



WOU

GRADUATE THESIS MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

The faculty of WOU's Graduate Programs are here to work with you and provide you with a quality master's degree experience. The *WOU Graduate Thesis Manual* is designed to provide instructions, guidelines, and regulations required to complete a master's thesis. This new edition replaces all guides and templates previously released by the Graduate Office.

An important purpose of a final thesis or professional project is to introduce you to original research under the supervision of a graduate faculty member. The primary value of a final thesis is that instead of studying a series of minor and highly-specified topics, you are obligated to examine a sizeable topic for a greater period of time while clearly learning to define both the very nature of a question and its relevant research findings. By the time a final thesis is completed, you can claim to have mastered a specific aspect of knowledge and accrued a deeper awareness concerning the processes of research.

In particular, you will gain experience:

- formulating a research question;
- making critical use of published work;
- selecting and using appropriate research methods; and
- organizing and presenting material in a clear, logical and convincing way.

All students preparing a thesis must conform to the rules explained in this manual for forming a committee, actualizing academic integrity, following the IRB regulations, observing format and arrangement of contents, placement, submission, and obtaining approval for thesis documents.

The Graduate Office urges students and their committee members to *follow this manual throughout the thesis process*. Doing so will save time and effort. If in doubt about processes involved in this manual, consult your thesis Chair or the Graduate Office.

Do NOT submit a thesis until you read this manual thoroughly!

You must use the formatting guidelines in this manual for page numbers, headings, margins, and copyright protection if you choose to have copyright.

OVERVIEW OF THE WHOLE THESIS PROCESS

1. Complete requisite coursework and register for thesis credit.
2. Formulate 2-3 thesis topic ideas.
3. Form a graduate committee
4. Discuss thesis topics with thesis committee chair
5. Write a thesis proposal
6. Complete IRB application if necessary
7. Submit approved thesis proposal to graduate studies
8. Write thesis under guidance of committee chair
9. Conduct research for the thesis
10. Revise thesis and get feedback from committee members
11. Defend thesis
12. Submit graduation paperwork

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PART 1:

HIGH LEVEL OVERVIEW

PART 1, SECTION A: WHAT IS A THESIS

A thesis is generally defined as:

... the written product of a systematic study of a significant problem. It identifies the problem, states the major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, sets forth the sources for and methods of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished project (product) evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation¹.

A thesis attempts to answer a general question or questions that are of interest to an entire field or profession. A thesis is distinguished by certain elements such as an introduction to the study, a review of the literature, a methodology section, results, summary, and recommendations for further research. A thesis is not the same as a professional project. If you are interested in a professional project, please talk to your advisor or program coordinator.

There is a distinction between a quantitative thesis (which involves the collection and statistical analyses of numerical data) and a qualitative thesis (which involves non-statistical applications, i.e. case studies, interviews, etc). It is important to discuss with your committee and committee Chair the most suitable approach for your thesis based on your goals, the content, and the research limitations.

GENERAL INFORMATION

PREREQUISITES²

Each department has different prerequisites. Before beginning any thesis work, consult an advisor or program director. As it takes several terms to complete a thesis, it's vital to speak to your advisor in after you have completed about 15-20 of your graduate credits. During this meeting, you both should try to answer the following questions:

SHOULD I WRITE A THESIS?

Theses are not a required exit option for all graduate students. It is important to consider your short and long term educational and professional goals. While writing a thesis can be rewarding, it requires a significant time investments and a lot of you and your committee's attention.

WHAT ARE THE TIMELINE AND THE MAJOR DEADLINES OF A THESIS?

Initial time investment requires selecting a Chair and committee members, focusing the research question, submitting a Research Proposal and, most likely, applying to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval of your research methods. Each of these has their own deadlines. After you complete these initial stages, it will still take between two to three quarters to complete your thesis. Thus, if you plan to write a thesis, you need to be familiar with the deadlines and the overall timeline arc for your project.

¹ The California Code of Regulations: Title 5 Education, Section 40510

² University, Western Carolina. "WCU Graduate Thesis Guide 7th Edition." Cullowhee, NC, October 2010.

Remember there are specific Graduate Office deadlines regarding your thesis. An accurate yearly calendar containing important dates of each term is available on the Graduate Programs website at: <http://www.wou.edu/graduate/student-resources/academic-calendar/>

WHAT ARE THE RULES IN MY CONCENTRATION?

Learn the citation and style guidelines for your field's approach to academic writing. APA is generally the approved style, but verify with your committee Chair. Your thesis must follow one style guide throughout.

WHAT ARE THE LIMITS OF MY TOPIC?

Not all ideas for theses are viable, especially with pressing deadlines. It is best to discuss your research questions and protocol with your research advisor (committee chair) early in the process. Best practice is to have IRB approval in hand *at least* two quarters before you plan to submit your thesis. Be sure to review the IRB section below and speak with your advisor or committee about IRB-related requirements.

WHO WILL BE AVAILABLE TO DIRECT AND ASSIST ME CONCERNING MY THESIS?

Your chair is your guide. She will help direct you during this process. The Writing Center offers additional writing, research, and citation support. Rather than seeking out multiple guides or resources, stay focused and follow your Chair's directions.

PART 1, SECTION B: THE THESIS PROCESS

WHEN TO START WORK

A thesis can seem intimidating; there is no question that it is a challenging process. However, when properly done, a thesis is very rewarding. Your final thesis represents the culmination and significant devotion to research in your field. It is helpful to remember that your work bears equal importance to your field as any published article in a recognized professional journal. Given this importance, you should begin to plan your thesis once you have completed 15 -20 graduate credits, and begin work on it by the time you have completed 20 credits.

To determine exact due dates for the current academic year, please consult the Graduate Calendar at <http://www.wou.edu/graduate/student-resources/academic-calendar/>

IMPORTANT FORMS AND THEIR DUE DATES

Unless otherwise noted, forms can be acquired from the Graduate Programs' website at <http://www.wou.edu/graduate/forms-exit-requirements/>

- IRB Approval Form - If your research involves human subjects, you will need to get approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Approval can take between 4-8 weeks, and **must be received before you can begin research on human subjects**, so be sure to account for it in your timeline. In order to submit an IRB application, you must also complete CITI training. See the IRB website at <https://www.wou.edu/provost/irb/> for details.
- Pre-approval Form - This form should be completed by your thesis committee and the director of graduate programs before you formally begin work on your thesis. Although you may turn in your completed form at any time thereafter, the absolute deadline for submitting it to the Graduate Office is the end of week 2 of the term you intend to complete your degree.
- Application for Completion of a Master's Degree - One term prior to your intended final term, you must file an application for completion, along with the requisite fee. For specific questions, contact the Graduate Office.

OTHER IMPORTANT TASKS AND DATES

- Individual term credits - The deadlines for individual term credits (e.g., ED 603, CJ 603) will be determined by the faculty member overseeing the project as well as your graduate advisor.
- Scheduling a Defense - Coordinate your thesis defense with your committee Chair. Remember that you need to successfully complete the defense before your completed thesis

can be formally approved on your thesis evaluation page. The defense must occur before finals week.

- Title Page - Your thesis title page should be submitted to the Graduate Office by the end of week 6 of spring term.
- Thesis Copies - Your completed thesis must be submitted to the Graduate Office (Administration building, room 107) by the Wednesday of finals week. Include your completed evaluation page. Unless your program has made other arrangements, one printed copy is required and will be deposited in the library, but you may order personal copies as well if you wish. A binding cost will be deducted from your student account. For specific details on the fee, visit the Graduate Office's website.
- Graduate Program Exit Survey - All students must complete this online survey as part of their graduation requirements. You cannot receive your degree until the survey is completed. The form can be accessed through the Graduate Programs' website at <http://www.wou.edu/graduate/forms-exit-requirements/>

SAMPLE TIMELINE

Table A below shows what the process might look like for a hypothetical graduate student who has completed 18-27 credits during his or her first year and is moving into his or her second full year of graduate study and plans to graduate.

Table A: Sample One-Year Thesis Timeline

Task	Time Frame
Choose a research topic, need, or issue.	Early Term 1
Find a chairperson who is interested in your topic, need, or issue	Early Term 1
Develop thesis proposal, invite committee members, and apply for IRB approval if needed (submit pre-approval to Graduate Office)	Middle Term 1
Write literature review and method chapters	End Term 1, Start Term 2
Collect data; revise literature review & method chapters	Middle Term 2
Analyze data & write up analysis	End Term 2, Start Term 3
Complete writing and prepare for oral defense	Start to Middle Term 3
Complete oral defense of paper	End Term 3

Note: You should develop a similar chart with the assistance of your committee chair.

PART 1, SECTION C: PLAGIARISM, COPYRIGHT, AND FAIR USE

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.³ All theses, or any paper developed by a graduate student must comply with university regulations (574-031-0300) concerning fabrication, facilitating dishonesty, and plagiarism. Material developed by someone other than the author of a thesis, or class paper should be clearly credited using the style guide recommended by your department or division.

Western Oregon University's Code of Student Responsibility (rev. 9/1/09) defines academic dishonesty as follows:

- a) Cheating -- intentional use, or attempted use of artifice, deception, fraud, and/or misrepresentation of one's academic work;
- b) Fabrication -- unauthorized falsification and/or invention of any information or citation in any academic exercise;
- c) Facilitating dishonesty -- helping or attempting to help another person commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes students who substitute for other persons in examinations or represent as their own papers, reports, or any other academic work of others;
- d) Plagiarism -- representing without giving credit the words, data, or ideas of another person as one's own work in any academic exercise. This includes submitting, in whole or in part, pre-written term papers of another or the research of another, including but not limited to the product of commercial vendors who sell or distribute such materials, and the appropriation and/or use of electronic data of another person or persons as one's own, or using such data without giving proper credit for it; or
- e) Any use or attempted use of electronic devices in gaining an illegal advantage in academic work in which the use of these devices is prohibited, and such devices include but are not limited to cell phones, PDAs, laptops, programmable calculators, removable disk drives, etc⁴.

Internet material must be treated as published material and must be fully credited. Purchased research materials must also be clearly identified as the work of others and not the original work of the author. In situations where material was developed through study groups or other formal or informal group interaction, the author is obligated to credit others for the ideas that were developed as part of a group process.

³Council of Writing Program Administrators. "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices." <http://www.wpacouncil.org/node/9>

⁴ Western Oregon University. "Code of Student Responsibility." Monmouth, OR. September 2009. <http://www.wou.edu/studentconduct/files/2015/10/CSR-2015-161.pdf>

GRADUATE OFFICE POLICY CONCERNING FABRICATION, FACILITATING DISHONESTY, AND PLAGIARISM⁵

A professor who believes that some form of dishonesty has occurred may take the following course of action:

- a) The faculty member may resolve the situation directly with the student or involve the Division Chair in resolution of the issue. The decision will be put in writing accurately stating the issue and how it was resolved. The student should be informed that if he/she disagrees with the decision, he/she has the right of appeal to the appropriate Dean.
- b) If the student chooses to appeal, the written appeal must be submitted to the appropriate Dean within five business days of receiving the decision. The Dean will review the appeal and respond in writing to both the student and faculty member within ten business days of receiving the appeal.
- c) In addition to the academic sanction, the faculty member may choose to bring a formal complaint of academic dishonesty to the Coordinator of Campus Judicial Affairs. The faculty member must submit the complaint in writing outlining specific details of the alleged misconduct. NOTE: This process is not required if the faculty member decides the issue has been dealt with appropriately at his/her level.

If the student has evidence that an error was made in the process, the student may pursue the issue through the student grievance process. Information regarding the student grievance process can be obtained from the Vice President for Student Affairs. A single instance of cheating or plagiarism usually results in a failing grade on the assignment in question. In situations where there is evidence of repeated offenses, or an offense involving an assignment comprising the greater part of the total grade (such as a term paper, thesis or professional project), this could entail a failing grade for the course (Faculty Handbook, General Academic Standards) and may lead to disciplinary action through WOU's Student Judicial System. A continuing pattern of failure to maintain a high level of academic honesty can lead to dismissal from Western Oregon University.

All students should be familiar with the Code of Student Responsibility. Copies of the code (rev. 9/1/09) are available from the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and can be found at: <http://www.wou.edu/studentconduct/files/2015/10/CSR-2015-161.pdf>

COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS

The U.S. Copyright Law provides federal copyright protection for both published and unpublished works. Therefore, authors who may wish to include quotations, illustrations, charts, graphs, and musical arrangements and so forth in their thesis should make every effort to be sure that reproduction of the copyrighted material does not exceed the doctrine of "Fair Use." Unpublished works, as well as works published without valid copyright notice are eligible for protection. The absence of a copyright symbol (©) does not necessarily mean that a work is in the public domain. Tabular arrangements and compilations are specifically covered under copyright law. Permission to reprint or adapt charts, tables, graphs, tabular arrangements, musical arrangements and so forth must be sought from the copyright holder.

⁵ Western Oregon University. "Graduate Office Policy Concerning fabrication, facilitating dishonesty, and plagiarism." <http://www.wou.edu/graduate/student-resources/policies/fabrication-policy/>

FAIR USE

If a work is protected by copyright, permission must be acquired prior to incorporation of that work into a new document. Extracts and quotations may be used to a limited extent for purposes of illustration and criticism. The language of the copyright law is vague as to what constitutes fair use, so the best rule is when in doubt, seek permission and consult with the editor of the particular work.

SECURING PERMISSION

Efforts to obtain permission to use material from other sources should begin well in advance of a final draft. If you use material that falls in these confines, you are expected to acquire written permission to use the material and the evidence of such permission must be provided with the final copy of the thesis/professional project. A statement of permission must appear in a caption or another distinct location in your thesis. The owner of the copyright may request that specific words or phrases be used to indicate that permission was granted. Requests for permission should be directed to the copyright holder or the copyright permissions editor of the publication. When requesting permission to reproduce copyrighted material, be sure to specify that the request is for a one-time, non-profit, educational use.

QUESTIONS ABOUT COPYRIGHT

Students who have questions about copyrighted status, and whether or not a use is likely to constitute "Fair Use," may e-mail Sue Kunda, Scholarly Communications Librarian, at kundas@wou.edu.

PART 2:
WRITING TIPS, IRB PROPOSAL, &
PREPARING THE THESIS

PART 2, SECTION A: WRITING TIPS

Starting on your thesis is exciting and probably a bit overwhelming. However, if you know what you need to accomplish, writing the thesis will be easier than you think. The first step is two-fold: determine a topic and identify a committee. Before you get the committee, though, you will need a chair. The best approach is to speak with several faculty whom you have taken courses from, discuss research topics that interest you, and see if they share these interests. If you share a common interest, you might approach them to see if they would be willing to chair your thesis committee.

Regular contact with your Chair is necessary, in person and via email, so you need to choose a Chair who will be accessible to you throughout the entire thesis process. The Chair will help you select your topic, direct your writing, frame your defense, and help you to understand the thesis process. Your Chair's principal role is to offer you guidance on methodological and theoretical issues, as well as discussing issues that may arise during the thesis process.

While your research topic will probably only shift a bit during the process, your research question will change many times. Knowing this in advance should help you relax a bit. Research means not having a fixed understanding or question but adapting based on what we learn and what we find. Thus, as you move forward in reading and discussions with your chair, you will likely discover things that you did not know--and these things will change how you see your thesis project. When you are at the start of your process, this is normal and expected. However, you want to get the research question nailed down before you start too much data gathering.

After you have confirmed a Chair, speak with her about other potential committee members. While each committee may operate a little differently, the Chair is traditionally your first contact point for all things thesis related. It is up to you, however, to confirm, identify, and invite other potential committee members. Do this with your chair's guidance. Bear in mind that the committee's role is to employ their expertise and understanding to shape and focus your thesis. All committee members should have expertise enabling them to provide critical and helpful advice in your thesis area and be willing to read and evaluate your thesis before your oral defense.

YOUR COMMITTEE

It is your responsibility to select committee members who will be influential towards your thesis and with whom you wish to work closely. The committee must include a Chair and two additional members with expertise in the area of your thesis work. The Chair and at least one additional member must be Western Oregon University faculty members. The third committee member can be an outside member of the university who holds at least an accredited master's degree. One committee member may be a professor or professional (with a minimum of a master's degree) from outside Western Oregon University, with the permission of your committee chair. Documentation/proof of their masters level work must be on record with the Graduate Office.

As you work with your committee, remember that they have a number of other responsibilities and obligations. Given this, it is important to plan meetings with your chair and other committee members well in advance. This not only allows them to prepare, but it helps them focus on you and your questions. Similarly, make sure that you attend to Graduate Office deadlines.

SELECTING YOUR TOPIC

After you select your committee, determine a suitable thesis topic for your thesis proposal. This topic will require between three to 12 months of your life, so make sure that the topic interests you and is one in which you are invested. Keep the following recommendations⁶ in mind when deciding on a topic:

- **Choose a topic you are passionate about.** This may be the most important criteria. You will be spending considerable time with this project; your quality of life will be more satisfying if these hours are spent enjoyably. What's more, the quality of your research, writing, and arguments will be more dynamic by feeling genuine passion for your work. Choose a topic you find both fascinating and socially significant in your field.
- **Pick a topic that will be helpful in your career path.** If your goal is an academic career, choose a topic that can be easily modified into journal articles or a book lending itself well to future research. If you wish to work at a teaching-oriented institution, consider a topic you can use in the classroom. If you are going into industry, select a topic that will make you more marketable. Ask yourself this, "How will my topic sound when I discuss it at a future career interview?"
- **Find a topic that establishes a niche in your field.** Do your research and find a topic that fits into existing bodies of literature, *yet builds upon theory and expands it.*
- **Choose research that is unique.** Complete significant research to make sure this topic has not been examined before. Be creative and choose an idea that is original and innovative.
- **Consider existing research that can be developed.** Are there studies that are worth replicating or could be enhanced? Could you approach the same topic but from another perspective?
- **Think carefully before you choose a controversial topic.** This does not mean you should avoid areas that spark your interest. However, if you choose a controversial topic, think carefully about how it may impact future employment, tenure, or publishing opportunities.
- **Pick a topic about which you already have some expertise.** Previously acquired knowledge will provide a foundation for your thesis giving you an advantage concerning your research. Taking related knowledge from your coursework and writing assignments that will reflect and contribute to your thesis.
- **Pick a manageable topic.** This is a huge project that requires ample devotion, but it is not your life's research. A good advisor will help you narrow and refine your topic and encourage realistic timelines during your graduate career.
- **Select a topic that aligns with your chair and committee.** As you consider topics, choose one that your chair and one or several of your committee members know. Additionally, when you are discussing research methods or approaches, select an approach that is known

⁶ Gladen, Naomi. "Dissertation and Thesis Topics: How to Choose Successful Research for your PhD or Master's Degree," Campus Life Suite101.com, March 2007.

and practiced by one or several committee members.

- **Realize that your research method may influence your research topic.** As you move forward, it's important to recognize that your choice in research methods and data collection may well influence the kind of research question(s) you ask.

If you are not ready to make a definite thesis proposal, decide on a general area of interest in which you would like to pursue research. Then read relevant professional and academic journals on the subject. Articles often contain and reflect current major research interests and can help you identify specific issues for future study.⁷

CHARACTERISTICS OF A QUALITY TOPIC

Need for research: A significant necessity for research should exist. The results need not have immediate application, but your topic should not be trivial. You must believe that your research is important and worthwhile, thereby helping to retain motivation during periods of routine work. Keep in mind that the need to understand the nature of some specific phenomenon is the key motivation for most research.

Amenable to research methods: Your topic needs to be feasible. It is important to consider both the availability of data and the availability of tools for analysis. Take into account that some research projects and research methods are beyond the capabilities of students because of technology, cost, or length of time requirements.

Achievable in a reasonable time: Typically, a master's final thesis should have the potential of being completed in one year by full-time graduate students. **A final thesis should be in the range of 20,000 - 40,000 words; or between 80 and 120 double-spaced pages;** although the nature of your topic may require you to exceed these typical ranges.

Match with student's capabilities and interests: The research topic should match both your interests and capabilities. This will sustain you in times of frustration and offset the possibility of entering areas where you have insufficient expertise.

Contribution of knowledge: A master's thesis should be based on a significant issue or research question. For example, you may want to replicate an experiment or study by using improved data and/or techniques in order to expand upon prior research. Acknowledge that your work should relate to, explain, solve, or add proof to the topic's question or issue. The outcome of the results from your research should increase understanding applicable to your particular field of inquiry. Knowledge may be increased by:

- New or improved evidence;
- New or improved methodology;
- New or improved technology/materials;
- New or improved concepts of theories; or

⁷ Northeastern Illinois University. "Graduate College Thesis Manual." Chicago, IL. September 2010.

- Any combination of the above.

Once you have your topic, you will need to file the necessary paperwork with the Institutional Review Board, if human subjects or other live vertebrates will be involved. Be sure to speak to your committee chair for guidance on applying for IRB approval.

As you shape your proposal, ask yourself the following questions:

- How can I develop a thesis which shows imagination and intellectual craftsmanship?
- How do I state the problem clearly?
- Can I write hypotheses or research questions that are clear, unambiguous and can be explored?
- If I do not need hypotheses, are my objectives clearly stated; can they be accomplished?
- How will I analyze the data or show that my project accomplishes the goals I set?
- If I need a sample population, is the population from which the sample is to be drawn receptive to the research and easily available to me?
- Is my thesis trying to do too much? If it is, what would make it more manageable?

PART 2, SECTION B: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

What is the IRB?

The purpose of IRB oversight of research is to assure the protection of the research participants, the researcher, and the university. The research community has a responsibility to ensure that the treatment of human participants in research meets the highest ethical standard.

If you are conducting research involving humans or any other live vertebrates, you **must obtain IRB approval before your Research Proposal can be approved and prior to beginning your research.** *The process to obtain IRB approval has several components, including completing the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) training prior to submitting your IRB application.* Information may be obtained by consulting your chair, or by using the following link: <http://www.wou.edu/provost/irb>

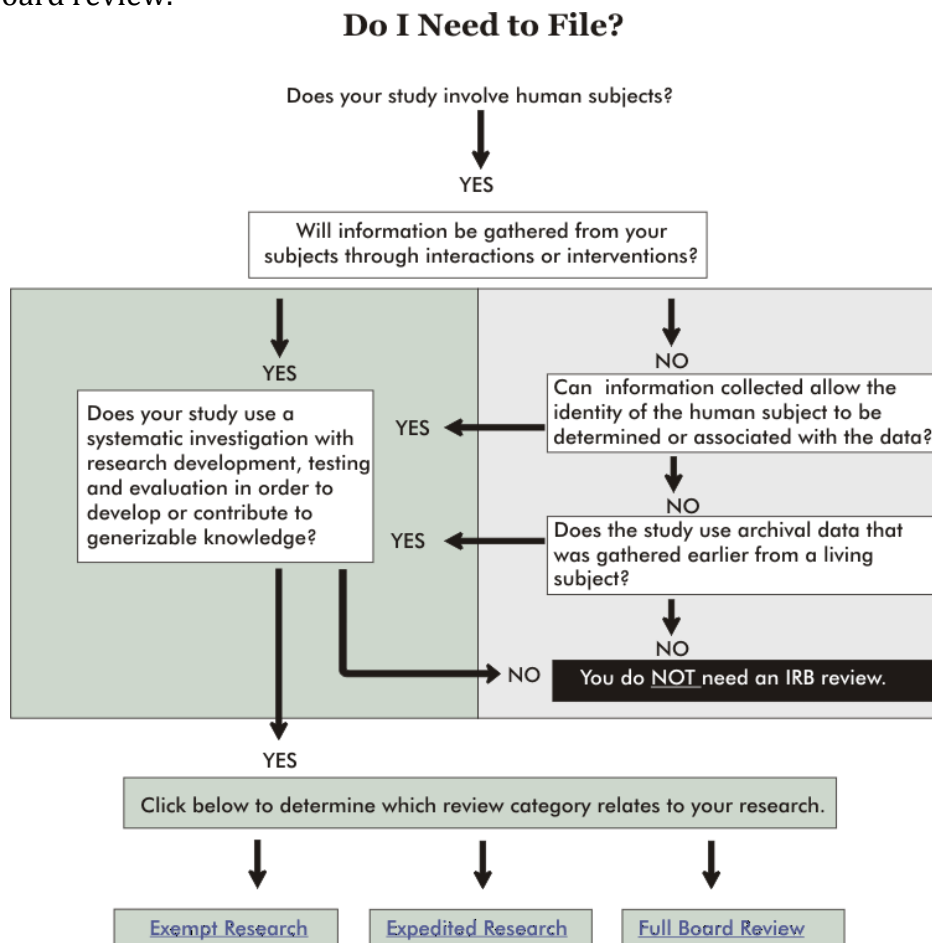
Why complete an IRB application and review?

If the proposed research activity involves human participants and may contribute (e.g., through publication, presentation, or dissemination outside the WOU community) to “general knowledge,” then the activity will require review and approval by the WOU Institutional Review Board before any recruitment or research involving human participants may begin. **IRB review and approval is**

required for ALL research projects involving human participants regardless of the source of funding for the project or the level of risk posed to participants.

Do I need to File?

There are three types of IRB review categories: **Exempt**, **Expedited**, and **Full Board**, shown in the following chart . Exempt and Expedited applications are reviewed by two IRB members. Research involving special participant populations (i.e., pregnant women, children, incarcerated individuals) requires Full Board review.



Once your research category is established, read the corresponding Level of Research Review document found on the website: http://www.wou.edu/provost/irb/level_review.php to determine if participant consent is required.

How Do I Get Help with Research Consent Forms?

Depending on your research review category, you may be required to include consent forms for your research participants. It is required to obtain legally effective informed consent of individuals before research as a protection provided under the HHS regulations at 45 CFR part 46. Your thesis Chair or committee members can help determine the correct format concerning your area of research. The IRB site also offers some helpful examples and templates.

What is required to do an IRB application?

Effective September 15, 2014, CITI Training has become a mandatory component to the IRB review process. Below is the memo from the Provost regarding the importance of CITI Training and Certification:

The Western Oregon University research community has the responsibility to ensure that the treatment of human participants meets the highest ethical standard, as well as complies with the many federal regulations related to the protection of human subjects. The WOU Institutional Review Board (IRB) provides oversight review and approval for research conducted by the university's students, faculty and staff to assure the protection of the participants, the researcher, and the university. In addition, as a recipient of federal research funding, the university is required to assure and provide for the protection of all participants in the university's research endeavors. Failure to do so could lead to the loss of federal funding and increased liability.

As part of our commitment to human protections, we maintain a Federal-Wide Assurance contract with the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP), the Federal agency with oversight in this area. This assurance contract specifies our agreement to uphold ethical principles of research and comply with Federal regulations and guidelines for human subjects' research.

One of the requirements of our assurance involves certification of ongoing training of ethical principles and federal requirements regarding human subjects' research. In line with this requirement, the National Institute of Health, the National Science Foundation, and other federal entities require funding recipients to certify training in the ethical use of humans in research. To remain in compliance and assure that research conducted through Western Oregon University meets the highest ethical standard, the WOU Institutional Review Board requires all individuals conducting human subjects' research to have training in the protection of human research participants for.

WOU researchers must provide evidence of successful completion of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) course hosted by the University of Miami. This course may be accessed through the following link: <https://www.wou.edu/provost/irb/> . Once completed, researchers will need to save their certificates electronically, or print them out and forward them to the Chair of the IRB. Approval of research projects will not be issued until documentation of training has been received by the IRB for all study team members. This documentation need only be submitted once. Study team- members for whom the IRB has already received training certification are not required to provide additional documentation of training.

How does an IRB Application get reviewed?

Once you submit your IRB application, it usually takes between two to four weeks to review the application. The length of time often depends on how complex the application is and what type of research you plan to conduct.

What if Research Continues after One Year?

In 2010, the WOU Institutional Review Board revised the *Renewal/Continuing Review Policy* for research lasting more than one-year to be in compliance with the Office of Human Research and Protection. **If the scope of your research continues past one year of your IRB approval, it is your responsibility to submit renewal documents to the IRB.** To allow adequate time for review, renewal documents should be submitted no more than one month prior to the renewal date. Renewal documents for continuing approval can be found on the IRB website.

Contacting the IRB

It may be necessary to contact the IRB for deadlines or any questions you may have regarding your IRB application process. The IRB is there to assist you. Feel free to call the office at 503.838.9200 or send an email to irb@wou.edu. Most academic divisions on campus have representatives on the IRB. This means it is important to work with your division's IRB representative.

As you work on your IRB application with your committee chair , you will also be working on your research proposal. The research proposal is the document that you submit to the graduate office

that explains what you are researching, why, and what you hope to learn. The processes of completing the IRB application and writing the research proposal inform each other, and both usually are written at the same time. It is important to understand that as you work on developing your research plan and selecting the research methods that these choices will deeply impact how your IRB looks and what your research proposal says. It is normal for these documents to take time to develop. This part of the thesis is when you grapple with, and formally shape, your research question and exactly what you will be doing with your work.

THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

It is crucial that the research proposal be clear, concise, and well-planned. Your research proposal is the foundation of your entire thesis; the more thorough your planning is, the fewer delays you will face. Up to 50 percent of your time working on the thesis is spent on planning.

Your research proposal will be revised multiple times based on your Chair and committee's constructive comment and criticism. Actively seek expert opinion on your proposal; it is far better to develop a viable research project at the outset than trying to make an unrealistic research project happen. Unrealistic projects and delays can be very frustrating; avoid them whenever possible. You should continue with your literature review, discussions with experts and/or exploratory work until you are absolutely confident about your research problem. Your proposal should constitute a clear, crisp definition of your research, including your purpose of study, main objectives, and potential limitations.

The research proposal should contain a brief, precise statement of exactly what you want to do and how you propose to do it. Keep in mind that the proposal may range from four to fifteen pages. Be sure to check with your Chair about your department's expectations. Your proposal should be clear enough that any reader will understand clearly, from your proposal, what your research goals, purpose, methods, and basic background are. Do not expect your writing Committee Chair and other advisers to consult any other document to obtain a clear idea of your research project.

FORMATTING YOUR RESEARCH PROPOSAL: A MODEST PROPOSAL

A research proposal provides your writing committee a clear idea of what you intend to do. You need to demonstrate to your committee the significance of your topic and the need to investigate this area. Depending on the type of research design and methodology you select, you may need to define your research population and the type of statistics you intend use.

Your proposal should be a compelling and concise statement of your intended project or thesis issue's research. It should follow appropriate publication style and documentation rules (e.g., APA, MLA) with no grammatical errors. Limit your proposal to 15 pages, *not including* the list of references⁸.

Below is a suggested model for your outline; your committee Chair will help you decide the best way to present your ideas.

a) **Introduction** (1-2 pages)

⁸ University, Western Carolina. "WCU Graduate Thesis Guide 7th Edition." Cullowhee, NC, October 2010.

- a. A brief introduction to the research project is provided leading up to a brief statement of the problem, or question. Often the candidate will include how he/she became interested in the research topic.
- b) **Literature Review**(2-5 pages)
 - a. The literature review must be focused on academic articles and research directly pertinent to your research question(s) and the thesis. What is known about the research question from prior literature? What is not known and why? You should reference at least 10-15 articles/books in this initial summary.
- c) **What's your method? What do you plan to do?** (1-3 pages)
 - a. Be sure to discuss your methodology, method(s), and your basic research plan. What data will you collect? Why did you choose that data?
- d) **How will you measure your results?**
 - a. How will you analyze and interpret your data? What theoretical framework will you use?
- e) **Contribution to knowledge** (1-2 pages)
 - a. State the way(s) that your work will make a contribution to knowledge. How is the proposed study unique? In what way will it go beyond existing research? How will it advance knowledge, contribute to the literature, or improve your profession?

Research Proposal Approval

It is important to work with your Chair as you develop your proposal. The proposal must be accepted by all of your committee. In many cases, approval from Western Oregon University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) is necessary for your Pre-Approval Form to be accepted. No data collection may take place until IRB approval is received.

PART 2, SECTION C: PREPARING THE THESIS

In general, *the introduction* should contain one or more hypotheses or questions which establish the purpose(s) of the study and demonstrate the theoretical and/or organizational basis for the direction of study. *The literature review* should provide empirical evidence supporting the study and placing the study in context with other research in the field. *The methodology section* explicitly describes how the research is conducted and any methods or implementations used, including any statistical treatment. *The results and discussion section* provides a thorough presentation and discussion of the findings. *The conclusion section* is a synthesis of the research findings and recommendations for future research. *Appendices* which include data, maps, and other material too detailed or bulky for inclusion in the body of the text, may be appended at the end.

THESIS CONTENT (BODY OF TEXT)

The framework of the thesis is built around the content areas noted in the previous section (i.e., Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results, and Conclusion). Organizing the research material in an outline based on this format will help you to clarify thoughts and present information in a logical sequence. The following outline is offered as a general template for the presentation of your thesis and should be finalized with your committee following conventions of

your discipline:

- a) Abstract
- b) Chapter 1: Introduction to the study:
 - a. background
 - b. statement of the problem
 - c. purpose of the study
 - d. theoretical bases and organization
 - e. limitations of the study
 - f. definition of terms
- c) Chapter 2: Review of the literature
- d) Chapter 3: Methodology
 - a. design of the investigation
 - b. population and/or sample
 - c. treatment
 - d. data analysis procedures
- e) Chapter 4: Results and discussion
 - a. presentation of the findings
 - b. discussion of the findings
- f) Chapter 5: Conclusion
- g) References
- h) Appendices (if necessary)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of an abstract is to provide a brief introduction to the thesis in order for potential readers to determine whether the entire thesis is of interest to them. The abstract provides the essential information about the thesis and an overview of the study. It should be written in complete sentences and may include statements of the problem, procedure or methods, results, and conclusions. The abstract may include accomplishments, the most pertinent facts and implications of the study, and a brief explanation of the work.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The primary function of the Introduction is to provide an overview of the study. The following components should be included in the Introduction:

- *Background*: The beginning of the chapter should serve as a carefully organized lead-in to the problem under investigation. This section may include an overview of the historical evolution, the current status, the projected future dimensions of the problem, or all three of these elements.

- *Statement of the Problem*: Present the focal point(s) of the research. Introduce the "what" of the present investigation (i.e., clearly state what the study will examine or investigate). State the specific major question(s) and/or hypothesis(es) to be studied or tested. Make a precise statement of all minor questions to be explored.
- *Purpose of the Study*: Justify the study. Explain why the present investigation is significant and how it supports other studies, differs from previous studies, extends present knowledge, and/or examines new issues.
- *Theoretical Bases and Organization*: Explain how the present research corresponds with other studies and what the underlying theoretical bases upon which the study is constructed are. One or more hypotheses or research questions should create a solid foundation upon which the conceptual framework is built.
- *Limitations of the Study*: Describe the limitations of the study. These may be related to aspects of the method, such as sample size or the instrument that was used to collect data. Limitations may lead to recommendations for future research.
- *Definition of Terms*: Define any special terms used in the study and establish abbreviations that will be used throughout the text. **If special terms or symbols are used, you must include a list of symbols.**

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There are several ways in which this chapter may be structured; for example, chronologically, categorically, or through related theoretical viewpoints. Emphasis should be placed on the reasons underlying the particular areas, topics, and periods selected for review.

The chapter may:

- provide empirical evidence supporting the historical, theoretical, and research background for the study;
- define how the investigation differs from other studies in the field;
- show how the study relates to other research studies in similar areas;
- include any theoretical foundations, expert opinions, and prior research findings;
- use primary sources relating to the basis of your research whenever possible.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research design or approach in depth. This should be a detailed and clearly written description that permits a precise replication of the study. The protocols listed below are customary to a quantitative thesis; however, these protocols may be adapted to a qualitative thesis, as well.

- *Design of the Investigation*: Explain how the study is designed to investigate each hypothesis or question. If appropriate, identify all variables and how they are manipulated.
- *Population and/or Sample*: Describe the principal characteristics of the population selected. If a random sample is used, describe the general population from which the sample was selected and the sampling procedure used.
- *Experimental Techniques and/or Data Treatment*: If the data is qualitative, several factors may need to be described including the approach (e.g., survey, interview, or focus group) used to collect the data, how the data was collected, the type of survey instrument (e.g., Qualtrics, SurveyMonkey, or Google Forms) used, and/or the sequence that was followed to collect the data. If the data is statistical, describe the exact sequence followed to collect and tabulate the data. Describe the instrument(s) used to collect the data and establish the validity of the instrument(s) via studies by other researchers.
- *Data Analysis Procedures*: Describe and explain data analysis procedures used. These may include descriptions of tests, formulae, computer programs, and/or qualitative procedures (e.g., discourse analysis or coding and categorizing ethnographic data).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, you will report on and discuss the findings of the study.

- *Presentation of the Findings*: The results of the investigation are presented in narrative form and may be supplemented with graphics. Whenever appropriate, use tables and figures to present the data. If tables and figures are used you must have a corresponding list in your pre-text pages (see page 25).
- *Discussion of the Findings*: The discussion of the results should be well argued in relation to each question or hypothesis. Inferences, projections, and probable explanations of the results may also be included. Discuss the implications of patterns and trends, and include any secondary findings.

CONCLUSIONS

The concluding section should synthesize the entire research effort. A sufficiently comprehensive overview should enable the intended audience to understand the entire study. At this point it is appropriate to reacquaint the reader with the conceptual framework, the design of the investigation, the methodology, and the results of the study. This section may include the significance of the study and its conclusions, the limitations and weaknesses of the study, implications for application, and recommendations future research.

REFERENCES

Cite references according to your discipline's appropriate style guidelines (e.g., APA format) and be sure to include every source cited in the study in the reference list, including material that has been adapted for use in tables and figures. Only include items in the reference list that have been cited in the thesis.

APPENDICES

Material too detailed for inclusion in the body of the text, or material that cannot be effectively presented due to its length or size may be included in the appendices. If you refer to a table or

graph in the next, that table or graph must appear immediately below the first reference. Tables and graphs should not be placed in the appendices unless they are supplementary material. Appendices might include such things as questionnaires, raw data, maps, photos, artwork, letters of permission to reproduce material, and personal correspondence.

ARRANGEMENT AND CONTENT RULES

Your thesis must include the following sections ***IN THIS ORDER***:

Pre-text pages

1. Evaluation Page (required)
2. Title Page (required)
3. Copyright Page (optional)
4. Acknowledgements (optional)
5. Table of Contents (required)
6. List of Tables (required - if tables used)
7. List of Figures (required - if figures used)
8. List of Abbreviations or Symbols (if used)
9. Abstract (required)

Thesis Content (Body of Text)

10. Body (required - pagination begins here)

Post-text pages

11. References/Bibliography (required)
12. Appendices (optional)

Evaluation Page (required)

The Evaluation page serves as a cover sheet to your entire thesis. The page is dated the day that you submit your final thesis and is signed by each member of your committee. The page will not be counted and is not numbered. Original signatures must be in indelible black ink. All signatures must be those of the actual committee member unless the committee member is not physically on campus.

If committee members are not physically on campus (i.e., joining the defense via distance technology), the thesis committee Chair may sign for them. In addition, the distance committee member may choose to send an email to the Chair with the following wording:

Dear Dr. [Chair's name],

I attended the thesis defense by [Student's name] on [month, day, year]. It is with pleasure that I hereby certify that in my opinion the thesis by [Student's name] is worthy of acceptance in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the master's degree.

Sincerely,

[Name of Thesis Committee Member]

All theses must be approved and signed by the Director of Graduate Studies. The Evaluation Page is called the *Thesis Final Approval* form and is found at: <http://www.wou.edu/graduate/forms-exit-requirements/>

Note: Your committee will sign the cover sheet **after** you have successfully completed all corrections required by the committee. After all editing corrections have been completed, and you have passed your orals, each committee member will sign the Master's Degree Final Evaluation Report. This is a separate form that serves as the official notice to the Graduate Office that this part of your master's degree exit requirement is completed.

Title Page (required)

The title page consists of evenly spaced components, centered on the page. The page will be counted as page 1, but not numbered. See page 31 for pagination format guidelines.

Copyright Page (optional)

This page is used if the work is to be copyrighted. If used, the pagination for all pre-text pages begins with this page as ii. Wording should begin ten enter strokes from the first line, including the copyright symbol (©), your full name, defense date and All Rights Reserved. If your thesis is copyrighted, you must include a the symbol © on the title page.

Acknowledgements Page (optional)

If included, the acknowledgements section is usually written in the first person. Here you may wish to explain certain features of the thesis. It is also customary to recognize the assistance of your Chair and/or members of the writing/advisory committee, as well as others who contributed to your thesis. Specific contributions by other persons or institutions should be acknowledged, especially if financial support was received. The top margin for this page is also 1 3/4".

Table of Contents (required)

The table is extremely important, and MUST be accurate. All titles, subheadings, and page numbers must correspond **exactly** to the body of the thesis. **Single-space the table.** Use **tab leaders** between titles and page numbers. For best results, wait until your thesis is totally completed before writing the Table of Contents⁹.

All headings, including the "Table of Contents" should follow the publication guidelines of your discipline. The "Table of Contents" heading should be 1-3/4" down from the top of the page. Second and subsequent pages, if any, begin 1-1/4" down from the top of the page and maintain the headings of "Chapter" and "Page" on the left and right margins, respectively. If the table of contents requires a full page, then double space between the last line of type and the page number at the bottom of the page.

List of Tables (required if tables are used)

"Tables" are tabulated numerical data used in the body of the thesis (or appendix). If you have tables in the body of your thesis, you must create an accurate master list.

⁹ University, Western Carolina. "WCU Graduate Thesis Guide 7th Edition." Cullowhee, NC, October 2010.

The "List of Tables" follows the "Table of Contents" on a new page. The title falls 1-3/4" down from the top of the page, and should follow conventions (such as the use of capitalization) used in your discipline. Number the tables with Arabic numerals, and underline (e.g., Table 1) in chronological order as they appear in the thesis. Double-space between titles. Be sure that the list of tables corresponds with titles and page numbers identical to those used in the thesis. Narrative or captions that follow a table title should not be included in the list. Appendix tables are not included in this list.

List of Figures (required if figures are used)

"Figures" are any non-textual materials, such as illustrations, charts, graphs, maps, photographs, drawings, diagrams, and musical scores. If you have figures in the body of your thesis, you must create an accurate "List of Figures." The title falls 1-3/4" down from the top of the page and should follow the guidelines from your discipline. Number the figures with Arabic numerals, and underline (e.g., Figure 1) in chronological order as they appear in the thesis. Double-space between titles. Be sure that the list of figures corresponds with titles and page numbers identical to those used in the thesis. Narrative or captions that follow a figure should not be included in the list. Appendix figures are also not included in this list.

List of Symbols (required if symbols are used)

A "List of Symbols," sometimes referred to as *Nomenclature*, can be a valuable aid. If you use symbols or abbreviations frequently throughout your thesis, you should create a master list. This list follows the "List of Figures" on a new page as well as the identical format guidelines as the lists of tables and figures.

Abstract

An abstract is a required component for all theses which should provide the reader with the essential information about the thesis and an overview of the study. It should be written in complete sentences and may include statements of the problem, procedure or methods, results and conclusions. The abstract may include accomplishments, the most pertinent facts and implications of the study, and a brief explanation of the work, and should not exceed 250 words (approximately 1-1/2 pages in length). Mathematical formulae, diagrams, footnotes, illustrative materials, and quotations should not be used in the abstract.

Type the word "Abstract" 1-3/4" down from the top following the conventions of your discipline, centered within the required margins. Triple space and type the complete title of the thesis in bold-type. Double-space and type "by," the author's name, degree for which the thesis is being prepared, Your Program and Department, the University's name and date of graduation, **each on a separate line**. If a copyright is to be involved, a c-world (©) should be typed before the author's name, and the year of copyright should follow the name.

RULES FOR THESIS CONTENT (BODY OF TEXT)

The body of the text explains, illustrates, argues for, and in some cases proves by organizing in a coherent manner the evidence gathered from various sources. The thesis will usually be divided into several chapters as laid out in this manual and/or as prescribed by your committee. You should verify an appropriate outline with your Chair. The text should be clear, accurate, and written in an academic, scholarly style that aligns with the type of thesis you are writing. The presentation of your thesis is as important as your research. Take ample time to edit and proofread the final copy of the work carefully. You are encouraged (and in some cases, required) to employ the assistance of a professional editor.

When typing the body of the text, follow these important requirements:

- There should always be at least two lines of a paragraph on any given page to avoid widowed or orphaned lines on a page.
- Do not hyphenate the last word on a page.
- Make sure to follow the conventions of your discipline (such as capitalization) for each chapter's title, making sure that they are uniform throughout.
- All chapter subheadings should follow the conventions (such as bold type and indented) used in your discipline.

RULES FOR PAGES AFTER THE CONCLUSION CHAPTER

Reference section

The reference section should follow the style guidelines for your discipline (e.g., APA).

Appendices

An appendix contains material too detailed for inclusion in the body of the work. When diverse materials are included, create an appendix for each group of data (e.g., computer printouts, questionnaires, correspondence, and certain figures). Appendices should be included following publication guidelines of your discipline.

Appendices are paginated just as the chapters are. Place the page number at the bottom of the page. Appendices will vary in format, and a certain degree of freedom is allowable. Consult your style guide. Spacing (single or double) is determined by the content; the decision to include the information is based on readability and overall appearance.

FORMATTING GUIDELINES¹⁰

GENERAL RULES

If preparing your thesis for the university's digital commons, speak to your advisor. Otherwise, if you are preparing a final **print** copy, your **entire thesis** needs to conform to these rules. If the formatting rules are not followed, the thesis will be returned to you for reformatting. It's slow, but

¹⁰ University, Western Carolina. "WCU Graduate Thesis Guide 7th Edition." Cullowhee, NC, October 2010.

do it once and do it right. These requirements override any other style guide's requirements. These requirements are set so that there is uniformity in presentation among all submitted thesis.

- Margins** Top, Bottom, and Right: one inch (1"). **Left: one and a half inches** (1½").
- Font** Times New Roman or Arial only. **12 point font ONLY**. All text must be the **same font and size**, including page numbers.
- Text** Double space body text. (Exceptions apply for title page, Table of Contents, footnotes, and other special text.) Do NOT justify the text. Tabs should be set at ½". New paragraphs must be indented ½". **All text must be in black ink.**
- Chapters** Each major section/chapter of the thesis must begin on a new page. Do not insert blank sheets between sections/chapters.
- Chapter Titles** CAPITALIZE and CENTER. Do not bold or underline chapter titles. Insert at least two blank lines between titles and body text. (Sub-headings within chapters should follow the style guide in your department (APA format)
- Pagination** Page numbers must appear in the **lower right hand corner**. For detailed rules, see page 33.
- Tables/Figures** Tables and figures must not exceed margins (see above). All tables/figures must be **numbered and labeled** according to discipline guidelines. If they are not original, you must cite them and comply with fair use and U.S. copyright rules (See Section 1.6 of the US Copyright rules). Extensive tables/figures should appear at the end of the chapter or in an appendix.

SOFTWARE CAPABILITIES AND PRE-FORMATTING¹¹

Familiarize yourself with the recent versions of Microsoft Office (MS) programs, especially Microsoft Word. While the University does not endorse or recommend any particular brand of software, most students find it easiest to use these programs. In particular, make sure you understand the following functions:

- Tabs and tab "leaders" (especially for the Table of Contents)
- Headers and footers
- Pagination
- Sections and section breaks
- Rulers
- Show/Hide Characters button ("¶" on the toolbar)

Knowing how to use the functions above will save you hours of work and frustration.

¹¹ University, Western Carolina. "WCU Graduate Thesis Guide 7th Edition." Cullowhee, NC, October 2010

Perhaps even more important are the functions you should NOT use. Unless you are *extremely* proficient with the software, we recommend that you limit (or turn off) the following tools:

- AutoCorrect and AutoFormat
- Preformatted headings, themes, or templates

These functions are the primary culprits when you have trouble with numbered lists and unwanted changes to headings and titles.

THESIS SOFTWARE TIPS FOR MS WORD USERS

The following are a few important tips to help you with file and document management as your thesis takes written form:

BEFORE starting a new document:

- Select “Print Layout” under the View tab to see how your document will look when printed.
- Set page margins according to the rules in this guide.
- The default tab setting in MS Word is $\frac{1}{2}$ ". **Do not change this setting.** All tabs and indentations in your thesis must be $\frac{1}{2}$ ".
- Keep rulers (found under the View tab) visible at all times.
- Turn on AutoSave and save your document at regular intervals. Keep backup copies of everything.
- You may wish to turn OFF the “AutoFormat” function (found under Tools). This will stop MS Word from automatically changing headings and numbering as you type.
- Do not pre-format or paginate chapters or sections.

DURING the writing of your document:

- For now, save the separate sections of your thesis (individual chapters, etc.) in separate files. Use distinct file names, including a notation about the date or draft number. e.g. Chap1-Intro-vers2.doc
- Use the **tab key** (default setting to $\frac{1}{2}$ "), **NOT** the space bar, to indent all paragraphs or tab any text.
- Be familiar with the Show/Hide Characters function (“¶”) on the toolbar. This tool toggles on and off, and shows hidden errors in spacing and format.
- Use Symbols and Special Characters (under the Insert tab) for foreign languages and special punctuation.

AFTER writing your document:

- When your thesis is *finished, but before your defense*, combine your separate files into one master file.
- Prepare your abstract, Table of Contents and other “front matter” according to the rules in this guide (See page 25).
- ****Insert a section break between the end of the front matter and the body of your thesis.** This will allow you to put page numbers in the body of the text and make sure they continue from the previous section.
- *Paginate your thesis last*, and then complete your Table of Contents. Be sure you have followed all formatting rules before submitting it to the Graduate School.

PAGINATION

Pages before the Thesis Body

All pretext pages will use i., ii. iii. Numeral format. **Note that page numbers do NOT appear on the Evaluation Page or Title Page.** However, pagination does count beginning with the Title Page, although the page number will not be printed on it. Please follow the table below to reference correct pagination.

Thesis Content (Body of Text)

Page numbers must appear in the *lower right hand corner of all body text*. **Use Arabic numerals (i.e., 1, 2, 3....) for all thesis content chapters, reference/bibliography pages and appendices.** Use consecutive Arabic numerals throughout; do not restart numbering at the beginning of sections/chapters.

	Counts towards pagination	Counts As Page Number	Print Page Number on Page(s)
Example with Copyright Page			
Evaluation Page	N	n/a	N
Title Page	Y	i.	N
Copyright Page (optional)	Y	ii.	Y
Acknowledgments	Y	iii.	Y
1-page Table of Contents	Y	iii.	Y
1-page abstract	Y	iv.	Y
First page of thesis content (first chapter or intro)	Y	1,2,3....	Y
References/Bibliography	Y	...4	
Appendices	Y	...5	Y

Note that if you include a *List of Tables* and/or *List of Figures*, they will fall under pre-text pagination format (i., ii., iii.) and numbers will be printed on the pages.

The first page of thesis content (body of text) will always begin with Arabic numeral 1.

Special materials/Photographs:

Photographs and pictures are considered “figures” and should follow the rules for figures explained in this guide, including labeling. If any pictures are not your original material, you must obtain written permission from the owner.

Recordings and Others:

Musical or sound recordings, electronic slideshows, and other special materials that are not part of the thesis document, that may be incorporated into your defense should be properly referenced per your department’s style guide (APA format) in your written thesis references section. All non-original audio and visual material must follow copyright and fair use rules, as explained on page 12.

Oversized Materials, Slides, and other Special Cases

The use of non-electronic slides or special printouts is not recommended. Consult your Chair if you have unusual materials or circumstances that cannot be reproduced electronically.

QUOTATIONS¹²

If you are to use quotations in your thesis, it is advised to use them sparingly, keep them brief, and work them into the flow of your own narrative. **If a long quotation must be used, take it out of the body of the text, indent, and follow style guidelines.** Quotations treated in this manner are called block quotations. **Quotation marks are not used for block quotations.**

The omission of a word or phrase from a quotation is indicated by an ellipsis, or three spaced periods

(. . .), at the point of omission. If the omitted words would have ended a sentence, a fourth period should be added to indicate the normal terminal punctuation.

A quotation must conform to the original in every detail. Do not correct misspellings or other errors, but insert after them the Latin word *sic* in brackets [*sic*] to show that the error was in the original. Brackets, not parentheses, are used to insert a clarifying word or phrase of your own into quoted material. When your thesis is completed, you should check all quotations against the original sources to ensure absolute accuracy. If you add any emphasis to the text with bold or italics, you must indicate in the parenthesis that that emphasis is yours.

THESIS DEFENSE AND PRINTING

THESIS DEFENSE

Final draft must be to your committee members at least two full weeks (14 days) before your defense. Contact your chair about properly distributing copies to all committee members. All final evaluations (except the written comprehensive examinations), require the candidate to complete an oral examination. Your Chair will notify you when you are ready to defend, which can be no later than the tenth week of your graduating term. Your committee will oversee your oral defense, and evaluate your thesis accordingly. The focus of the oral examination is usually the written manuscript, portfolio, and/or product produced by the candidate. However, the committee is not limited in their range and scope of inquiry.

¹² Princeton University. “Thesis Guidelines.” Princeton, NJ. 2010.

Before your defense, prepare a blank Evaluation Page. Also bring a blank copy of the Master's Degree Final Evaluation Report for your committee to sign their approval after a successful defense. This is due to the Graduate Office by Wednesday of the last week of the term.

In the event the defense is unsatisfactory, the committee shall so inform the candidate and counsel possible future actions. The results of the oral defense shall be reported in writing to the Graduate Office along with a statement of the future action to be taken by the candidate.

A final grade (A-F) for course work related to the thesis (Ed 603M, Sped 603M, CJ 603M, etc.) cannot be awarded until the candidate's thesis committee approves the finished product and a final copy is filed with the Graduate Office. If the student does not finish their thesis or professional project, the student will have an "Incomplete" or an "F" grade listed on their transcript for thesis project related courses. After one calendar year, all grades marked "Incomplete" will convert to the default grade assigned at the time the "Incomplete" was submitted.

PRINTING FINAL MANUSCRIPT

After successfully completing their oral defense, candidates must provide the Graduate Office one unbound manuscript. **You cannot graduate until your final thesis is approved by the Graduate Director and has been submitted successfully for cataloging and printing.** The unbound manuscript must be printed on 8.5"X11" white cotton bond paper. The pages must be printed on one side only.

Cotton Bond Paper: Cotton bond paper contains a minimum of 25% cotton bond fiber and has a weight of at least 20 lbs. Each sheet should have a watermark with the cotton content noted. Cotton bond paper should be white for all documents and should not have texture or design lines. The same paper must be purchased to print the entire document and any corrections needed after submission.

A fee will be assessed to cover the cost of producing a library copy. The Graduate Office copy will be permanently housed in Western Oregon University's library and available to the public. Please see the Graduate Office for a current estimate of theses publishing costs. If you want more copies bound for personal use, then you need to supply the additional loose, printed pages.

COPYRIGHT

In the US, if you have created an original document, it is automatically copyrighted for the period of your lifetime plus seventy years. *Formal notice or registration is not necessary*; nevertheless, you should include a copyright page in your document to alert readers that you are the copyright owner and that you acknowledge your legal rights. You may wish to register your copyright, though this step is optional. Registration establishes public record of your document, its copyright and your name and address. If you are interested in formally copyrighting your thesis, you can visit <http://www.copyright.gov/>