

# Guidelines for Formatting Theses, Dissertations, and D.M.A. Documents

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## Introduction

*Guidelines for Formatting Theses, Dissertations, and D.M.A. Documents* is intended to help graduate students present the results of their research in the form of a scholarly document. Before beginning to write a master's thesis, Ph.D. dissertation, or D.M.A. document, students should read the relevant sections of the [Graduate School Handbook, section 7.9](#) for dissertations and/or [section 6.4](#) for master's theses.

Candidates for advanced degrees should also confer with their advisors and members of their graduate studies committees to learn about any special departmental requirements for preparing graduate degree documents.

Members of the graduation services staff at the Graduate School are available to provide information and to review document drafts at any stage of the planning or writing process. While graduation services is responsible for certifying that theses and/or dissertations have been prepared in accordance with Graduate School guidelines, the student bears the ultimate responsibility for meeting these requirements. Graduation services will not accept documents if required items are missing or extend deadlines because of miscommunication between the student and the advisor.

## Features

Some features are required, and some are optional. Each component is identified with a major heading unless otherwise noted. The major heading must be centered and with a two-inch top margin. See [sample pages](#) and/or [templates](#).

### Required features

- Title page
- Copyright
- abstract
- Vita
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables (if applicable)
- List of Figures, Illustrations, etc. (if applicable)
- Bibliography
- Appendices (if applicable)

### Optional features

- Frontispiece (if used, no heading is included on this page)
- Dedication
- Acknowledgments

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## **Title page** (required)

The title page should include:

1. A full title (the use of title case is recommended)
2. Identification of document type (dissertation, D.M.A. document, or thesis)
3. The statement:  
Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree (insert the applicable degree such as doctor of philosophy, doctor of musical arts, master of science, etc.) in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University
4. Name of the candidate
5. Initials of previous earned degrees
6. Name of graduate program (insert correct name from program directory)
7. Name of the university - The Ohio State University
8. Year of graduation
9. Dissertation, document, or thesis [select applicable title] committee and committee member names

## **Copyright page** (required)

Notice of copyright is centered in the following format on the sheet immediately after the title page. This page is not identified with a page number.

Copyright by  
John James Doe  
1995

## **Abstract** (required)

The heading Abstract is centered without punctuation two inches from the top of the page. The actual abstract begins four spaces below the heading. See sample pages.

## **Dedication** (optional)

If used, the dedication must be brief and centered on the page.

## **Acknowledgments** (optional, but strongly recommended)

Either spelling of the word, *acknowledgements* or *acknowledgments*, is acceptable. The acknowledgment is a record of the author's indebtedness and includes notice of permission to use previously copyrighted materials that appear extensively in the text. The heading *Acknowledgments* is centered without punctuation two inches from the top of the page.

## **Vita** (required)

Begin the page with the heading *Vita*, centered, without punctuation, and two inches from the top of the page. There are three sections to the vita: biographical information (required), publications (if applicable), and fields of study (required).

There is no subheading used for the biographical information section. In this section, include education and work related to the degree being received. Use leader dots between the information and dates. The publication section follows. The subheading *Publications* should be centered and in title case. List only those items published in a book or journal. If there are none, omit the Publication subheading. The final section of the vita is *Fields of Study*, which is required. Center the subheading and use title case. Two lines below the *Fields of Study* subheading, place the following statement: *Major Field*: [insert only the name of your Graduate Program as it reads on the title page] flush left. Any specialization you would like to include is optional and is placed flush left on the lines below *Major Field*.

## **Table of contents** (required)

The heading *Table of Contents* (title case preferred) appears without punctuation centered two inches from the top of the page. The listing of contents begins at the left margin four spaces below the heading. The titles of all parts, sections, chapter numbers, and chapters are listed and must be worded exactly as they appear in the body of the document. The table of contents must include any appendices and their titles, if applicable. Use leader dots between the listed items and their page numbers.

## **Lists of illustrations**

Lists of illustrations are required if the document contains illustrations. The headings *List of Tables*, *List of Figures*, or other appropriate illustration designations (title case preferred) appears centered without punctuation two inches from the top of the page. The listing begins at the left margin four spaces below the heading. Illustrations should be identified by the same numbers and captions in their respective lists as they have been assigned in the document itself. Use leader dots between the listed items and their page numbers. See [sample pages](#).

## **Bibliography/References** (required)

Include a complete bibliography or reference section at the end of the document, before the appendix, even if you have included references at the end of each chapter. You may decide how this section should be titled. The terms *References* or *Bibliography* are the most commonly chosen titles. The heading must be centered and 2-inches from the top of the page. Include this heading in the table of contents.

## **Appendices**

An appendix, or appendices, must be placed after the bibliography. The heading *Appendix* (title case preferred) appears without punctuation centered two inches from the top of the page. Appendices are identified with letters and titles. For example: *Appendix A: Data*. Include all appendix headers and titles in the table of contents.

## **Style**

Candidates are free to select a style suitable to their discipline as long as it complies with the format and content guidelines given in this publication. Where a style manual conflicts with Graduate School guidelines, the Graduate School guidelines take precedence. Once chosen, the style must remain consistent throughout the document.

## **Margins**

Top, right, and bottom margins should be set at one-inch and the left margin should be at least 1.5 inches. (A left margin at 1.5 inches is called a binding edge.)

Any pages with major headings, such as document title, chapter/major section titles, preliminary page divisions, abstract, appendices, and references at the end of the document should be set with a 2-inch top margin and a 1.5-inch left margin.

## **Font**

The selected font should be 10 to 12 point and be readable. The font should be consistent throughout the document. Captions, endnotes, footnotes, and long quotations may be slightly smaller than text font, as long as the font is readable.

## **Spacing**

Double spacing is preferred, but 1.5 inch spacing is acceptable for long documents. Single spacing is recommended for bibliography entries, long quotations, long endnotes or footnotes, and long captions. Double spacing between each bibliography entry is recommended.

## Titles

Each major division of the document, including appendices, must have a title. Titles must be centered and have a two-inch top margin. The use of title case is recommended. If chapters are being used, they should be numbered and titled. For example: *Chapter 1: Introduction*. Appendices are identified with letters and titles. For example: *Appendix A: Data*.

## Page numbers

Every page must have a page number except the title page and the copyright page. If a frontispiece is included before the title page, it is neither counted nor numbered. The page numbers are centered at the bottom center of the page above the one inch margin. Note: You may need to set the footer margin to 1-inch and the body bottom margin to 1.3 or 1.5- inches to place the page number accurately.

Preliminary pages (abstract, dedication, acknowledgments, vita, table of contents, and the lists of illustrations, figures, etc.) are numbered with small Roman numerals (ii, iii, iv, etc.). Page numbering begins with ii, which is the number assigned to the abstract.

Arabic numerals are used for the remainder of the document, including the text and the reference material. These pages are numbered consecutively beginning with 1 and continue through the end of the document.

## Notation

Notation practices differ widely among publications in the sciences, the humanities, and the social sciences. Candidates should confer with their advisors regarding accepted practice in their individual disciplines. That advice should be coupled with careful reference to appropriate general style manuals.

1. Arabic numerals should be used to indicate a note in the text.
2. Notes may be numbered in one of two ways: either consecutively throughout the entire manuscript or consecutively within each chapter.
3. Notes can be placed at the bottom of the page (footnotes) or at the end of a chapter or document (endnotes). Once chosen, the notation style must be consistent throughout the document.
4. Notes about information within tables should be placed directly below the table to which they apply, not at the bottom of the page along with notes to the text.

## Illustrations (tables, figures, charts, graphs, photos, etc.).

Some documents include several types of illustrations. In such cases, it is necessary that each type of illustration (table, figure, chart, etc.) be identified with a different numbering series (*Table 1, Table 2*, and so on, or *Chart 1, Chart 2*, and so on). For each series, include a list with captions and page numbers in the preliminary pages (for example, *List of Tables, List of Charts*, etc.). These lists must be identified with major headings that are centered and placed at the two-inch margin.

Each illustration must be identified with a caption that includes the type of illustration, the number, and a descriptive title (for example, *Map 1: Ohio*). Numbering may be sequential throughout the document (including the appendix, if applicable) or based on the decimal system (corresponding to the chapter number, such as *Map 2.3: Columbus*). When using decimal numbering in an appendix, the illustration is given a letter that corresponds with the appendix letter (for example, *Appendix A.1: Voter Data*). Captions should be placed under illustrations, but table captions are acceptable placed above the tables if that is common practice for the applicable discipline.

If an illustration is too large to fit on one page, you must indicate below the illustration on the lower right corner that it is continued. For example, the phrase *continued* is placed under the illustration, on the right hand side. On the following pages, include the illustration type, number, and the word *continued* above it at the left margin; for example, *Map 2: Continued*. If landscape orientation is used, the page number goes at the bottom of the page (portrait), not at the bottom of the illustration. Always stay in the margins.

If an illustration is placed on a page with text, between the text and the top and/or bottom of the illustration, there must be three single spaced lines or two double spaced lines of blank space. The same spacing rule applies if there are multiple illustrations on the same page. The top/bottom of the illustration includes the caption.

## Submission

All final Ph.D. dissertations, D.M.A. documents, and master's theses are submitted to the Graduate School through OhioLINK at <https://etdadmin.ohiolink.edu>. The document must be saved in PDF embedded font format (PDF/A) before beginning the download at OhioLINK. During the submission process, OhioLINK will require an abstract separate from your document. This abstract has a 500 word limit. You will get a confirmation from OhioLINK that the submission is complete. The submission then goes to the Graduate School for review. After it is reviewed by staff of the Graduate School, you will receive an email that it has been accepted or that changes need to be made. If changes are required, you will need to re-submit the revised document via a new OhioLINK submission. When you receive an "accepted" email from the Graduate School, you can turn in the final paperwork.

## Thesis or dissertation in a foreign language

The Graduate School has no policy specifically permitting graduate degree documents to be written in a foreign language. The practice is allowed as long as it is approved by the student's advisor and Graduate Studies Committee. Documents in a foreign language must comply with the following requirements:

- The title page must be in English, but the title itself may be in the same language as the document. If the title is in a language using other than Roman characters, it must be transliterated into Roman character equivalents.
- The abstract must be in English.
- The academic unit must notify the Graduate School of dissertations in a foreign language so that an appropriate graduate faculty representative can be found to participate in the final oral examination.