

Guidelines for the Preparation of Your Master's Thesis

Foreword

This guidebook summarizes the procedures followed by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for students who are planning to write theses for their master's degree. This manual also is intended to guide students in the elements and structure generally contained in a thesis as well as to provide a reference to the appropriate style manuals and other writing resources. Departments with graduate programs also may have guidelines for thesis writers. This document is not meant to supplant, but rather to *supplement* department procedures.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to Graduate Research and Thesis Writing

Section 1.1: What is expected in a thesis?

Research is an essential component of graduate education. The thesis is often seen as the culmination of graduate work, and it is the formal product. However, the process requires the work of many people. The two crucial components of this work are the Major Advisor and Advisory Committee. These two components, interacting with a Master's student, create a significant professional experience and shape the degree work and resulting thesis. One of the most important aspects of graduate work is communication between the Major Advisor and the student. Methods, circumstances, and personalities vary and can make sufficient communication challenging. **Ultimately it is the student's responsibility for making adequate progress toward completion of his or her thesis and for producing high quality work.**

A Master's Thesis provides opportunities for students to plan, complete, interpret, and report research. Thesis projects must not have been published previously, and must be conducted and written under the supervision of a Graduate Faculty Major Advisor member and a Graduate Advisory Committee. The completion of a Master's Thesis constitutes six semester hours of credit.

Master's projects should be the result of work that is independently conducted, and that represents original research and critical analysis. The work should demonstrate the following from the student concerning the field of study:

- Awareness and understanding of important current work in the field
- Ability to plan a research activity
- Knowledge and motivation to carry out the planned research activity
- Ability to analyze the results of the research
- Ability to draw reasonable conclusions from the research
- Ability to complete a written description of the work in the form of a well-written, properly organized thesis
- Ability to complete a thesis with potential for presentation at and/or participation in professional meetings and/or publication in scholarly journals

Section 1.2: Purpose of the thesis document

The purpose of a thesis is the documentation of a student's scholarly activity in a formal structure that lends a relatively uniform appearance to work completed at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. The thesis structure is intended to facilitate the understanding of students' scholarly work by people unfamiliar with the specific work presented, but who are familiar with professional writing in general. Also the thesis structure is intended to aid students in the preparation of manuscripts from their scholarly work.

Section 1.3: Deciding on the content type of your thesis - two types of thesis: qualitative (including creative) and quantitative

Subsection 1.3.1 Thesis Types

Theses generally can be categorized as two types: qualitative (which includes creative) and quantitative. While some graduate work may not clearly fit in one category, most will. Because the structure and formatting for each are different, this document is organized in to two sections describing each. Although some information is the same for all theses, it is important to determine which type of thesis you are writing early in your graduate program.

Qualitative or Creative Thesis

This type of thesis is the result of work done by students in a descriptive, exploratory, analytical, or creative way. Departments that encompass the arts and humanities may have graduate students doing this type of thesis.

Quantitative Thesis

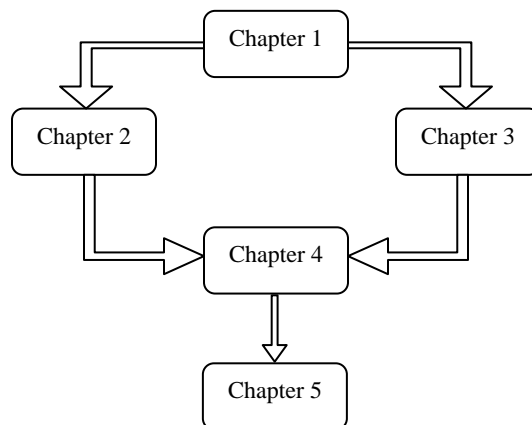
This type of thesis typically contains data, pieces of information made or measured by scientific devices (such as spectrophotometers, polymerase chain reaction cyclers, microscopes, stopwatches) and recorded numerically on some type of scale. Examples of this type of thesis may include:

- testing materials under different temperatures and determining their conductivity
- measuring the effect of a new Alzheimer's drug on nerve conduction speed in mice
- comparing strength training regimes for track athletes to find the best method
- correlating variables obtained from survey data

This document is organized so that you can obtain information as you proceed through the various stages of your thesis work. Use the following checklist for guidance on how to best use this document:

Subsection 1.3.2 Using this document

This document is organized so that students will use either Chapter 2 or Chapter 3 depending on which type of thesis they are pursuing. All students should read Chapter 4 and 5, as well as this chapter. Diagrammatically, the organization can be thought of as:



Section 1.4: When to use sections of this document

Here is the suggested time sequence for using this document. Note, however, the final point is time critical. This list outlines the steps necessary to complete the thesis work, no matter what type of thesis is being done.

- Before your Graduate Committee is formed, read Chapter 1 to understand the entire process.
- Before the first committee meeting is convened, refer to “Timelines” and “Proposal Guidelines” section.
- During your second semester, track your research progress and seek committee meetings as recommended by in the “Timelines” section of this document.
- Before beginning your research, refer to the “Additional Considerations” section for important information about the required permissions if using animals or people in research.
- Before starting to write your thesis, refer to “Guidelines for Writing Thesis” section for your type of thesis.
- During writing, refer to “Formatting Requirements” section and the “Forms and Examples” section. The Library, your department, and your advisor can also provide examples of previous thesis work
- During writing also keep in mind calendar date requirements for Application for Graduation and other University, Graduate College, and Departmental deadlines.
- After writing your thesis (and having necessary committee meetings) the “Copyright” and “Electronic Submission to Library” sections should be read. Note that some copyright issues may arise during the writing stage; for example, if the researcher needs permission to use another work.
- **A completed thesis is due to the Graduate College NO LATER than two weeks before graduation day. This is a FIRM deadline and ignoring the deadline may mean you will not graduate in a given term.** It is highly recommended that thesis defense meetings happen no later than one month before graduation day.

Section 1.5: Important information from the Office of Graduate Studies

These guidelines summarize the procedures that are followed by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research in assisting master’s degree students to prepare a thesis project. It is important that the student be familiar with the information presented in these guidelines, and observe all the procedures governing the preparation and submission of the thesis.

The master's thesis provides the opportunity for students to acquire first-hand experience in research methods under competent direction. Writing a thesis is equivalent to six hours of credit, and must be indicated as such in the program of study.

The thesis or any excerpts from it may not be published in any form in books, periodicals, or journals prior to completion and acceptance by the Graduate Faculty on behalf of the Graduate College and the degree awarded by the University of Nebraska. After the thesis has been accepted, material from it—in whole or in part, quoted or paraphrased—may be published with proper documentation in the published material giving credit to the department, the Graduate College, and the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

Subsection 1.5.1 Checklist for thesis documentation procedure

- File a Proposed Supervisory Committee form at the Office of Graduate Studies and Research before initiating the thesis at least one semester prior to your anticipated graduation date (See Subsection 5.2.2).
- If appropriate, obtain approval from the IRB (Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research) or the IACUC (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee) prior to initiating the study. To determine if approval is needed contact the chair of the appropriate committee.
- Establish with your Supervisory Committee a date when the first draft of the thesis is due.
- Make arrangements for the oral/written defense of the thesis with your Supervisory Committee.
- Be sure that your thesis advisor files a signed Report of Committee on Thesis Examination form with the Office of Graduate Studies after defense.
- Deliver one original copy and four additional copies of the thesis, and any desired personal copies in individual protective envelopes, labeled with your name, to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for final approval at least two weeks prior to commencement. You will pay the thesis binding fee in the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at this time. At the same time, you should submit the PDF file of your thesis to ProQuest CSA's UMI Dissertation Publishing.

Subsection 1.5.2 Thesis format check, thesis binding, depositing thesis copies, and electronic submission

You should submit to the director of Graduate Admissions the first 10 pages of the thesis including the preliminary pages three weeks prior to graduation for a format check. (Examples of preliminary pages can be found at the beginning of Subsection 3.3.1.)

The original thesis (1) and four (4) copies must then be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for review and acceptance before being submitted for binding. The student is responsible for paying all binding costs. The student will be notified by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research when the copy of the thesis is ready to be picked up.

The UNK Library will retain two (2) bound copies of each thesis, one for the Archives Collection and one for the Circulating Book Collection. One copy will be given to the thesis advisor, one (1) to the department, and the student will receive a copy. Students may submit additional copies to be bound at their expense.

An electronic version of the thesis also will be submitted for to ProQuest CSA's UMI Dissertation Publishing at <http://dissertations.umi.com/unk/>. The website will provide you with step-by-step instructions. These are also provided in this document in Section 4.3 titled Library/Electronic Submission.

Chapter 2: Qualitative Master's Thesis

The following is the recommended content of a qualitative/creative research project.

Note: the content may vary by discipline, advisor, and/or your committee. The creative works that constitute the creative/qualitative thesis will most likely not fit into the traditional chapters of the qualitative thesis as outlined below. Indeed, the subjects allotted separate chapters may all be condensed in a prefatory statement or introduction that precedes the actual creative pieces that are included as the body of the thesis, i.e., the creative work itself. Within the thesis, the author should attempt to avoid presenting a simple miscellany, but rather work to organize the creative materials in accordance with some aesthetic principle. This may involve grouping and/or sequencing works, thus creating some thematic continuity or counterpoint, as well as a sense of a beginning, middle, and end.

This section provides guidelines for conducting the research and writing a qualitative or creative master's thesis including a suggested timeframe for completing a master's degree in two years, proposal writing, the structure of a typical thesis, and Institutional Review Board considerations.

Section 2.1: Suggested timeline for qualitative master's degree in two years

1. First Year
 - a. First Semester in Residency
 - i. Student should meet with a professor in the area of subject interest
 - ii. Student should begin to consider or confer with his/her advisor regarding the composition of his/her thesis committee
 - b. Second Semester
 - i. Student should conduct preliminary research to formulate a topic
 - ii. Form advisory committee: major professor, two faculty from department, and one faculty member from outside the department
 - iii. Note: some departments may require that specific documentation be filed with the department (for example, a program of study)
 - iv. First committee meeting
 1. Indicate general area of research
 2. Provide description of proposed research objectives
 3. Prepare Program of Study document to be signed by major professor, full committee, chair of department graduate committee, and placed on file with the department
 4. If research involves human subjects, obtain IRB Approval.
 - c. First Summer
 - i. Research material
 - ii. Work with advisor
2. Second Year
 - a. First Semester
 - i. Apply for candidacy after successful completion of half of the required hours and before enrollment for the next semester (use Candidacy form found <http://www.unk.edu/acad/gradstudies/index.php?id=947>)

- ii. Continue working with advisor and committee
- iii. Committee meetings are recommended as needed or required by advisor/committee
 - 1. Inform committee of progress and modifications to program
 - 2. If the Program of Study needs to be changed, a Change in Program form (found at same link above) should be submitted to the student's advisor and routed for appropriate signatures. Once complete, the form should be filed with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research
- b. Second Semester (preferably in the first month of classes)
 - i. Committee meeting during which formal research proposal filed in student folder after signature by all members containing the following elements
 - 1. Review of pertinent literature
 - 2. Statement of research question outlining what is needed and what work will contribute
 - 3. Research objectives
 - 4. Procedures for each objective
 - 5. Presentation of any data collected at this time (Note: some departments may require a formal presentation, and some may require different elements)
 - ii. Thesis Defense timeline
 - 1. Copies of the completed thesis should be given to the Committee at least two weeks before the oral exam (defense) date
 - 2. Public presentation of the thesis (if required) and thesis defense should be completed one month before graduation day of any semester
 - 3. The student may pass without reservations, pass with reservations, or fail. If revisions are necessary they must be completed and approved by all members of the Committee at least two week before graduation day. Students are urged to keep this scheduling issue in mind if there is the possibility of a "pass with reservations" decision by the Committee.
 - 4. Submit to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research the first 10 pages of the thesis including the preliminary pages three weeks prior to graduation for a format check.
 - 5. All forms must be completed and all copies of the thesis given to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research two weeks before graduation day. . A check to cover the costs of binding made out to the binding company, Houchen Bindery, must be supplied at this time.

Section 2.2: Guidelines for writing the qualitative/creative thesis proposal

The purpose of the thesis proposal is to provide thesis committee members with information about the students' study early in the graduate program so the committee will be able to understand, provide appropriate guidance, and approve implementation of the study.

Subsection 2.2.1: Components of a Qualitative Thesis Proposal

Many fields of study use differing qualitative model formats. Be sure to work closely with your advisor to select the relevant components for your proposal. For example, qualitative research theses may use all these components while creative theses may use only the first four components or may involve alternative formats depending on the nature of the work. Note: items 8-12 below are more relevant to theses that use data collection rather than those that are critical analyses involving texts.

1. Title Page – including the preliminary title of the study, the student’s name, and the institution double-spaced and centered one-third of the way down the page (see sample page)
2. Introduction – brief overview explaining the background and importance of the study
3. Statement of Problem – specifically what the researcher wants to know; format to be determined by the department
4. Purpose of the Study – explanation of the problem and what the researcher hopes to achieve by conducting the study
5. Theoretical framework, research questions, or objectives – used to guide the direction of the research; format to be determined by the department
6. Definition of Terms – clarification of any terminology in the study that may not be commonly known; provides a similar interpretation for all readers of the study
7. Review of the Literature – sufficient review of the relevant research to demonstrate an understanding of the subject and major components
8. Research Design – describes the methods that will be used to collect data or organize creative products. May include the following depending on the department:
 - a. Description of the design
 - b. Criteria for judging credibility and trustworthiness of results (where relevant)
9. Sampling – describe the aspects of the cases on which data collection and analysis will focus (where relevant)
 - a. Indicate how access to the study population will be achieved
10. Variables – describe aspects of the cases on which data collection and analysis will focus (where relevant)
11. Methods of Data Collection – explain how each variable will be measured (where relevant)
12. Data Analysis Procedures – describe the use of interpretational, structural, or reflective methods (where relevant)
13. Timeline – provide a timeline listing the order for all the major steps of the study and indicate the approximate amount of time needed for each step
14. Texts/ historical events/ case studies to be analyzed, with some sense of the conclusions that the writer might be tending toward and of the manner in which the argument/ analysis is positioned in relation to existing scholarship on the subject

Subsection 2.2.2: Other Considerations for the Qualitative Thesis Proposal

1. Institutional Review Board (IRB) – approval is required prior to data collection for a study involving human subjects
2. Writing Style Format – as determined by the department
3. Basic Text Formatting – to make the proposal easily readable by the committee
 - a. Use 12-point type

- b. Use a standard type face, such as Times New Roman, Courier New, or Arial
- c. Use double-spacing for all portions of the proposal as determined by the style manual
- d. Use a 1-inch margin on the right side, 1.5-inches on the left side, and 1.25-inches on the top and bottom.
- e. Center the page number 0.25-inches from the page bottom; begin numbering with the title page

Subsection 2.2.3: Components of a Creative Thesis

Should include the following, based on the decision of the student's director/committee.

- Title of the work
- Introduction explaining the
 - genesis of the work,
 - genre(s)/media of the work
 - main focus or subjects to be treated/represented
- Elaboration on the creative goals/aesthetic principles of the writer/artist and the forms the student will be employing
- Discussion of artistic/literary influences and relation of the work to other writings/art in the field
- The creative work itself

Subsection 2.2.4: General chapter-by-chapter guidelines for creative/qualitative thesis

Chapter One Introduction

Discussion of the genesis, context, goals, or creative pieces that form the thesis. May cover areas suggested in proposal components as well as provide some explication of particular works.

Chapter Two Methods

Elaboration on the creative and aesthetic principles of the writer/artist and the forms student employed.

Chapter Three Findings/Discussion

Discussion of artistic/literary influences found and relation of the work to other writings/art in the field.

Section 2.3: Other considerations: human subjects

If humans are involved in your thesis work the proposed research must be approved by the appropriate committees. This must be done before work begins, because changes might be necessary. Be prepared for this approval process to take a number of weeks depending on when the committees meet.

Subsection 2.3.1: Protection of Human Subjects in Research

If the research you are conducting for your thesis involves human subjects, federal law requires that your project be reviewed and approved—in advance—by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). This means that you must complete an Online research training program titled the CITI Course in the Protection of Human Subjects (CITI). You also will need to complete the appropriate IRB forms, and submit them to the university's IRB for review before your research can proceed. Detailed information about the training program, the federal legislation, the instructions for completing the application and IRB materials, and the downloadable forms can be found at the university's IRB Web site, <http://www.unk.edu/acad/gradstudies/IRB/>.

Because training and IRB review requires planning, you should complete the steps in this procedure well in advance of your anticipated beginning date of the research.

Chapter 3: Quantitative Master's Thesis

This section provides guidelines for conducting the research and writing a quantitative master's thesis including a suggested timeframe for completing a master's degree in two years, proposal writing, the structure of a typical thesis, Institutional Review Board and protection of animal subjects considerations.

As you begin your Master's project, bear in mind that your project should be the result of work that is independently conducted, and that represents original research and critical analysis. The work should demonstrate the following from the student concerning the field of study:

- Awareness and understanding of important current work worldwide
- Ability to plan an experiment or other research activity that contains critical hypo-deductive elements such as hypothesis, controls, statistically appropriate sample sizes, independent variable manipulations, and correct statistical analyses
- Knowledge and motivation to carry out the planned research activity
- Ability to conduct a mathematically and statistically correct analysis of the results of the research activity
- Ability to draw reasonable conclusions from the research work
- Ability to complete a written description of work in the form of a properly written and organized thesis
- Ability to complete a thesis with potential for participation in professional meetings and/or publication in scholarly journals

Section 3.1: Suggested timeline for quantitative master's degree in two years

1. First Year
 - a. First Semester
 - i. Form advisory committee: major professor, two faculty from department, and one faculty member from outside the department
 - ii. Note: some departments may require that specific documentation be filed with the department (for example, a program of study)
 - b. Second Semester
 - i. Hold committee meeting (suggested timeframe: prior to spring break)
 1. Describe research plan
 2. Proposed research objectives
 3. Prepare Program of Study form to be signed by major professor, full committee, chair of department graduate committee, and on file with the department
 4. If research involves human subjects, obtain IRB approval.
 - c. Summer of First Year
 - i. If this summer is used for research purposes the committee should be presented with a detailed work plan in a committee meeting *before* the end of the second semester
 - ii. Apply for candidacy with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research after successful completion of half of the required hours and *before*

enrollment for the next semester form here:

<http://www.unk.edu/acad/gradstudies/index.php?id=947>

2. Second Year

a. First Semester

- i. Hold second committee meeting during first month of classes
 1. May occur during second semester of first year in program, or first summer
 2. Formal research proposal filed in student's folder after signature by all committee members containing the following elements (note: departments may have additional requirements such as a formal presentation) The proposal should contain the following elements:
 - a. Literature review and/or theoretical framework
 - b. Statement of research questions or hypotheses
 - c. Research objectives
 - d. Procedures for each objective
 - e. Presentation of any data already collected

b. Second Semester

- i. Committee Meeting: as early as possible in the semester
 1. Inform committee of progress and modifications to program
 2. If the Program of Study needs to be changed, this should be approved by approved by the committee, and a Change in Program form (same link as above) filed with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research
- ii. Thesis Defense
 1. Copies of the completed thesis should be given to the Committee at least two weeks before the oral exam (defense) date
 2. Public presentation of the thesis (if required) and thesis defense should be done one month before graduation day of any semester
 3. The public presentation is followed by closed thesis defense during which time questions concerning the thesis, or any other program-related questions, will be asked by the committee
 4. The student may pass without reservations, pass with reservations, or fail. If revisions are necessary they must be completed and approved by all members of the Committee at least two week before graduation day. Students are urged to keep this scheduling issue in mind if there is the possibility of a "pass with reservations" decision by the Committee.
 5. You should submit the first 10 pages of the thesis including the preliminary pages three weeks prior to graduation for a format check.
 6. All forms must be completed and all copies of the thesis given to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research two weeks before graduation day. A check to cover the costs of binding made out to the binding company, Houchen Bindery, must be supplied at this time.
 7. Submit the PDF file of your thesis to ProQuest CSA's UMI Dissertation Publishing (see Section 4.3 titled Library/Electronic Submission of this document).

Section 3.2 Components of a quantitative thesis proposal

Many fields of study use differing quantitative model formats. Be sure to work closely with your advisor to select the relevant components for your proposal. For example, quantitative research theses may use all these components while qualitative/creative theses may use only the first four components or may involve alternative formats depending on the nature of the work.

1. Title Page – including the preliminary title of the study, the student’s name, and the institution double-spaced and centered one-third of the way down the page (see sample page)
2. Introduction – brief overview explaining the background and importance of the study
3. Statement of Problem – specifically what the researcher wants to know; format to be determined by the department
4. Purpose of the Study – explanation of the problem and what the researcher hopes to achieve by conducting the study.
5. Theoretical framework, research questions, or objectives – used to guide the direction of the research; format to be determined by the department
6. Definition of Terms – clarification of any terminology in the study that may not be commonly known; provides a similar interpretation for all readers of the study
7. Review of the Literature – sufficient review of the relevant research to demonstrate an understanding of the subject and major components
8. Research Design – describes the methods that will be used to collect data or organize creative products. May include the following depending on the department:
 - a. Description of the design
 - b. Criteria for judging credibility and trustworthiness of results (where relevant)
 - c. For texts/ historical events/ case study analyses, provide some sense of the conclusions that the writer is predicting and the manner in which the argument/ analysis is positioned in relation to existing scholarship on the subject.
9. Sampling – describe the aspects of the cases on which data collection and analysis will focus (where relevant)
 - a. Indicate how access to the study population will be achieved
10. Variables – describe aspects of the cases on which data collection and analysis will focus (where relevant)
11. Methods of Data Collection – explain how each variable will be measured (where relevant)
12. Data Analysis Procedures – describe the use of interpretational, structural, or reflective methods (where relevant)
13. Timeline – provide a timeline listing the order for all the major steps of the study and indicate the approximate amount of time needed for each step

Section 3.3: Quantitative thesis chapters

The following is the recommended content of a quantitative research project. Note: the content may vary by discipline, advisor, and/or your committee. Also, departments may have their own requirements that supersede those given here.

There are two basic arrangements possible for a quantitative thesis. Model I is to write each chapter as sequential chapters, for example: Chapter 1 introduction, Chapter 2 materials and methods. Model II is to write the chapters so that each is a stand-alone paper containing all the elements of a complete study (introduction through discussion). The intent here is that individual

chapters will be submitted to journals for publication. Both models are valid, the choice is up to the student, advisor, and committee. More detailed outlines of each model are given below.

Subsection 3.3.1 Model I: Sequential Chapter Structure

Preliminary Pages

Examples of items:

Dedication
Acknowledgments
Table of Contents
List of tables/List of figures
Title Page
Signature Approval Form

Chapter One Introduction

Purpose of the Study

The first part of the introduction should clearly state the purpose of the study. There should be a concise statement of purpose provided in this section.

Statement of the Hypothesis or Research Question

A clear statement(s) that identifies the precise research question should be included. Each specific measurement to be conducted should be identified.

Significance of the Study

As part of the purpose of the study, there should be justification for conducting the project. This section should exhibit a clear understanding of what makes your study significant and why it should be conducted.

Definitions

A simple list of definitions of terms that directly pertain to this study should be provided. The list should include definitions of terms that might be unclear to the reader.

Delimitations, Limitations, and Assumptions

A brief statement identifying the delimitations, limitations, and assumptions associated with your study should be provided.

Delimitations – factors that were controlled by the researcher

Limitations – factors that were not under the control of the researcher

Assumptions – factors that the researcher assumes were taken into consideration.

Chapter Two Literature Review

The author should provide a breakdown of sub-topics influencing the processes of the research project. Each sub-topic should contain a thorough examination of the literature that influences or is representative of current research on that sub-topic. The literature review should collectively support the process and purpose of the study. A theoretical framework as applicable to the field of study may be included here.

Chapter Three Methods

The methods section is the section that should clearly present each aspect of the process by which the study will be completed. Every attempt should be made to leave no question as to the procedures used to complete the study. Proper scientific methods should be used for this aspect of the study.

Subjects

This section should identify the process for selection, recruitment, and delineation of the subject pool used for your study. The subject pool should be reflective of the population selected for the study.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation section should identify the tool(s) used for collection of data. How the instrument was acquired or created as well as reliability and validity of the instrument should be presented in this section.

Procedures

All aspects pertaining to the entire process conducted should be described. Careful consideration should be paid to approval of methods and treatment of human or animal subjects. All treatments should be carefully described as well as notification of risks for participation.

Statistical Analysis

Provide a clear description of the statistical process used for analysis of data. The type of statistical tests should be reflective of the research hypothesis or question(s).

Chapter Four Results

Order of Presentation

Offer your results in an order that is similar to the order you presented your hypothesis or research questions.

Descriptive Data

Provide all the descriptive data such as demographic results.

Results of Statistical Testing

Give the results of the statistical processes conducted for your study. Provide only the results and avoid offering conclusions or interpretations of the results.

Interpretations of Statistical Results

Offer a brief summary of the results with foundational interpretations of what the statistics provide.

Chapter Five Conclusions/Discussion

Summary of Findings

Provide inferences and implications that the results of the study provide you and the reader or others who may have interest in the results. This is a time to expound on your results and offer insight into what your study does or does not contribute to the body of information on your topic.

Conclusions Drawn by Results

Identify specific conclusions resulting from your study. Offer specific insight to what your findings reveal. This section should synthesize your findings with the current knowledge in your area of study.

Recommendations for Further Research

Provide recommendations to further research on this topic or how parts of your study could be improved upon. If you found as a result of your study that another topic should be looked at in order to offer more insight into this topic, then suggest that at this time. It is important that this part of your conclusion chapter incorporate the implications of your findings in terms of other research in your area of study.

Literature Cited

Provide a list of references used for this paper. Provide them in the style agreed upon by your committee.

Appendices

Examples of items:

Letters written to subjects

Questionnaires

Large data files or sheets not appropriate for main body of thesis

Subsection 3.3.2 Model II: Stand Alone Chapter Structure

Detailed descriptions of the elements are not needed as they are described above. This model is preferred by some faculty as a way to prepare sections of a thesis for publication. Typically this arrangement also includes formatting the thesis in accordance with the style of the targeted publication. As each chapter presents a self-contained experiment a preliminary and/or summary chapter is typically helpful in connecting the chapters together for the larger thesis framework. All other considerations are the same for this type of thesis as Model I.

Each chapter contains all elements contained in Model I including Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Literature Cited, and Appendices (if present).

Example chapter organization

Chapter One *Introduction*

Chapter Two *Experiment 1*

Chapter Three *Experiment 2*

Chapter Four *Experiment 3*

Chapter Five *Summary*

Section 3.4: Other considerations: human and animal subjects

Subsection 3.4.1 Protection of Human Subjects in Research

If the research you are conducting for your thesis involves human subjects, federal law requires that your project be reviewed and approved—in advance—by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). This means that you must complete an online research training program titled the

CITI Course in the Protection of Human Subjects (CITI). You also will need to complete the appropriate IRB forms, and submit them to the university's IRB for review before your research can proceed. Detailed information about the training program, the federal legislation, the instructions for completing the application and IRB materials, and the downloadable forms can be found at the university's IRB Web site, <http://www.unk.edu/acad/gradstudies/IRB/>.

Because training and IRB review requires planning, you should complete the steps in this procedure well in advance of your anticipated beginning date of the research.

Subsection 3.4.2: Protection of Animal Subjects in Research

If the research you are conducting involves the use of animals, federal law requires that your project be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) prior to your research. To accomplish this, you should access the link below to complete the appropriate form, or contact Dr. Wayne Briner, chair of the university's IACUC. [www.unk.edu/uploadedFiles/academics/biology/IACUC-Document .doc](http://www.unk.edu/uploadedFiles/academics/biology/IACUC-Documents/IACUC-Document.doc)

Chapter 4: Filing the Thesis: Academic Integrity Reminder, Copyright, and On-campus Filing

Section 4.1 Academic dishonesty policy

As a graduate student about to embark upon the role of active scholar, your attention to academic honesty is imperative. This requires that your work:

- Provides a full and complete representation of any scholarly findings,
- Credits the contributions of colleagues and co-workers,
- Respects diversity of opinion,
- Defends you and your colleagues' academic freedom.

Misconduct in research and writing is defined in the university's *Policy Statement on Integrity in Faculty/Student Authorship & Research* as:

The fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other practices that seriously deviate from those commonly accepted within the scientific, artistic, and academic professional communities. Plagiarism involves the intentional appropriation of another's work, including ideas or phrasing of words, without crediting the source.

A student found guilty of dishonesty in academic work is subject to the disciplinary action and procedures as outlined in the Graduate Catalog, Academic Integrity section at <http://www.unk.edu/acad/gradstudies/gradcatalog/index.php?id=926>.

Section 4.2 Copyright issues

Small amounts of most material (for example, findings from previous research, quotations and information from literary works, surveys and other test instruments) may be used in a thesis with the appropriate citation. Other copyright considerations:

1. In some situations, the material you are using is copyrighted by corporate or individual authors. This would require that you seek permission to reproduce the material as part of your thesis. In such instances, it is your responsibility to contact the publisher for permission to use the work. You should include the written permission with your manuscript when you turn it in to the Graduate Office. Also, make sure that you cite copyrighted work as requested by the copyright holder. Consult with your advisor on this issue.
2. Your thesis is automatically copyrighted, according to the federal Copyright Act of 1976. This means that you are not required to attach the copyright symbol to your thesis to have copyright protection, although the best way to protect an unpublished work is to include the notice. The unnumbered copyright page should follow the Title Page or Abstract in the manuscript. The copyright statement should include the

copyright symbol, your legal name, and the date of the acceptance of the thesis. For example:

Copyright © 2007 by Susan B. Jones

If you desire a public record of the copyright, you can register your thesis with the United States Copyright Office. A fee is required. For information about copyright law, registration and other important information, access the U.S. Copyright Office at <http://www.copyright.gov/>.

Section 4.3 Library/Electronic Submission

Deliver one original copy and four additional copies of the thesis, and any desired personal copies, in individual protective envelopes, labeled with your name, to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for final approval at least two weeks prior to commencement. Students, are responsible for binding costs, and will need to submit the binding fee to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at this time. A check must be written directly to the binding company, Houchen Bindery.

The UNK Library, which forwards the theses on for binding, will retain two bound copies of each thesis, one for the Archives Collection and one for the Circulating Book Collection. Also submit an electronic version of the thesis to ProQuest CSA's UMI Dissertation Publishing at <http://dissertations.umi.com/unk/>. The website will provide you with detailed instructions. Once you access ProQuest (also available from UNK's Graduate Studies and Research website), you should:

- Read the section on the first screen titled "Before you begin" for helpful information. Note: the full text of your thesis must be converted to a PDF format prior to submitting it to ProQuest. If you need help in the conversion process, links are available at the first ProQuest screen.
- Once the PDF format conversion is complete, you are ready to begin the process by clicking on "Start your submission."
- At "Publishing Agreement" select TR-1, Traditional Publishing Agreement" and continue.
- Enter your personal information at "About You."
- Provide information about your thesis at "Submission Details."
- Upload your PDF formatted thesis. Remember, ProQuest/UMI will assist you in converting your thesis to a PDF file if necessary.
- Next you will have the option of submitting "Supplemental Files," such as figures, tables, or graphics.

- At “Copyright Fees,” you have the option of having ProQuest/UMI submit an application to the U.S. Copyright Office for you. There is a charge. Be sure to click “I am not requesting that UMI register my copyright” if you do not want this service.
- ProQuest/UMI offers additional copies for a charge at “Bound Copies.” This is an optional service. (Note: you are required to submit one original and four additional copies of your thesis, plus any additional personal copies to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for binding.) Click “Continue with submission” to proceed.
- At the “Confirmation” step, students will pay the \$45 thesis submission fee and for any additional services. You will need to pay this by debit or credit card.

Chapter 5: Formatting Requirements

Section 5.1 Requirements from the UNK Graduate Admissions and Programs Office

Paper and Printing

The original thesis must be printed on watermarked paper of at least 25 percent cotton and at least 20 pound weight; duplicate copies may be printed on 16 pound paper. Page size must be eight and one-half inches by eleven inches.

Except for the original, duplicate copies may be photocopied. If in doubt about paper or print quality please bring a sample to the Office of Graduate Studies for approval.

Word Processing

The thesis must be printed on one side of the paper with a laser or laser-quality printer.

Margins

A left-hand margin of 1.5 inches, a right-hand margin of 1.0 inch, and top and bottom margins of 1.25 inches each are required unless special permission is obtained. Illustrations and appendices should also conform to this requirement. See Example 1.

Style

Departments require the use of a particular style that has been approved in the profession. See the section on style manuals in this document.

Illustrations

Photography, maps, diagrams, and drawings may be included on graph paper in such a way as not to be obscured when the project is bound. Preferably, small illustrations are placed in the text.

Table and Figures

Tables and figures should be numbered and labeled in accordance with the style manual being used. Tables or figures larger than the page size (8.5 by 11 inches) should be folded leaving binding space on the left margin of at least 2 inches, and any folded edge should fall 0.5 inch within the corresponding edge of the project. Reduction techniques should be used only with special permission.

Pagination

The pages of the text should be numbered with Arabic numerals according to the style manual being used. Begin page 1 following any preliminary pages.

Title Page

The title page should closely follow the form illustrated in this guide (see Example 2) with respect to order, spacing, and capitalization. No abbreviations or punctuation should be used.

Acceptance Page

An acceptance page on watermarked paper of at least 25 percent cotton and at least 20 pound weight must be included following the title page. The page will be typed as part of the project. The committee chair and committee members will sign it following acceptance of the thesis by the committee at the time of the oral examination. (see Example 3)

Abstract

An abstract must be included following the acceptance page. It should follow the same guidelines for margins and spacing, and be consistent with the style manual being used. The abstract should not exceed 300 words.

Table of Contents

The thesis should include a table of contents following the title page, acceptance page, abstract, and any other preliminary pages. The Table of Contents should list all the principal topics, subdivisions, and enumerate the illustrations, tables, and figures in the order in which they are to be bound.

Thesis format check, binding, copies needed, and electronic submission

You should submit the first 10 pages of the thesis including the preliminary pages three weeks prior to graduation for a format check. The original thesis and four copies will then be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for review and acceptance before being submitted for binding. The student is responsible for paying all binding costs. The student will be notified by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research when the copy of the thesis is ready to be picked up.

The UNK Library will retain two bound copies of each thesis, one for the Archives Collection and one for the Circulating Book Collection. An electronic version of the thesis also will be submitted for deposit with ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. The department requires a copy, as does the advisor, and one for the student.

Section 5.2 Approved Style Manuals

Style manuals provide information about preparing a master's thesis including formatting citations for endnotes, footnotes, reference lists, and bibliographies. Listed below, by department, are the style manuals approved for use when writing a master's thesis at UNK. Please consult with your advisor to insure that the style manual listed for your department has his/her approval. The UNK theses manual will take precedence over any information presented in a style manual. These style manuals are available for use in the Reference Collection on the first floor of the Calvin T. Ryan Library.

Biology

Council of Science Editors. *Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*. 7th ed. Reston, VA: Council of Science Editors, 2006.
(Calvin T. Ryan Library Reference Collection: *T11.S386)

Business (MBA)

Communication Disorders

Counseling & School Psychology

Educational Administration

Teacher Education

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 5th ed. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2001.
(Calvin T. Ryan Library Reference Collection: *BF76.7.P83 2001)

English*

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*. 2nd ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1998.
(Calvin T. Ryan Library Reference Collection: *PN147.G444 1998)

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6th ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2003.
[contains most recent documentation & works cited forms that have supplanted above]
(Calvin T. Ryan Library Reference Collection: *LB2369..G53 2003)

History*

University of Chicago Press. *The Chicago Manual of Style*. 15th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
(Calvin T. Ryan Library Reference Collection: *Z253.C57 2003)

Turabian, Kate L., Grossman, John, and Alice Bennett. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.
(Calvin T. Ryan Library Reference Collection: *LB2369.T8 1996)

Modern Languages

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*. 2nd ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1998.
(Calvin T. Ryan Library Reference Collection: *PN147.G444 1998)

Physical Education

Iverson, Cheryl, et al. *American Medical Association Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors*. 9th ed. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1998.
(Calvin T. Ryan Library Reference Collection: *R119.A533 1998)

**** more than one manual approved***

Subsection 5.2.1 Online Resources - Style Manuals and Writing Guides

The online resources listed below are intended to supplement the information given in the approved style manuals. These resources provide examples of citation styles as well as information about planning, preparing, and writing a master's thesis.

APA Citation Guide - University Libraries - The Ohio State University

<http://www.lib.ohio-state.edu/sites/guides/apagd.html>

Examples of citations using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA).

APA Style.org Frequently Asked Questions

<http://www.apastyle.org/faqs.html>

Information about using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA).

Chicago Manual of Style Examples of Chicago-Style Documentation

<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools.html>

Examples of citations using the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

Chicago Manual of Style Citation Guide - University Libraries - The Ohio State University

<http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/chicagogd.php>

Examples of citations using the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

Citing Sources - Duke University Libraries

<http://library.duke.edu/research/citing/>

Examples of citations using *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*; *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*; *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*; *The Chicago Manual of Style*; and *Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*. Also provides information about avoiding plagiarism.

Modern Language Association Frequently Asked Questions about MLA Style

http://www.mla.org/style_faq

Information about using the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*.

Modern Language Association (MLA) Citation Guide - University Libraries - The Ohio State University

<http://www.lib.ohio-state.edu/sites/guides/mlagd.html>

Examples of citations using the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*.

Research and Documentation Online - Diane Hacker

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/home.html>

Information about finding and documenting sources in the Humanities, Social Sciences, History, and Sciences. Also includes tips for evaluating sources, a list of style manuals, and a glossary of research terms.

Research and Documenting Sources - Purdue University Online Writing Lab

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/index.html#writing>

Information on evaluating information sources, APA and MLA citation styles, and writing research papers.

Style Manuals and Writing Guides - Libraries and Media Services - Kent State University Library

<http://www.library.kent.edu/page/10603>

Links to citation examples and information about *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*; *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*; *The Chicago Manual of Style*; *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*; and *American Medical Association Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors*.

Also includes links to writing guides and examples of citations for electronic sources.

Turabian Citation Guide - University Libraries - The Ohio State University

<http://www.lib.ohio-state.edu/sites/guides/turabiangd.html>

Examples of citations using *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.

The Writing Center - University of Wisconsin-Madison

<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/index.html>

Examples of citations using *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*; *The Chicago Manual of Style*; *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*; *Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*; and *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*.

Also includes information on the writing process, grammar and punctuation, and avoiding plagiarism.

Writing and Presenting Your Thesis or Dissertation - S. Joseph Levine, PhD - Michigan State University

<http://www.learnerassociates.net/dissthes/>

Information on preparing a proposal, writing a thesis or dissertation, and defending a thesis or dissertation.

Writing Resources/Style Manuals - University Libraries - The Pennsylvania State University

<http://www.libraries.psu.edu/gateway/referenceshelf/writ.htm>

Links to citation examples and information about *American Medical Association Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors*; *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*; *The Chicago Manual of Style*; *Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*; *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*; and *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.

Also includes links to information about citing electronic sources, writing and grammar guides, and plagiarism and copyright.

Writing Theses and Dissertations - Jennifer Hillman Helgren and David Parker - Claremont Graduate University

<http://www.cgu.edu/pages/880.asp>

Information about choosing a topic, writing a proposal, conducting research, the writing process, organizing, revising, and time management.

Subsection 5.2.2: Forms and Examples of Thesis pages

The following form can be found at:

<http://www.unk.edu/uploadedfiles/academics/gradstudies/resources/tfss.pdf>



Graduate Studies and Research

***Proposed Supervisory Committee
for Theses, Field Studies, and Scholarly Studies***

Name _____ NUID _____

Major Department _____ Degree Sought _____
(MA, MAEd, MBA, MS, MEd, EdS)

Advisor's Signature _____

Committee Members**	Department	Graduate Faculty Member
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

****The committee will be composed of the following graduate faculty members: (a) the candidate's thesis professor who will serve as chair, (b) one other member representing the candidate's major department, (c) a third member representing a related field in the college in which the candidate's major field is located, (d) a fourth member selected at large from the University of Nebraska Graduate Faculty.**

Recommended by _____ Date _____
Chair, Graduate Program Committee

I agree to serve on the supervisory committee for this student who is working on his/her Master's or Specialist's degree. (Please sign your name).

Chairperson

Approved by _____ Date _____
Dean of Graduate Studies and Research

Page numbers can be placed here → 1

1.25" to top of page

Example 1: Margins and Page Numbers

All text and diagrams must be printed within these margins

1.5"

1.0"

1.25" to bottom

Or page numbers can be placed here → 1 or here → 1

Example 2: Title Page

(TITLE OF THESIS)

(ALL CAPS)

A Thesis

Presented to the

Graduate Faculty of the (your department) Department

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

(Name of Degree)

University of Nebraska at Kearney

By

(Name of Student)

(Month and Year)

Example 3: Signature Form

THESIS ACCEPTANCE
(ALL CAPS)

Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College, University of Nebraska,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree (name of the degree),
University of Nebraska at Kearney.

Supervisory Committee

Name

Department

Supervisory Committee Chair

Date