computer simulations, data analyses, hardware design, etc. should be clearly stated.
- **Significance:** Why is this investigation justified? What is the scientific or practical contribution?
- **References:** A list of references should be provided

- **Timeline/Work plan:** The timeline helps to assess whether the proposed research is feasible as planned and establishes milestones. Periods when there are activities which could slow progress should be highlighted and accounted for when selecting milestones. The timeline should also indicate when likely outputs (e.g., scientific paper and reports) will be produced.

The length of the written thesis proposal should be the minimum needed to adequately address these topics; 8-10 pages including references, would be appropriate. The approved thesis proposal should be attached to the Thesis Proposal Approval form.

The research thesis/dissertation proposal needs to be recommended for approval by the chair and all other members of the advisory committee. The thesis/dissertation proposal form needs to be signed by the chair and all other members of the advisory committee, as well as the program graduate director.

Revision of Thesis/Dissertation Topic or Title

The student must file a revision of thesis/dissertation topic proposal if there are major changes from a previously-approved research topic or the expected deliverables. Similarly, a revision of thesis/dissertation title also needs to be filed if there is a major change in the title. Minor word additions or deletions need not be filed. A revision of the proposal for thesis/dissertation topic or title must follow the same procedure used for a new proposal.

Checking Thesis/Dissertation Format

The student is fully responsible for the accuracy of the contents of their thesis/dissertation. The student is also fully responsible for ensuring that his/her writing follows the approved format. It is recommended that the graduate committee perform a thorough review for the accuracy of the contents and style of writing of a thesis or dissertation. A professional review for the document may be needed for dissertations. It is also recommended that the student turn in the document as early as possible to the Graduate school for format checking.

Chapter 3: Electronic Thesis and Dissertations

Advantages and Disadvantages

These are major advantages for electronic thesis/dissertation submission, including saving money by not using expensive papers. Paper copies are only needed for reviewing the thesis/dissertation before the final approval. The main disadvantage of electronic submission is that some journals may consider electronically published documents as already published material and may refuse to publish work presented in the thesis/dissertation.

File Formats

The final thesis document to be submitted to the Graduate School must be in Adobe Portable Document (PDF). Microsoft word (.doc, and .docx), or Rich Text Format (.rtf) files can easily be converted to PDF documents. All used fonts should be embedded in the document. Internal links to multi-media are acceptable. Acceptable multi-media file formats include the following

Images	Video	Audio
GIF (.gif)	Apple Quick Time (.mov)	AIF (.aif)
JPEG (.jpeg)	Microsoft Audio Video Interleaved (.avi)	MP3
PDF (.pdf) use Type 1 PostScript Fonts	MPEG (.mpg)	WMA
TIFF (.tif)		WAV (.wav)
		MPEG-2
		SND (.snd)

File Naming Conventions

The name of a thesis or dissertation file should follow the following naming convention:

Lastname_firstname_middleinitial_term_degree.pdf

The format for the term is YYYYT where the T represents the term of graduation, S for Spring, M for Summer, and F for Fall. The word “degree” should be replaced by “mas” or “phd”. Multi-media files should follow the following naming convention:

Lastname_firstname_middleinitial_term_degree_filename.filetype

Multi-media file names follow the same convention used for naming thesis or dissertation files with the addition of the appropriate file name and suffix.

Bounded Copies

After the thesis/dissertation has been successfully defended and all corrections have been made in a satisfactory manner, academic schools or departments may request that the student make and deliver a few copies of the thesis or dissertation. The copies should be made on approved bond paper (permanent white paper of at least 25% cotton). One brand of paper should be used throughout. Copies of the signature page should also be made and included in the bounded copies. In addition, the student may be charged an extra fee to cover the cost of binding.

Hard Copies and Binding

All other copies of the thesis or dissertation, including any required by the department and/or committee, are produced and bound through arrangements made personally by the student. The student's major professor, or the program's graduate director can help determine who expects to receive copies and how copies should be presented, but responsibility for obtaining such copies is entirely the student's.

Chapter 4: Publication of Theses/Dissertations

This chapter includes the UDC policies on publication of master's thesis and doctoral dissertations and on the use of copyrighted material.

Policy on publication of Theses/Dissertations

The University of the District of Columbia policy states that master's theses and doctoral dissertations should be openly published. It is anticipated that all doctoral work and thesis research will be published in the open, refereed literature. However, upon request of the student and the consent of the student's major advisor, a thesis or dissertation, in both electronic and paper format, can be withheld from circulation for no more than one year.

Use of Copyrighted Material

According to the United States Copyright Office website, the use of a copyright statement is no longer required. However, the use of a copyright notice is important because it informs the public that the work is copyright protected and identifies the owner of the work and shows the year of its publication. The optional copyright notice can be included in the last line of the title page using the following format:

Copyright © <student full name> <first year of publication>

Copyright Fees and forms are obtainable online: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/copyright/>.

Part II: Document and Format Guidelines

Chapter 5: Document Appearance

The overall appearance of a thesis or dissertation should be professional and consistent.

Fonts and Type Style

A single font type and size should be used throughout the thesis or dissertation document. The UDC Graduate School recommends the use of Times New Roman, size 12 or Arial, size 11. Other fonts may be used with prior approval from the Graduate School. Such fonts include:

Courier	11 or 12
Century Gothic	11 or 12
Helvetica	11 or 12

Fonts of size 14 may be used consistently in the top level headings of the title and preliminary pages, chapters, references, bibliography, and appendices. Font sizes 10 may be used for tables, figures, computer programs, mathematical equations, and items included in the appendices, if necessary.

For each major header, each header must be identical in font size, type face, location, bold, style, amount of space in-between the header and the first line of text, etc.

Margins

Bottom and right margins on each page must always be one inch wide. The left margin in each page should be 1.5 inch wide. For major headings such as title page, first page of each chapter, etc., the top margin should be 2 inches wide. For text pages, the top margin should be one inch wide.

All tables, figures, and copies of reprinted materials such as computer programs and manuscripts included in the thesis or dissertation must conform to the margin requirements.

Justification

Except for major headings, all text should be left justified. All major headings should be centered on the top of the page.

Line Spacing

Text spacing should be consistent throughout the entire thesis or dissertation as follows:

- Text spacing should be a space and half.
- Table of contents, long quotations, table and figure captions, legends, footnotes, computer printouts, and references (1.5 spacing between entries) should be single-spaced.
- Leave two blank lines before and after tables and figures except at the very top or bottom of a page.

Page Numbers

The format requirements for page numbers are as follows:

- Page numbers should be placed at the bottom center of a page within the 1 inch bottom margin.
- Preliminary pages, i.e., pages before Chapter 1, should be numbered consecutively using small Roman numerals. The title page and the approval page count as pages i and ii. However, page numbers should not appear on these pages.
- The first page to bear Roman numerals is the dedication page (if it exists).
- Arabic numbers begin at the first page of Chapter 1, which is understood to be “1”. However, traditionally, no number appears on that page. The numbering begins at 2 and consecutively continues to the end of the thesis document with all pages counted including blank pages.

Landscape Pages

Landscape pages may be used, if necessary, for tables and figures. When a page is rotated to landscape orientation, the page number may automatically or manually be rotated to the new location.

Widows and Orphans

Set the word processing software to prevent both widows and orphans. A widow is a single line of a paragraph at the bottom of a page. An orphan is a single line ending a paragraph at the top of next page. Also, do not leave a heading or subheading without at least two lines of text at the bottom of a page.

Hyphenation

The last word in the page should not be hyphenated. The number of hyphenated words per page should be minimized as possible.

Footnotes

All footnotes should be typed using the same font used in text pages. Smaller font sizes no less than nine should be used. All footnotes should be single-spaced and conform to the margin requirements.

Chapter 6: Arrangement of Contents

Introduction

Every thesis/dissertation should have the following three content divisions:

- Preliminary pages
- Text pages
- End pages

In addition, an abstract page should also be provided. The format requirements for the abstract page, the order of pages in each of the three document divisions, as well as their format requirements, follows.

Document Order of pages

The contents of each division and their formatting rules are as follows:

a. Preliminary pages

The order of the preliminary pages is as follows:

- Title page (required)
- Abstract (required)
- Approval page (required)
- Dedication (optional)
- Epigraph (optional)
- Biography (optional)
- Acknowledgements (required)
- Table of Contents (required)
- List of Tables (required if tables were used)
- List of Figure (required if Figures were included)
- List of Symbols, Abbreviations, or Nomenclature (optional)
- List of Attachments (optional)
- Summary (required)

b. Body pages

Body pages are divided in chapters.

c. End pages

- References (required)
- Appendices (optional)

Preliminary pages

The contents of preliminary pages and their formatting requirements are as follows:

Title Page

Title Page Formatting Rules

- There is no page number on the title page. However it is counted as page “i”.
- All lines in the title page are horizontally centered. The text should cover the whole page vertically.
- Unless specified, use font size 12 and do not bold, italic or underline words
- The title of the thesis or dissertation is a major heading. The full name of the title should be placed at the top of the title page
- Use base font size 14 and bold type face for the title only
- Capitalize the first letter of all important words
- If the title does not fit in one line, it must be: a) formatted as inverted pyramid; b) the lines are single-spaced
- No period at the end of the title
- Leave 1 double-spaced lines
- Type the word “by”
- Leave one line
- Type the author’s name
- Leave 1 double-spaced line
- Type committee chair member names
- Leave 1 double-spaced line
- Type the following single-spaced text:

A thesis (or dissertation) submitted to Graduate Faculty of the
University of the District of Columbia
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
(Master of Science/Master of Arts/ Doctor of Philosophy/Doctor of Education) in
(Degree Program)

Note: the word Degree Program should be replaced by the words such as Electrical Engineering

- Leave 6 single-spaced lines
- Type “Washington, DC”
- Leave a single line
- Type the month and year degree conferred
- The last line of the title page may contain the optional copyright statement as follows:
Copyright © <student Name and Year Goes Here>
- Example of a title page is found in the appendix.

Abstract Page

The abstract page provides the most important results of the thesis/dissertation research. The abstract page helps researchers determine if they want to read the entire thesis or dissertation. The abstract page is limited to 400 words maximum for the thesis and 600 words for the dissertation. Thesis/Dissertation abstract pages will be published by the University to showcase student work and achievements.

The abstract page Format requirements are as follows:

- Margins: one inch all around
- Spacing: Single or one and half spacing may be used
- Font: The same typeface and font size used in the thesis or dissertation
- The word “Abstract” should not be used as the title of the abstract. The title of the abstract page should match exactly the title of the thesis or dissertation given in the title page
- Leave a blank line
- Begin the text of the abstract

Approval Page

The thesis/dissertation advisory committee is normally formed before the thesis research begins. The thesis advisory committee must approve the topic, methodology and the deliverables of the research. Upon successful completion of the thesis/dissertation oral defense, all members of the thesis committee must sign the Certificate of Approval of Thesis/Dissertation. This certificate may also need the approval of the Graduate dean. The certificate should have the title of the thesis as it appears in the title page, the student name, and the list of the advisory committee members and their affiliations. A few copies of the certificate may be signed to accompany the bounded copies of the thesis/dissertation. The Certificate of Approval of Thesis/Dissertation cannot be included in the electronic version of the thesis/Dissertation. A thesis approval page without the signature should be included in the electronic version of the thesis or dissertation.

Dedication Epigraph, Biography and Acknowledgements pages

These Sections may contain personal information about the student and other appropriate information that the student may share with the readers of their thesis or dissertation. These sections may include pictures, poems, quotes, etc. However, these sections may not have any material that is not appropriate for a general audience.

Dedication (optional)

In the dedication page, the student thanks one or more persons for their support and guidance while working on their thesis or dissertation. Foreign language may be used in the dedication page if followed by English translation. If included, the dedication page will be the first page with a displayed page number. The page number should be lower-case Roman numeral ii. The dedication does not appear in the Table of Contents.

Epigraph (optional)

An epigraph is a brief quotation, phrase or poem placed at the beginning of a document to suggest its theme. If included

- The word Epigraph may not be used to label this page.

- The text should be centered on the page.
- Quotation marks should not be used.
- The name of the author quoted and the reference title should be given. The full reference should be included in the reference list pages.
- The page should be counted but not numbered.
- The Epigraph does not appear in the Table of Contents.

Biography (Optional)

The biography contains appropriate academic, professional, and personal information about the student. If a dedication page was not included, the biography page will be the first page with a displayed page number (lower-case Roman numeral ii). Otherwise, the biography will have a lower-case Roman numeral following the page preceding it.

Acknowledgements (Required)

In the acknowledgment page, the student thanks all every one that had helped him successfully completing his work. Permission to quote copyrighted material and acknowledgment of financial assistance including grant and special funding should be listed in this page. A disclaimer stating that personal views, expressed in the thesis or dissertation, are not necessarily the views of the funding agency may also be included in this page. If included, the acknowledgements page should have a lower-case Roman numeral page number following the page number preceding it.

Table of Contents (Required)

The table of content is a topic outline of the thesis or dissertation. The table of content does not list itself or any preliminary pages preceding it. The List of Tables is the first entry in the Table of Contents. All of the major headings and subheading are listed exactly as they appear in the body and end pages. It is not necessary to list all levels of subheadings in the table of content. The titles of chapters, sections, and the primary and secondary headings should be listed in the Table of Content. However, if a particular level of any topic is included; all heading of that level must be included. Use Microsoft Word to automatically generate the Table of Contents.

Manually modify the generated table such that

- The heading “Table of Contents” should be centered at the top of the page.

- The page numbers of Table of Contents is lower-case Roman numeral following the page number preceding it.
- Leave one blank line between all main title entries (e.g. Dedication, Acknowledgement, List of Tables, List of Figures, Summary, Chapter Headings, References, and Appendices)

List of Tables/List of Figures/ List of Symbols/ List of Abbreviations or Nomenclature/ List of Attachments

A List of Tables should be included if the thesis or dissertation has two or more tables. Similarly, a List of Figures should be included if there are two or more figures. Each table or figure must be listed using its unique number, exact title as it appears in the table or figure and the page number where it is located in the document. However, if these titles are long, these lists should include information up to the first terminal punctuation. When many symbols or abbreviations/nomenclature are used, a separate List of Symbols, List of Abbreviations or Nomenclature should be included for the sake of clarity. A List of Attachments should also be included if one or more attachments are referenced in the body or appendices of the thesis or dissertation. The List of Attachments must include attached file names. The separate lists should be placed on separate pages. If included, these lists should appear in the following order: a) List of Tables; b) List of Figures; c) List of Symbols; d) List of Abbreviations or Nomenclature; and e) List of Attachments.

The formatting requirements for all lists are as follows:

- The header of each list should be centered at the top of the page. The lists should have the following headers: List of Tables, List of Figures, List of Symbols, List of Abbreviations or Nomenclature, List of Attachments, respectively.
- The page header and the text should be separated by two blank lines.
- The page number of each list must be lower-case numerals following the page preceding it.

Additional formatting requirements for the List of Tables and List of Figures follows:

- The page numbers for listed tables and figures should line up flush right to follow the same style used in the Table of Contents.

Summary Page

The summary provides a one-page executive summary of the contents of the thesis including methods used, findings, and deliverables. The summary page may include the same text used in the Abstract page or an expanded version of it. The summary page should be formatted as follows:

- The heading “Summary” must be centered on the top of the page.
- The thesis /dissertation title should not be included.
- Leave two blank lines between the heading and the text.

Document Body

The body of the document may be included in one part or divided into parts. Each part is divided into chapters. Each chapter is divided into sections and subsections. All headings and subheadings must be formatted consistently throughout the document. The same font, font size, typeface, subheading positioning and numbering, paginations, and formatting of mathematical equations and symbols, tables, and figures should be used consistently throughout the document. The style of writing should follow the convention used in the student’s discipline in terms of contents and number of chapters included in the document. Typically, each document should have a) an introductory chapter (Chapter 1) to introduce the research topic(s) and its importance, and outline the topics included in the rest of the document; b) a literature survey chapter to describe relevant and related research; c) A chapter describing the work done; d) A chapter describing experiments or simulation done to verify the correctness of the work; and e) A results and conclusion chapter(s).

Each chapter should start on a new page and with a major heading (title). The first page of Chapter 1 should have the page number listed using Arabic numeral “1”. All pages thereafter should have consecutive Arabic numeral numbers.

End pages

List of References, Literature Cited or Bibliography (Required)

A thesis or dissertation that references other original literature relevant to the research presented in the body of the thesis or dissertation must provide a reference listing of these sources. Words

such as “LITERATURE CITED” or “BIBLIOGRAPHY” may be used instead of “REFERENCES” if that is the convention in the discipline of that area of research.

The list of references, literature cited, or bibliography must be listed in the Table of Contents. The list of references should be placed at the end of the work. The form, style, and content of references should follow what is generally accepted in the student’s field of study.

The two commonly used methods of referencing sources within text are: a) to use the author’s name and date of publication, as in “(John, 2011)”; or b) to use “[x]” where x is the number assigned to that reference in the list of references.

List of References, Literature Cited or Bibliography Page Format

- Type the heading REFERENCES, LITERATURE CITED or BIBLIOGRAPHY centered at the top of the page.
- The heading must have identical font, size, format, and position/location in the page as other major headings.
- Double-space in-between the header and text.
- References may be listed alphabetically or in a sequential order as they appear in the text.
- All references should be single-spaced internally and one and half spaces between the list entries.
- All hyperlinks must be changed to appear black and no underline.
- Web site references should include the URL, author if known, title if available, and the date the URL was accessed by the student.

Appendix/Appendices (Optional)

One or more appendices may be included at the end of the document. These appendices should include materials that are not appropriate to include in the body of the documents. Such material may include: large program printout, raw data used, surveys, correspondence with others, letters of permission to reprint copyrighted material, etc.

Attachments

Very large files such as spreadsheets, maps, architectural drawings, audio or video materials should be loaded as attachments. The attachment sheet will list all attached names and types.

The Table of Contents is a topic outline of the thesis or dissertation. The Table of Contents does not list itself or any preliminary pages preceding it. The List of Tables is the first entry in the Table of Contents. All of the major headings and subheadings are listed exactly as they appear in the body and end pages. It is not necessary to list all levels of subheadings in the Table of Contents. The titles of chapters, sections, and the primary and secondary headings should be listed in the Table of Content. However, if a particular level of any topic is include, all heading of that level must be included. Use Microsoft Word to automatically generate the Table of Contents. Manually modify the generated table such that

- The heading “Table of Contents” should be centered at the top of the page.
- The page numbers of Table of Contents are lower-case Roman numerals following the page number preceding it.
- Leave one blank line between all main title entries (e.g. Dedication, Acknowledgement, List of Tables, List of Figures, Summary, Chapter Headings, References, and Appendices)

Chapter 7: Tables and Figures

Definitions

In this guide, the definition of the tables and figures are as follows:

- **Table:** The term “Table” is used to designate tabulated numerical data used in the body and appendices of the thesis/dissertation.
- **Figure:** The term “Figure” is used to designate any non-text material used in the body and appendices of the thesis/dissertation such as photographs, maps, drawings, images, plates, charts, computer printout sheets, etc. However, the word “Figure” cannot be used to describe digital, audio or video materials.

Tables and Figures Format Requirements

Many theses and dissertations include tables and figures either in the text and/or in the appendices or both. Tables and figures should be numbered in separate series. The series may run consecutively throughout the work, including the appendices, or the series may restart at each section or chapter using a decimal system. If available, all tables and figures must:

- Be listed in the List of Tables and List of Figures pages, respectively.
- Consistently, follow the style adopted in the scholarly journal in the field of study.
- Bear a unique number in its own series.
- Have a unique descriptive title. If the title needs to be more than one line, it should be single-spaced. Tables and figures numbers and titles must have the same font and typeface as the rest of the thesis or dissertation. The style of the titles must be consistent for all tables and figures.
- Be placed as close as possible to its first citation in the text. If a table or a figure is placed in an appendix, this fact must be stated in the body of the text.
- Be separated from the text, above and below, by double spacing except if they are at the very top or bottom of a page, in which case the margin can substitute for the two blank lines.
- Be placed in the center of the page.
- Not be placed side-by-side.

- In addition, a table or figure may:
- Be placed rotated landscape and/or shrunk to conform to the margin requirements.
- Be centered in a separate page if it is more than one-half page in length.

Tables: Additional Format Requirements

- All tables must use the same font as the rest of the document.
- Font sizes smaller than 10 points should not be used.
- The titles of a table must be placed above the tables and must exactly match the corresponding entry in the List of Tables page.
- Must be placed in the center of the page.
- If any table continues to a following page, the line above the table as it continues on the subsequent page should read "Table XX (continued)" without repeating the table title.

Figures: Additional Format Requirements

- If photographs are used, they must be of professional quality and have high resolution
- Figures important from external sources may have text with different fonts, typeface and size.
- Text in diagrams, drawings, computer printouts, etc. must be neat and fully-legible.
- The title of a figure must be placed below the figure and must exactly match the corresponding entry in the List of Figures page.
- Color figures may be used.
- A figure containing several related parts too large to be placed on a single page may be continued onto subsequent pages. The line below the figure as it continues on the subsequent pages should read "Figure XX (continued)"

Citations of Tables and Figures in text

When making reference to a table/figure in the body of the text, a full word and number must be used, e.g. Table 1, Table 1.3, Figure 11, or Figure 3.7.

Appendix A: Sample Pages

Appendix B: Forms and Policies

Various forms will be inserted here. A program of study form is shown below

