Graduate College Thesis Manual

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

This manual is designed for students who are writing a thesis at Northeastern Illinois University. Careful reading of this manual and attention to detail in preparation of the thesis will save time and effort and may well avoid the need for last minute corrections and/or adjustments when checked by the Graduate College.

Many of the suggestions, especially those relating to form and style, may be followed profitably by students preparing less formal reports and projects.

1.1. SELECTING AND FORMULATING A THESIS TOPIC

The responsibility for selecting and formulating a suitable thesis proposal lies with the student. Consultation with and approval by the faculty advisor is, of course, necessary. For guidance purposes, several suggestions are offered:

1. If you are not ready to make a definite thesis proposal, try to decide on the general area in which you would like to work. Within this area the pertinent professional journals and research bulletins provide many clues. The articles they contain reflect current major research interests and, in addition, often specify problems on which further or new study is desirable.

2. Unless your work in the research course or similar class is fairly fresh in mind, it may be useful to review your notes and even to do some reading again in one of the standard texts in this field. This suggestion pertains especially to the framing of research hypotheses, methods of investigation, and the statistical and other treatment of data.

3. Although other theses on file in the library may serve as guide for format, you will save much time and effort if you obtain, for this purpose, a copy of Kate Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, most current edition; or *The Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association*, Washington D.C.: The American Psychological Association, most current edition. Both manuals are available in paperback and the latest editions should be used. The Ronald Williams Library has copies at the Reference Desk. Specific departments may use other approved manuals (such as *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*). It is mandatory that one approved style guide be used consistently throughout the entire thesis.

1.2. PREPARING A THESIS PROPOSAL

The thesis proposal should be prepared in outline form. What is needed is a descriptive statement that is as concise as possible, yet sufficiently detailed to be intelligible. Some departments have their own forms for this purpose, and when this is the case, students should use them.

Three copies of the thesis outline should be submitted to the chairperson of the department in which the student’s graduate work is concentrated.
1.3. ACCEPTANCE OF A THESIS PROPOSAL

A departmental thesis committee will examine and evaluate the acceptability of the thesis proposal. The graduate committee may ask other faculty members, because of their special competence or interest, to help with this review. The committee may approve or reject a proposal; it may also require clarification, elaboration, or modification. Students will be asked to meet the committee only when necessary, and will be notified of the committee’s actions.

1.4. REGISTERING FOR THESIS CREDIT

Thesis students, in those programs where the thesis carries course credit, must register in the appropriate thesis seminar during the Fall or Spring semester, preferably the Fall semester. A single registration for thesis seminar is all that is required even though the work is not completed during the given semester. In such case an incomplete will be recorded; the grade is given upon conclusion of the work and only A or B grades are acceptable.

Prior to registration in a thesis seminar course the student must secure the Course Schedule Maintenance for Thesis Seminar Form from the Graduate College office. The signatures of 1) the Thesis Advisor, 2) the Graduate Coordinator/Advisor 3) the Department Chairperson, 4) the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, OR the Dean of the College of Business and Management OR the College of Education and 5) the Dean of the Graduate College are required. At the time of registration the signed form must be submitted with the course registration form.

1.5. SUPERVISING THE THESIS

The departmental thesis graduate committee will designate a faculty advisor for the thesis. The committee may name one or more other members of the faculty as consultants to render specific and technical assistance. All appointments are subject to the concurrence of the faculty members concerned.

The advisor will provide appropriate guidance when it is requested. An initial conference should be arranged shortly after the proposal is accepted. Subsequent conferences should be held as needed. It is the student’s responsibility to arrange for such conferences.

If the student is not making satisfactory and steady progress in completing research for the thesis or requires an excessive amount of help, the advisor may discuss withdrawal as the advisor with the chairperson of the department, the graduate advisor /graduate committee. They may recommend (1) a change of advisor, (2) a change of topic, or (3) election of a non-thesis option for completion of degree requirements. The Graduate College should be consulted as appropriate. Both the student and the College should be notified of the recommendation.

The advisor passes judgment upon organization, content, form, and style. Approval of the thesis by a second, and possibly a third, faculty reader may also be required by the department. A final examination in defense of the thesis is also required. A thesis
examination committee should be constituted of at least 3 faculty members.

All theses are examined by one of the administrators of the Graduate College. Final acceptance by the Graduate College is required before the thesis may be submitted for binding.

1.6. COPYRIGHT & PLAGIARISM

Copyright
Students hold copyright to their theses regardless of whether they a) choose to include a copyright page in the bound copies of their thesis or b) register with the Copyright Office. Like other written works, copyright is conferred upon creation, that is when the thesis is written.

Plagiarism
In NEIU’s Student Conduct Code plagiarism is defined as follows:

Plagiarism: Appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author and representation of them as one’s original work. This includes (1) paraphrasing another's ideas or conclusions without acknowledgement; (2) lifting of entire paragraphs, chapters, etc. from another's work; and (3) submission as one’s own work, any work prepared by another person or agency. (Administrative Memorandum N. 37, Acts of Misconduct, Academic, #4)

Please refer to this website for more important information regarding plagiarism:
http://www.neiu.edu/~ejhowens/plagiarism/
2. THESIS FORMAT AND APPEARANCE

2.1. Suggestions about Thesis Form and Style

One official guide should be followed consistently for form and style throughout the thesis. Students are urged to become familiar with contents of the given manual before beginning to write. Frequent reference to the guide may spare the candidate much revision and rewriting.

2.2. General Formatting Guidelines

The specific requirements, which follow, supersede guidelines in any other publication. Contact the Graduate College for assistance with special problems.

PAPER AND PRINTING

White paper, 8 1/2 x 11 inches, must be used. A letter-quality laser printer should be used for printing the thesis. Good quality (black and white only) photocopies are also acceptable. Print must be clear and distinct with clean, sharp letters, and even blackness throughout. The thesis is to be printed on only one side of the paper.

Twenty-pound non-translucent bond paper is required for the original copy. This is a very important consideration for microfilming, in order that the typing on the following page will not show through.

FONT (TYPE)

One type style must be used throughout the text of the manuscript. The type selected must be found in a scholarly journal (two examples are Times New Roman and Arial). Broken, colored or faint print is not acceptable for text. Figures, tables and their titles as well as appendix material are not considered text of the manuscript and be different type styles.

One type size must be selected and used throughout the text – choose one point size between 10 point (minimum) and 12 point (maximum). If done consistently, major headings may be up to two points larger than the text (maximum size is 14 point) and may be boldface. Tables, figures and their titles are not considered text and can vary in point size. The minimum size for numbers and upper-case letters in tables, figures, footnotes, and appendixes is 1.5 millimeters (no less than 7 point type is recommended).
MARGINS

A margin of one-inch (1) must be provided at the top, bottom, and right-hand sides of each page and a margin of one and one-half (1.5) inches on the left-hand side of each page. All writing (text, tables, figures, appendices, etc.) must be placed within the margins (with the exception of the page numbers).

Any research paper or thesis that is to be bound must have a margin on the left of one and one-half inches. This includes not only pages of text, but also charts, maps, etc.

SPACING

The text of the manuscript must be double-spaced. Block quotations, a table of contents, tables, footnotes, figure legends, lists in text, and table and figure titles can be single-spaced.

Headings and subheadings must have at least two full lines of body text below them. If only one line of text fits below a heading, move the heading to the next page.

PAGINATION

Each page must be numbered. For the preliminary pages such as the Abstract, Acknowledgements, Table of Contents, etc., use small Roman numbers (iii, iv, v, etc.). These numbers should be centered at the bottom of the page about eight spaces up from the bottom edge. The printed numbering should begin with iii. The approval page counts as I (one), the title page as ii (two), but these numbers do not appear.

For the remaining part of the thesis, including the text, illustrations, bibliography, and appendices, use numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.). The numbering begins with 1 and runs consecutively to the end of the thesis. On pages carrying a major heading, such as the first page of a chapter or the bibliography, the page number should be placed at the center bottom.

All other numbers should be placed at the top right-hand corner, one inch from the right-hand edge and one inch down from the top of the page. It is also permissible to center these page numbers at the top of the page provided the appropriate margin is maintained. For illustrative material the caption and page number should be placed on the same page within the prescribed margins. If this is not possible, a page may be inserted between the text and the illustration. The caption and page number should be typed on the back page facing the illustration. The page number should be typed in the upper left-hand corner. The reverse side of the page should be left blank except for a sequential page number in the center top of the page.

TABLES, GRAPHS, AND ILLUSTRATIONS

They must conform to the specific requirements outlined in Turabian or other guide used. For larger documents, they may involve photo-reduction so that margin requirement is met. Tables are numbered with Arabic numerals and the title is placed at the top of the page. Any calculations must be carefully checked. Illustrative material drawn
in dark opaque ink will reproduce satisfactorily. Microfilming is a black and white photographic process. Colors appear as shades of gray. Lines on a graph should be identified by labels or symbols rather than colors. Shaded areas have better contrast if crosshatching is used instead of color.

**FOOTNOTES**

Since theses are microfilmed, it is recommended that footnotes appear at the bottom of the page on which their numerical citations occur in the text. This approach is advocated because the person who is using a microfilm copy of the thesis would find it very difficult to read endnotes if they are collected at the end of chapters or at the end of the text.

Footnotes are used to clarify or explain. They may be numbered sequentially throughout the text or may begin with number 1 on each page; superscript Arabic numerals are to be used and must appear on the page where cited. Footnotes appear beneath a typed line at the bottom of the same page. Footnotes used in tables and figures must be identified by lower case superscript letters. All footnotes must be within the required margins. Lengthy footnotes should be avoided. A single footnote must not be split to two or more pages, i.e. the whole entry must be shown on the same page.

**PERSON, TENSE, AND VOICE**

The thesis should be written in the third person and the past tense unless the department does not require it (ex. the third person is not required by The Department of Communication, Media and Theatre). Judicious use of the passive voice is suggested. But stilted or turgid construction should be avoided. Students should maintain consistency of tense throughout the thesis.

**CORRECTION OF ERRORS**

Erasures, the use of correction fluid, interlinear corrections, and corrections made by hand, or by strikeover, are not acceptable. If the thesis has pages where excessive corrections are obvious, the thesis will not be accepted by the Graduate College.
3. THESIS ARRANGEMENT

3.1. Quick Guide to Arranging the Thesis

The following list gives the contents of the thesis in the proper order. All sections marked with an asterisk (*) must be included in the manuscript.

PRELIMINARY PAGES:
*Title Page
*Copy Permission Page
*Approval Page
*Abstract
Dedication
Acknowledgments
*Table of Contents
*List of Figures (if there are two or more figures in text)
*List of Tables (if there are two or more tables in text)

TEXT
*Introduction (as first chapter or section)
*Main body of text divided into various chapters or sections)
*Summary or Conclusion (as last chapter or section)

REFERENCES AND SUPPLEMENTAL SECTIONS
*Reference Section
Appendix Material

The thesis should conform in general to the outline in the official guide. The candidate should become familiar with the correct placement and form for the various parts of the thesis. The student should also know how to prepare chapter headings, subordinate headings, and other details of construction, and should check these items with sample pages in the guide.

3.2. Title Page

The only accepted form for the title page of theses at Northeastern Illinois University appears as Sample A on page 14 of this manual.

Use of the word “SAMPLE” on any page of the thesis is not acceptable.

3.3. Copy Permission Page

Please refer to Sample C on page 18. No identifying student number (Social Security number, student ID number) should appear on any page of the thesis.
3.4. Dedications and/or Acknowledgments

You may include a special page of acknowledgements and a separate page for dedications if you so desire.

A dedication page contains no special heading.

An acknowledgments page is a brief note of appreciation for assistance given the candidate in the research and preparation of the thesis. The word ACKNOWLEDGMENTS should be centered at the top of the page. Continuing pages must be headed also, e.g., ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (continued), if this section is longer than one page.

3.5. Table of Contents

It is suggested that the candidate make a temporary table of contents as soon as the outline of work has been approved by the advisor. The student may then use this table as a working guide in organizing the thesis. Such a guide, updated and revised as the thesis progresses, will facilitate the logical presentation of topics and clear development of ideas. The entry and appropriate page numbers of the Table of Contents must appear on the Table of Contents.

Included are some suggestions on preparing the Table of Contents (Sample D, Page 19) and choosing a thesis title (sample E, page 20).

3.6. List of Tables and/or List of Figures

When tables are used, a List of Tables should be placed on a separate page immediately following the Table of Contents. Center and position the heading, LIST OF TABLES, in the same manner as the TABLE OF CONTENTS. Table numbers should be presented in Roman numerals, e.g., TABLE I, TABLE II, etc., and table titles in capital letters. The complete table title must be shown. Appendices which are actually tables must be listed here as sequentially numbered tables. Continuing pages are headed, LIST OF TABLES (continued), if the list of tables is longer than one page.

When figures, process flow charts, metabolic pathways or similar schematics are used, a List of Figures should be shown on a separate page immediately following the List of Tables. Center and position the heading, LIST OF FIGURES. Figure numbers should be presented in Arabic numerals. Each figure or illustration must have a legend or title. The figure legend is presented in lower-case letters except for the first letter of the first word, which is capitalized. Either the full legend may be used or an abbreviated, adequately descriptive legend may be used. Continuing pages are headed, LIST OF FIGURES (continued), if the list of figures is longer than one page.
3.7. **Abstract**

An abstract is a concise, clear and coherent summary of your study.

An abstract should be limited to a 200-300 word statement capturing the relevance/purpose/importance of the study, the methodology, and the highlights of your findings/interpretation/conclusions.

3.8. **Text**

The text is the main body of the thesis in which the problem is stated, methods described, results presented, analyzed and discussed, findings interpreted and conclusions reached. If an introduction is used, it becomes Chapter/Section 1. The organization of the text will vary with different subjects, but a consistent style should be followed. Each chapter must begin on a new page. If a thesis is in two or more distinct parts, the Cited Literature may follow each part.

3.9. **Bibliography (or List of References)**

- The bibliography or list of references contains sources consulted during the course of your research
- Please refer to the style manual for references formatting guidelines and follow them consistently.
- Reference entries must not be divided between pages. To preclude this shift the entire entry to the top of the next page and leave the bottom of the previous page blank.
- In some departments, theses are composed of separate and distinct parts. Each part has a bibliography or list of references placed at the end of each part. Accordingly, bibliographies or lists of references are treated as major divisions and listed in the Table of Contents.

3.10. **Appendices**

- Appendixes are optional and used for supplementary material.
- Place the Appendixes after the reference section.
- All Appendix pages need to be numbered; page numbers are continued from the last page of the references.
- All material must be within prescribed margins and be readable in size and legibility (1.5 mm or larger).
4. THE FINAL MANUSCRIPT

After the thesis has been approved by the advisor, the student makes arrangements for word processing of the final manuscript. The final copy of the thesis is then submitted to the student's committee for approval.

4.1. Proofreading

This essential requirement is the candidate's responsibility. The initial draft, as well as the final copies, should meet this requirement. All materials, submitted for examination should represent the candidate's best efforts, and should be carefully proofread for errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, word processing format etc. It is worth emphasizing that the quality of typescript is the sole responsibility of the candidate. Failure to proofread the entire thesis carefully before submission may result in delay for the student.

4.2. Copy Permission

The original records of an investigation for a graduate thesis are the property of the University but may be kept by the student at the discretion of the student's major department.

The completed thesis is the property of the University. The right to publish and copyright the thesis shall remain with the author. Before graduation, the author of the thesis shall sign a form authorizing the University to make copies, at its discretion, of the thesis upon request by individuals or institutions and at their expense. However, extensive quotation or further reproduction of the thesis by persons or agencies other than the University may not be made without the express permission of the writer. When the University lacks signed permission from authors to copy theses (as will be the case, for example, for theses accepted before this policy took effect), the University will seek such permission when these copies are requested by individuals or institutions.

4.3. Submission to the Graduate College

The thesis should be submitted for examination in sufficient time to allow for corrections and/or adjustments.

- The original loose, unbound, and unpunched thesis.
- The signed Thesis Acceptance and Approval form (Sample B, page 16), with original signatures and no student identifying numbers.
- The Copy Permission form (Sample C, Page 18) with no student identifying numbers.
The Graduate College would appreciate receiving each thesis on a unrewritable CD with a separate set of tables, figures etc. You must state on the disc label the word processor program and the version you have used in preparing your thesis e.g. Microsoft Word 2003, 2007 etc. It would enable the Graduate College staff to provide thesis-on-disc when such a request(s) is (are) received.

4.4. **Procedure for Binding Copies**

For the binding of personal copies of student’s these, you may consult with the library personnel.
SAMPLE A: TITLE PAGE OF THESIS

TITLE OF THESIS (ALL CAPS)

Sub-Title
(CAPS & Lower Case)

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of (Name of Dept.)
Northeastern Illinois University

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of (Arts, science, Education)
In (Exact Title)

By Name Date (Month & Year of Grad)
(All lines above centered on page)
SAMPLE B: THESIS ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

Please find the Thesis Approval Form on the following page. That form should be reproduced and handed over to the thesis advisor and all thesis committee members.

No page number is used when it is submitted with the thesis.
THESIS ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This thesis submitted by __________________________________________________________ Name of Student

Entitled ___________________________________________________________ Exact Title of Student Thesis

_________________________________________________________________________________

has been reviewed by the Department of____________________________________________ Name of Department

and is found to be in good order with reference to content, style, and mechanical accuracy.

It is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of _________
in (Exact Title) __________________________________________________________

THESIS ADVISOR ___________________________ GRADE_______ DATE ______________

Members of the Thesis Committee:

__________________________________________________________
Signature of the Thesis Advisor  Date

__________________________________________________________
Signature  Date

__________________________________________________________
Signature  Date

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SAMPLE C: COPY PERMISSION

Please find the Copy Permission form on the following page. That form should be reproduced and attached to the thesis before submitting to the Graduate College.

No page number is used when it is submitted with the thesis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Department/Program</th>
<th>Month, Year of Graduation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Permission is herewith granted to Northeastern Illinois University to make copies of the above title, at its discretion, upon the request of individuals or institutions and at their expense. Extensive quotation or further reproduction of this material by persons or agencies other than Northeastern Illinois University may not be made without the express permission of the writer.

__________________________________
Signature of Writer
SAMPLE D: Suggestions for preparing Table of Contents

THESIS TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES (table nos., titles, and page nos.)</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES (figure nos., titles and page nos.)</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE PRESENT STUDY</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2 REGIONAL AND SITE GEOLGY</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REGIONAL GEOLOGY</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITE GEOLOGY AND SOIL TYPES</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3 SAMPLING METHODS AND DATA ANALYSIS</td>
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<td>METHODOLOGY, DATA COLLECTION</td>
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<td>Chapter 4 RESULTS</td>
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<td>Chapter 5 DISCUSSIONS AND INTERPRETATION</td>
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<td>Chapter 6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
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<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SAMPLE E: SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR THESIS TITLE

The title of a study is important in communication. Therefore, it should be informative, concise, appropriate, and short.

Some title examples are presented below:

- Mineral chemistry and origin of the Wausau Igneous Complex.
- Women in the sciences.
- War is peace.
- Violence processing (War) and a state of permanent pre-hostility (Peace)
- The cost-effective marketing of new products.
- The urban school reforms: A case history of innovative educational administration in a public school.