



THESIS AND DISSERTATION FORMATTING GUIDE*

**If you print out a hard copy of this guide, please be aware that it is subject to change. The most current guide will always be available online. Therefore, as you progress through your master's or doctoral program, please check the Graduate School/Thesis and Dissertation Services, [Resources for Writing](#) (hyperlink provided) web page for the most current version of this guide.*

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The Graduate School, with Thesis and Dissertation Services (TDS), provides this guide to assist with the formatting requirements of the Graduate School. All students will be held to the standards described in this guide, so it is important that students and faculty read and understand the standards, as well as the potential consequences for failing to meet them (e.g., deferred graduation).

It is important to note that the standards described in this guide are considered minimum requirements; departments retain and may exercise the right to create additional requirements for their students. Department determine which style guide or guides (APA, MLA, ACS, etc.) are to be used to complete the thesis or dissertation, but the style guide should be the most recent edition available, if possible. Students are responsible for learning the style guide requirements and ensuring the document adheres to that chosen style guide. It is the responsibility of student along with the advisor to ensure the thesis or dissertation complies with all requirements of the selected style guide.

The Graduate School/TDS's role in the thesis and dissertation process is to review proposals, final theses, and final dissertations for conformity to the Graduate School's formatting requirements. TDS does not provide editing services; however, a list of student-recommended editors is available by contacting TDS (TDS@tamuc.edu). Students may also schedule one-on-one appointments with TDS if assistance is needed. However, the final responsibility for revising and editing the document lies with the student.

For questions, concerns, or further clarification, please contact:

Thesis and Dissertation Services
The Graduate School
(903)886-5968
TDS@tamuc.edu

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome! This guide is intended as a resource to help you in preparing a thesis or dissertation (both proposal and final) that meets the formatting requirements of the Graduate School. It provides the uniform standards of formatting you are expected to maintain in writing your document, both proposal and final. The purpose of the TDS review is to produce theses and dissertations that maintain a consistency in appearance. We want to produce documents of which both the university and you can be proud.

When you submit your proposal document or final document, TDS reviews it for adherence to the formatting requirements set forth in the thesis/dissertation template and as further described in this guide. This means that TDS does not review for spelling, grammar, or adherence to your chosen style guide. It is up to you to work closely with your advisor and/or committee members to ensure your document meets all style requirements, follows the rules of English grammar, and does not violate any copyright laws.

Whenever there are differences in format and layout between the Thesis and Dissertation Formatting Guide and your chosen style guide, the Graduate School formatting guidelines overrule.

Everyone in the Graduate School is working to ensure the success of our graduate students. We encourage you to ask questions or let us know of any concerns; we are here to help. If there are any questions or concerns not answered in this guide, please feel free to contact the TDS office at (903)886-5968 or through email, TDS@tamuc.edu. You can also make an appointment for an office visit or Zoom meeting, if needed.

Resources

On the TDS web pages for thesis students, short link www.tamuc.edu/thesis, and for doctoral students, short link www.tamuc.edu/dissertation, TDS provides a wealth of information and resources to assist you in completing your thesis or dissertation. It is recommended you bookmark the appropriate short link for convenient reference.

See the left sidebar of the TDS web pages for the following resources:

- **iThenticate**: The University has contracted with this service in order to determine the degree of similarity between the document you have drafted and other copyrighted material. The system produces a similarity percentage indicating the degree to which your document “borrows” from other published material. The Graduate School sets a cap of 12% similarity. All submissions must include a copy of this similarity report. More information on how to prepare your document for the iThenticate process and on how to read the report can be found on the iThenticate web page.

The iThenticate program requires licensing and most faculty should already have access to this program; however, if access is needed, faculty should contact Tina Freeman in the Office of Academic Technology, Tina.Freeman@tamuc.edu; she can provide faculty with

information for licensing to obtain access. Because students are not allowed to obtain a license to access iThenticate, please contact your advisor for a copy of the report.

- Resources for Writing: This item provides a number of resources to aid in the drafting of your proposal and final document. Below is a brief description of the resources made available to you.
 - Graduate School Templates and Guide: The Graduate School provides a basic template for you to use when drafting your document (to be followed at both the proposal and final stages). When you begin drafting your document, use the template provided; it has some of the required formatting built into the document. The template also provides commentary in the margin to guide you through setting up and formatting your document. As mentioned earlier, the goal of the Graduate School/TDS review is for all final documents to look basically the same.

The Thesis and Dissertation Formatting Guide and Thesis and Dissertation Submission Guide are also found on this web page. The Formatting Guide provides more detailed information and instructions for setting up your document and for formatting it. There are also two appendices to this document with Appendix A providing an example of a vita, and Appendix B providing examples of the formatting of tables and figures. The Submission Guide provides detailed instructions on the submission process, both at the proposal stage and at the final stage.

- Commonly Used Style Guides: Each department and/or your advisor determines what style guide you should follow when drafting your document. In this section, TDS provides links to the most commonly used style guides and helpful resources to various styles that can assist when drafting your document. Remember, however, if the style guide conflicts with a Graduate School formatting requirement, the Graduate School formatting requirement prevails.
- Velma K. Waters Library Resources: The library maintains copies of the most frequently used style guides (APA, MLA, ACS, etc.) either in an online format or in hard copy, or both. See the link to this helpful web page the library provides for when you are working on your thesis or dissertation:
<https://tamuc.libguides.com/dissertations>

In addition, the library staff occasionally holds educational workshops to assist with the thesis/dissertation process. Be sure to check the TDS Information section of the GradNews for a list of workshops the library may be offering.

- Writing Resources: This section provides links to sites that can help with grammar, Word formatting, and formatting Word on a Mac.
- Copyright Essentials: To help in understanding copyright laws and regulations, TDS explains the Graduate School's expectations and provides links to pertinent

statutes and helpful resources. A more in-depth look is provided on the TDS web page [Copyright/Plagiarism Information](#).

- [3 Necessary Characteristics of a Thesis or Dissertation](#): This succinctly summarizes the characteristics the Graduate School expects your study to contain.
- [A “Baker’s Dozen” of Issues Concerning Theses & Dissertations](#): Written by the previous director of the Office of Thesis & Dissertation Services, Dr. Paul Zelhart provides a list of points to consider during the various phases of the drafting of your dissertation or thesis.
- [Research Methods Resources](#): There are many books written on the subject of successfully completing a thesis or dissertation. This section provides a list of a few that have been recommended to TDS.
- [Rubrics for Assessing Dissertation Proposals](#): During the 2016-2017 Academic Year, faculty members from various departments participated in a committee to provide students with rubrics to guide the development of the dissertation proposal. While the rubrics are not used in any official capacity, you are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the resource to ensure the dissertation is as strong as possible. Though the rubrics were developed with dissertation students in mind, thesis students are more than welcome to use the rubrics as well.
- [Research Tools](#): This page provides information regarding some of the tools used in research such as propensity score matching in education research and a discussion of what the difference is between qualitative versus quantitative research traditions.
- [Deadlines for Thesis and Dissertation Submissions](#): All the important dates and deadlines associated with the thesis and dissertation process can be found on this page. Be sure to add these dates to your calendar.
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#): If you have a question about the thesis or dissertation process or what to submit, take a moment to review the FAQs.
- [Copyright/Plagiarism Information](#): Students must be careful not to violate the copyright laws of the United States. Avoiding unoriginality is a required skill of scholars and is learnable. See the information provided on this page and in the links provided to help you understand and avoid violating copyright laws in your work.

Now you are ready to begin drafting your document!

FORMATTING OF PROPOSAL AND FINAL DOCUMENT

Thesis and Dissertation Services (TDS) is entrusted by the Graduate School with the task of reviewing all proposal documents, final theses, and final dissertations to ensure that each document meets the formatting standards set by the Graduate School.

Page Setup

The text of the document must be in a standard font, either Arial or Times New Roman. Font size can be in a range from 12 point to as small as 10 point font, but must be consistent size throughout the document. The body of the text is double-spaced unless indicated otherwise in the template or the Formatting Guide. The right margin should be jagged (left justification), not fully justified. Major headings are formatted and positioned according to the Graduate School template and guidelines with subheadings formatted and positioned according to the style guide being followed.

The margins for each page are 1 inch for the top, bottom, left, and right margins, except the first page of the Abstract page, which has a top margin of 2.5 inches. All material (text, tables, figures, appendices, etc.) must be fit within the margins, with the exception of the page numbers, which are placed in the header.

Page Numbering

Every page in the document except the Title Page and the Signature Page (the first two preliminary pages) must be numbered. The Title and Signature Pages are considered pages i and ii, but no page number is shown on these two pages.

Page Numbers

Page numbers are placed in the header in the upper right corner of the page, ½ inch from the top edge of the page and 1 inch from the right edge of the page. Preliminary pages are numbered with lowercase Roman numerals and the body of the manuscript numbered using Arabic numerals, with Chapter 1 beginning with page 1.

Preliminary Pages

Below is a list of the preliminary pages in order:

- Title page (no page number)
- Signature page (no page number)
- Copyright page (if copyrighting, this will be the first page with a page number—Roman numeral iii in the top right corner)
- Abstract (if not copyrighting, this will be the first page with a page number—Roman numeral iii in top right corner, otherwise it will be page iv)
- Acknowledgments
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables (as applicable)
- List of Figures (as applicable)

Body of the Manuscript

The body includes the following:

- Body (all chapters)
- References
- Appendices (if applicable)
- Vita

Arrangement

The document should be arranged in the following order:

1. Title Page
2. Signature Page
3. Copyright Page (if not copyrighting, do not include this page)
4. Abstract
5. Acknowledgments (optional)
6. Table of Contents
7. List of Tables (if applicable)
8. List of Figures (if applicable)
9. Body of document
10. References
11. Appendices (if applicable)
12. Vita

The first entry in the Table of Contents should be the first item following the Table of Contents (i.e., the List of Tables and/or the List of Figures, as applicable). You may choose to include the Abstract and Acknowledgments in the Table of Contents, but this is not required.

Footnotes

Footnotes must be single-spaced with a single space between footnotes.

Major Headings

The rules for major headings are as follows:

- Center major headings at the top of a new page; put in ALL CAPITAL letters. They should be flush with the top margin making them no more than one inch from the top of the page. The only exception to this requirement is the heading on the Abstract page.
- If major headings are more than one line, double-space the lines. Each subsequent line of the heading must be shorter than the one above it.
- The font must be the same size as the body text, no larger.

- Do not bold major headings or put the headings in italics (except for scientific terms in Latin or titles).
- Do not include punctuation after a major heading.
- Format major headings consistently.

The following are considered “major headings” in the document:

- TITLE of the thesis or dissertation on the Title Page
- TITLE of the thesis or dissertation on the Signature Page
- Headings ABSTRACT, ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, TABLE OF CONTENTS, LIST OF FIGURES, LIST OF TABLES on the preliminary pages
- CHAPTER designations and titles
- REFERENCES (or LITERATURE CITED, etc.)
- APPENDICES cover page and each APPENDIX title page
- VITA

Subheadings

Subheadings are used to organize chapters into different sections. Some style guides, such as APA, provide specific rules for subheadings. Become familiar with your style guide rules regarding capitalization, positioning, and formatting of subheadings. Be sure to follow logical subordination of subheadings.

If your style guide does not provide specific instructions on formatting subheadings, please follow these guidelines:

- Use the same font size for all subheadings.
- Use consistent capitalization for each level of subheading, but do not use all capital letters, as this defines major headings.
- The style used for subheadings must clearly show the various subordination levels and must be used consistently throughout the document from chapter to chapter.
- Double-space before and after subheadings; do not include extra spacing.
- Do not begin subheadings and subsections on a new page.
- A subheading near the bottom of a page must have at least two lines of text under it or the subheading should be moved to the next page to remain with the text.

Figures and Tables

If your chosen style guide provides formatting and style requirements for tables and/or figures, follow those requirements except where they contradict with the Graduate School formatting and style requirements. The Graduate School formatting and style requirements are addressed below as follows.

Color, Size, and Legibility

- Color is acceptable in figures, but black and white is preferred.
- Color is not acceptable in tables.
- The font size for the contents of a table may be reduced in order to fit on a page, but the font size should not be any smaller than is 7-point font.
- The body of a table must be double-spaced.
- All lettering must be of publishable quality; this requirement includes scanned images. Images must be clear and without blurred or dark areas.
- All figures and tables must fit within the 1-inch margins of the document.

Text Mention

Each table and figure must be mentioned (referred to as an “in-text reference”) in order of appearance **within 1½ pages before** the table or figure appears in the document. Tables and figures that appear in an appendix should be mentioned in text, but they do not need to be listed in Lists *unless* they are numbered consecutively after text figures and tables.

Placement in Text

Tables and figures may be included on a page with text or, if your style guide requires, on separate pages. However, do not leave more than ½ a page of white space on a page before a table or figure. If a table or figure is placed on a page with other material, **the table or figure should be separated from the text (or other material) by at least 3 single spaces** above and below the figure or table.

Long and Continued Tables

When tables are longer than one page, include the table number at the top of subsequent pages with the word “(continued)” following it. Do not include the table title. Also, include the necessary column headings from the table for ease of reading. Include the bottom line of the completed table only on the last page of the table. See the examples included in Appendix B to this document.

Long and Continued Figures

When several figures make up an entire figure and they span more than one page, include the figure number at the top of subsequent pages with the word “(continued)” following it. Do not include the figure title/caption. See the examples in appendix B to this document.

Landscape Orientation

If the table or figure is placed sideways on a page (landscape position), the top of the table or figure must be at the left-hand, “binding” side of the page. The page number **stays in the regular (portrait) position**. Follow this link for instructions for correct placement of the page number: <https://uknowit.uwgb.edu/page.php?id=26346>, or use the template provided as an Appendix to the thesis/dissertation template for placement of the page number.

Basic Format of Tables

All tables should reflect the following basic format no matter the style guide being followed (see Appendix B for an example table):

- Do not use vertical border lines
- Use minimal horizontal border lines. The minimum border lines to include are a top border line, a line below the header row, and a border line at the bottom of the table.
- Double-space the contents of the table
- Each column should have a column heading, not bolded.
- Columns of text should be left aligned. Note that rows of text with more than one line may be single-spaced, but double-space between the rows.
- Align columns of numbers by the decimal, by the one's column, or, if the column contains both, first by the decimal, then by the one's column.
- Unless your style guide instructs otherwise, align tables with the left margin.

Table Titles and Numbering

Each table must have a unique title (no two titles can be the same). Unless your chosen style guide instructs otherwise, the table title must appear above the table and be consecutively numbered throughout the text. The style guide you are following may dictate the style of the table numbering, but no matter the style followed, numbering should be consecutive (1, 2, 3) or by chapter and section (1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, etc.).

Basic Format of Figures

All figures should reflect the following basic format no matter the style guide being followed (see Appendix B for an example figure):

- Do not include a title as part of the figure; that is what the figure title/caption is for.
- Delete any outside border lines.
- Align figures to the left margin.
- Figure captions (appearing below the figure) may be either double-spaced or single-spaced, but do so consistently for all figure captions.

Figure Captions/Titles and Numbering

Each figure must have a unique caption/title (no two captions/titles can be the same). Your chosen style guide may require a figure caption to appear below the figure (caption) or a figure title to appear above the figure (title). If it does not specify, you may place it in either location, but do so consistently throughout the document (always below or always above). No matter the style guide followed, figures should be numbered consecutively (1, 2, 3) or by chapter and section (1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, etc.).

Labeling of Parts or Panels of a Figure:

If there is more than one part or panel to a figure, label each individual part of the figure with a letter or number and identify each part in the caption, or in a note below the figure if the figure uses titles above the figure.

Large Figure Title/Long Caption on a Separate Page

This format is used only for figures when there is not enough space for the caption/title on the page with the figure, even if the figure size is reduced. If the caption/title must go on a

separate page, place it on the page preceding the figure. In the List of Figures, the number of the page on which the figure itself appears is the page number listed. ***This format is never used with tables.***

The Appendices

Appendix figures and/or tables must be mentioned in text. Figures and/or tables in appendices may be numbered consecutively following the numbering of the figures and/or tables found in the text, they may be numbered with an Appendix designation (A-1, A-2, for example), or they may be unnumbered. If numbered consecutively with the figures and/or tables in the text, they must be included in the List of Tables and/or List of Figures. Graduate School formatting and style requirements must be maintained for figures and/or tables in appendices.

Lists of Figures and Tables

Entries in the Lists of Figures and Tables must agree word-for-word with the title or caption in the text. For captions, include the entire caption up to the first period (parenthetical information may be excluded from the List). Be sure the figures and tables are found on the page given in the List.

Equations

Equation numbering is optional and may be consecutive (1, 2, 3) or consecutive by chapter or section (1.1, 1.2, 2.1). No two equations may have the same number unless identical, term-for-term. The font size and style of the equation and its number must match the text.

References/Literature Cited

Each document must contain a formal reference section. References must follow the format required by the chosen style manual; however, the Graduate School requires that the list should be double-spaced with no extra spacing between the reference entries.

Citations should be crosschecked with the reference list to verify that every citation has a source listed and that every source has a citation. In other words, each citation must have a corresponding reference entry, and each reference entry must have a corresponding citation.

When using electronic sources, before submission of the document, please check that all URLs or doi numbers provided are still active and correct. URLs or doi numbers that are broken or inactive should be replaced with working links. If a working URL or doi number cannot be found for the source, an alternative source must be found or the source should be removed from the paper. The “login.proxy.tamuc.edu” URLs do not serve the reader because the reader can only access the material from that URL if he or she has access to A&M-Commerce’s resources (i.e., is a currently enrolled student, staff member, or faculty member). If you are unable to find this source through another URL or doi number and the reference is complete without it, do not include it with the reference.

In-Text Mention of References (Citations)

As noted above, all references must be cited in the text, and all text citations must be referenced. All text citations must be from sources actually used and must be from appropriate sources. In most cases, Wikipedia, About.com, lifestyle magazines (e.g., People, Us Weekly, OK!, etc.), and

other non-peer-reviewed sources are not appropriate. Using inappropriate sources diminishes the rigor of your document and, in some cases, can lead to misinformation.

Appendices

Appendices are **optional** and used for supplementary material. An Appendices cover page is required if there are two or more appendices. Each appendix must have a title page. Place the appendices after the reference section and before the vita. All appendix pages have page numbers continuing from the last page of the references. All appendix material must be within prescribed margins and be readable in size and legibility.

Appendices Cover Page

A cover page should precede the appendices. The title, APPENDICES, appears in all capital letters in the middle of the page, centered vertically and horizontally.

If you have only one appendix, the Appendices cover page is replaced with the Appendix title page (see below) with no letter designation needed.

Appendix Title Pages

Each appendix requires a title page with an appendix designation (APPENDIX A, for example). The appendix title appears one double space below the appendix designation. The appendix designation and title are in all capital letters and centered vertically and horizontally on the page. Titles with more than one line in length must be double-spaced with each subsequent line being shorter than the line above it.

If there is only one appendix, the appendix title page will serve as the cover page also. Include only the word APPENDIX with no letter designation, and the appendix title is one double space below the heading. The appendix designation and title are in all capital letters and centered vertically and horizontally on the page.

Vita

The vita is required. For the purposes of the vita, your information **should be in paragraph form** instead of the traditional resume format. A sample vita can be found in Appendix A to this guide.

FORMAT INSTRUCTIONS AND SAMPLES

Title Page

General Format

- Font size and style should be consistent and must match the text of the document.
- Do not bold text on this page.
- Do not number this page.
- Use proper spacing and capitalization as shown on the sample page.

Title of Document

- The first line of the title is placed one inch from the top of the page, flush with the top margin.
- Use all capital letters and center the text horizontally.
- Double-space the lines of the title if it is more than one line.
- If the title is more than one line, subsequent lines must be shorter than the line(s) above it.
- Do not include a period at the end of the title.

Author Statement

- Double space and center the statement both vertically and horizontally on page.
- Capitalize the A and the T in Thesis or the D in Dissertation, i.e. “A Dissertation.”
- Student's name is in all capital letters; name must be the same as in the official records of the university.

Submittal Statement

- Single space text.
- “of Texas A&M University-Commerce” is on a line by itself with no space before or after the hyphen.
- Your degree is in all capital letters; use the full name of the degree without major (e.g., MASTER OF SCIENCE, MASTER OF ARTS, DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, DOCTOR OF EDUCATION). Check the Graduate Catalog for correct wording of your degree.

Date

- Use the month and year you expect to graduate. Graduation months at Texas A&M-Commerce are May, August, or December—do not use the final defense or submittal month.
- Do not use a comma between the month and year.

Sample is on the following page

SAMPLE TITLE PAGE

no page number →

THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONS
FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

↑
Title is double-spaced; each subsequent
line is shorter than the one above it; text is
in all uppercase letters with the top line
flush with the top margin

← 1 inch margins on all sides

author statement is
centered both
horizontally and
vertically
and double spaced

→

A Dissertation
by
IMA HARDWORKER

←

author name is in
all uppercase
letters

Submittal statement is
centered and single-
spaced with the
bottom line flush with
bottom margin of the
page

→

Submitted to the Graduate School
of Texas A&M University-Commerce
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
Graduation month 20XX

Month (May,
August, or
December) and the
year you expect to
graduate

←

Signature Page

General Format

- Font style and size should remain consistent with that used for the Title Page.
- Do not bold text on this page.
- Do not include a page number on this page.
- Use proper spacing and capitalization as shown on the sample page.

Title of Document

- Title should be flush with the top margin.
- Use the same wording for your title as on the Title Page.
- Use all capital letters and center.
- Double space if more than one line; no period at the end of the title.
- Succeeding lines of title must be shorter than the preceding lines.

Author Statement

- Capitalize the A and the T in Thesis or D in Dissertation, i.e. “A Dissertation.”
- Double space text and center the statement both vertically and horizontally on the page.
- Student's name is in all capital letters, using the same name used on the Title Page.

Committee Member Names and Positions

- Do not include degree designations when listing names (e.g., Dr., PhD, etc.).
- If a committee member, chair, or co-chair is also a department head or dean, include his or her name for both positions.
- Use the correct spacing shown on the sample page.
- Verify (with department and/or college) the correct spelling and presentation of all names.

Sample is on the next page

THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONS
FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

↑
**Title is double-spaced; each subsequent
line is shorter than the one above it; text is
in all uppercase letters with the top line
flush with the top margin**

← **1 inch margins on all sides**

**author statement is
centered horizontally →
and vertically
and double spaced**

A Dissertation
by
IMA HARDWORKER

← **author name is in
all uppercase
letters**

Approved by:

Advisor: Dudley Doright

Committee: Clark Kent
A. B. Normal
Thurston Howell

Head of Department: Head Honcho

Dean of the College: T. O. P. Ladder

Dean of the Graduate School: G. S. Leader

← **titles such as Dr., Prof., and Ph.D.
are not used**

Copyright Page

Although copyrighting is optional, you are highly encouraged to copyright your thesis or dissertation, and it is recommended you consult with your advisor before choosing not to copyright. Also, please be sure to review the section in this guide entitled Publication of the Research: Copyright Issues. If copyrighting your thesis or dissertation, please follow the formatting guidelines detailed below and shown on the following sample page. **If you choose not to copyright, please do not include the copyright page in your final document.** If you are not copyrighting, the Abstract will be page iii of your document.

Page Number

- The page number iii is placed in the top right corner within the header.
- The page number is ½ inch from the top of the page and 1 inch from the right side of the page.

Copyright Statement

- The statement is centered both vertically and horizontally on the page.
- Double space between the copyright statement and your name.
- The year used in the copyright statement should be the year you expect to graduate.
- Your name should appear as it does on the title page and signature page, only the name should be in uppercase and lowercase letters.

Sample is on the following page

SAMPLE COPYRIGHT PAGE

The page number iii is in the top right corner of the page, placed 1 inch from the right of the page and ½ inch from the top of the page ↑

Text is centered vertically and horizontally on the page and is double-spaced



Copyright © 2022

← use the year you expect to graduate

Your name is in upper and lowercase letters →

Ima Hardworker

Abstract

The abstract page should be included in the proposal document; however, it does not need to be a complete abstract at the proposal stage. At the proposal stage, please include a brief summary of the purpose of your thesis/dissertation and the procedures used to research/investigate the topic. At the final stage, the completed abstract should be a summary of the processes and statistical procedures used in the findings. Abstracts should be no more than 350 words. **NOTE: This is the only page with a different margin setting.**

Preliminary Lines

- The heading ABSTRACT appears 2 ½ inches from the top of the page; this is the only page that will not have a 1 inch top margin. Instead of changing the margin setting on this page, you may also use the left ruler bar, aligning the heading with 1.5 on the left ruler bar.
- The page number in the top right corner should be iv unless you are not copyrighting your document. If you are not copyrighting, the page number should be iii.
- The thesis or dissertation title is centered and single-spaced on this page with the title in all uppercase letters.
- Your name is centered and in the same form as it appears on previous pages, but in upper and lower case letters.
- Insert a comma after your name and include the abbreviation of the degree you are earning, e.g., MS, MA, EdD, PhD (no periods).
- In the university name, do not put spaces between A&M or before or after the hyphen between University and Commerce.
- After the university name, insert a comma and include the year in which you expect to graduate (the same year given on the previous pages).
- Include your advisor's degree abbreviation after his or her name (e.g., PhD, EdD), no periods.

Text

- Text begins two double spaces below the advisor's name.
- The abstract may not be more than 350 words; any term with a space on each side is counted as a word
- Text is double-spaced.
- Text is aligned to the left margin; do not use full justification.

Sample is on the following page

page number is in top right corner →
if you are not copyrighting, the page
number should be iii

top margin is 2.5 inches

Title is single-
spaced and in
all uppercase
letters

ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONS
FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Insert a double space →

Ima Hardworker, MS, MA, EdD or PhD
Texas A&M University-Commerce, year of graduation

← Your name is in upper
and lower case letters and
is the same name used on
previous pages

Advisor: Name of your Advisor and her or his degree EdD or PhD

↑ There are two double spaces between the
advisor line and the text ↓

The text of the Abstract starts two double spaces below the advisor's name. **The text of the abstract is double-spaced.** Follow the same margin settings as your narrative text. Do not use full justification of text.

Your Abstract must be a *complete snapshot* of your manuscript. The first paragraph briefly describes the focus of your study and the methods you used to examine or test your hypothesis. The remaining paragraphs present the research and results in detail. However, text of the abstract should not exceed 350 words. Any term (or numeral) with a space on either side is counted as a one word.

Keywords: Keywords are optional, but if you decide to include them, please start the keywords on a new line and italicize the word "*Keywords.*"

Table of Contents

Table of Contents (TOC) should follow the formatting of the sample shown on the next page. Generally, your document should be a 5-chapter model, unless your department recommends a different number of chapters. Some disciplines may not “fit” in the standard 5-chapter model or may prefer a different organization of the information presented in the document. As long as the basic topics of introduction, literature review, methods, findings, and conclusions are addressed logically in the document, then variation of the 5-chapter model will be accepted. However, formatting of headings as shown in the sample must still be maintained. With this said, you are not obligated to use the heading titles shown in the sample, nor are you required to organize your sections as shown in the sample.

At the proposal stage, because the page numbers will likely change between the proposal and final dissertation, you are not required to report page numbers for each section. However, you do need to include the dot leader lines. To create the dot leader lines, go to the Home tab on the Word document tool bar. Open the dialog box for Paragraph. At the bottom is a box for Tabs. Click this box to open up the Tabs dialog box. In the Tab stop position, insert 6.5; in the Alignment section, select Right; in the Leader section, select 2; click Set; and then click Okay.

General Format

- Do not bold text on this page.
- Do not use italics on this page (except for Latin terms, titles of works, etc.).
- Insert dot leader lines between TOC headings and the page numbers.
- Insert a uniform number of spaces before and after the dot leader line. For example, in the sample on the next page, two spaces are placed before and after each dot leader line.
- Double-space between headings.
- When major headings span more than one line, double-space the lines.
- When subheadings span more than one line, you may single-space the lines.
- If your TOC is more than one page, include the word CHAPTER as a column heading at the top of each page **that introduces a new chapter** (see sample page).

Content

- The TOC must contain the major headings and the first level subheadings.
- Each level of subordination of subheadings should be indicated by an additional .5-inch indentation.
- Inclusion of lower levels of subheadings is optional, but if included, must be included consistently for all sections.
- Place major headings in all capital letters.
- Use title case for subheadings (upper and lower case).
- Preliminary pages do not have to be included in the TOC; however, if included, begin with the Abstract page, and include all the preliminary pages that follow.
- Chapters should be numbered using Arabic numbers with a period following the number.

- If there is only one appendix, change APPENDICES to APPENDIX (with no letter designation) and list the appendix document title one double space below, indented .5 inches and written using title capitalization. Page number follows the appendix title and reflects the page of the APPENDIX cover page.

Consistency

- Check that levels of subordination of headings and subheadings in the TOC match the level of subordination in the document.
- Check for consistency of capitalization.
- Headings in the TOC should match word-for-word with the headings in the text.
- Check that the titles of the listed appendices match exactly the headings used for the appendices in the document.
- Check the TOC against the body of the paper for agreement of page numbers.

Sample is on the following page

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES #

LIST OF FIGURES #

CHAPTER ← column heading for chapter numbers

Level of heading denoted by indent

1. INTRODUCTION #

 → Statement of the Problem #

 Purpose of the Study #

 Research Questions #

 Hypotheses #

 Significance of the Study #

 Method of Procedure #

 → Selection of Sample #

 Collection of Data #

 → Step 1 #

 Step 2 #

 → Subheading 1 #

 Subheading 2 #

 Treatment of the Data #

 Definitions of Terms #

 Limitations #

 Delimitations #

 Assumptions #

 Organization of Dissertation Chapters #

CHAPTER ← column heading since TOC is multiple pages and chapters are introduced on the page

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE #

 Topic Heading 1 #

 Topic Heading 2 #

 Topic Subheading 1 #

 Topic Subheading 2 #

3. METHOD OF PROCEDURE #

 Design of the Study #

 Instrumentation #

 Sample Selection #

 Data Gathering #

 Treatment of Data #

4. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS (or DATA) #

5. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY AND THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS,
 IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE
 RESEARCH #

REFERENCES #

APPENDICES #

 Appendix

 A. As Needed #

 B. As Needed #

VITA #

List of Tables and List of Figures

General Format

- A List of Tables and/or a List of Figures should be included if you have two or more tables and/or figures in the main body of text.
- If used, a separate list for tables and a separate list for figures are needed and either list may come first.
- Include the heading “FIGURE” or “TABLE” above the appropriate column (see example on the next page).
- Insert a uniform number of spaces before and after the dot leader line. In the example on the next page, two spaces are placed before and after the dot leader line.
- All figure and/or table entries are double-spaced.
- Double space the text between figure or table entries.
- If a list is more than one page, insert the appropriate column heading on each page.

Content

- Each figure title/caption or table title must be unique; no two may be exactly the same.
- Include only the first sentence of the title or caption (up to the first period) in the List of Tables or List of Figures. Parenthetical information may be excluded from the headings in the List.

Consistency

- Check page numbers in List against page numbers in text for agreement.
- Figure titles/captions in the List of Figures and table titles in the List of Tables must agree word-for-word with the titles in the text—up to the first period.
- Use the same capitalization in your List as used in the titles in the document. Capitalization should be consistent. If your style manual does not provide standards for capitalization, use title capitalization (capitalize the major words in the title).

Sample is on the next page

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE

1. Include This Page in Your Proposal, Even if You Have No Tables at the Time	#
2. Number Should Be on the Left	#
3. And the Title Should Be Written Here	#
4. The Entry Should Match What Is in the Text Word-For-Word	#
5. Use Title Capitalization for Entries if Your Chosen Style Guide Does Not Specify	#

Vita

- Vita is the last page of the document and is limited to one page.
- The vita should be in paragraph style (see example in Appendix A) instead of a résumé format.
- Continue using the same font and font size as used in the text of your document. Text should be double-spaced.
- Your vita must include your name, a permanent address, and your educational background. **Because the thesis or dissertation will be available on the Internet and there are increasing privacy concerns, the Graduate School recommends that you *do not* include personal information such as your date of birth, parents' or family member names, or your personal address in the Vita.**
- The wording of your name should be the same as listed on the preliminary pages of your thesis or dissertation.
- Include a permanent address that will be good for two years. Because your thesis or dissertation will be available worldwide via the Internet, we recommend you use a professional address or the A&M-Commerce department address.
- Include your educational background for all previous degrees, bachelor's level and beyond; include the degree, major subject, university, and your date of graduation.
- Inclusion of the following information is optional but encouraged: professional experience, publications, business, or academic information.

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL/TDS's REVIEW PROCESS

Students will submit their thesis or dissertation documents to the Graduate School/TDS at two different stages of their program:

- 1) after the proposal defense, and
- 2) after the final defense.

Please consult the [Thesis Checklist](#) or the [Doctoral Checklist](#) for the steps and timing for each stage in the process.

Before a defense (proposal or final) and by the deadlines set by your department, students must submit to their committee a document that meets the high standards of quality expected by their thesis or dissertation committee. After defending the proposal or final document, and prior to submitting it to TDS, students must carefully revise and edit the document as has been requested by the committee, department head, or college dean. This includes, but is not limited to, editing for grammar, mechanics, and style. The primary purpose of TDS is to assist students in meeting the Graduate School formatting requirements. The TDS staff does not serve as editors or proofreaders; that responsibility lies with the student. **All students are expected to perform**

line-by-line proofreading and editing prior to submitting the proposal or final document for review by TDS.

If the initially submitted document is not in the basic Graduate School format found in the thesis/dissertation template, the document will be returned for proper formatting before it is reviewed. This means that the student's place in the review order will be forfeited. When the revised document is returned to the Graduate School/TDS and it is deemed to be in basic Graduate School template format, the paper will be placed next in line for review, based on when it was received by TDS.

Please see the section on Formatting of Proposal and Final Document in this guide for more details on format requirements.

When TDS conducts its review, a Reviewer's Checklist will be used to indicate and explain formatting errors found in the document. The Reviewer's Checklist will be returned to the student with a copy to his or her advisor. For final documents, a due date will be included in the email by which the revised document must be submitted. The student, with the help of the student's advisor and/or committee members, as needed, is expected to incorporate the recommended changes throughout the entire document. The document should be resubmitted only when it has been thoroughly revised and reviewed. Proposal documents are not returned to TDS. If an editor is recommended, TDS keeps a running list of editors students have used in the past. For a copy of this list, please email TDS@tamuc.edu.

APPENDIX A
SAMPLE VITA

SAMPLE VITA

Ima Student attended Texas A&M University-Commerce in Commerce, Texas where she received her Bachelors of Arts in elementary education. After graduating in 2010, Ima took a position teaching fourth grade at Commerce Elementary School where she specialized in teaching students with behavioral disorders. She worked at Commerce Elementary for 7 years before deciding to pursue a Master's degree in curriculum and instruction. Ima graduated with her Master's degree in 2019 and was hired as a curriculum developer for Mesquite Independent School District in Mesquite, Texas.

Ima's research interests include developing programs to help students with learning and behavioral disorders succeed in the public school system. She is passionate about informing teachers and administrators of the unique needs of these students and developing faculty and staff training programs to help teachers and administrators better assist students with special needs.

Send correspondence to:

1234 Professional Address
Somewhereville, TX 99999
ima.student@fakeISDemail.edu

APPENDIX B
EXAMPLE TABLES AND FIGURES

EXAMPLE TABLES AND FIGURES

The following is an example of some of the basic format requirements of a table and a figure. Some elements may differ based on the style guide being following. For example, the table number and table title may be formatted differently according to your style guide, or the figure may require a caption instead of a figure title. However, please see the section for Tables and Figures for the basic requirements expected by the Graduate School.

Example of numeric table alignment:

Table 5

Distribution of Participants According to Age

Age Distribution (in years)	% of Sample
18–25	28.0%
26–35	7.1%
36–45	21.4%
46–55	21.4%
56–65	14.3%
66+	10.7%

Example of text table alignment:**Table 3***Phases of Thematic Analysis*

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic ‘map’ of the analysis.
1. Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.

Note. The phases of thematic analysis were designed by Braun and Clarke and implemented for use in this study by the researcher. Adapted from “Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology,” by V. Braun and V. Clarke, 2006, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.

Example of a continued table:**Table 5***Factor Analysis*

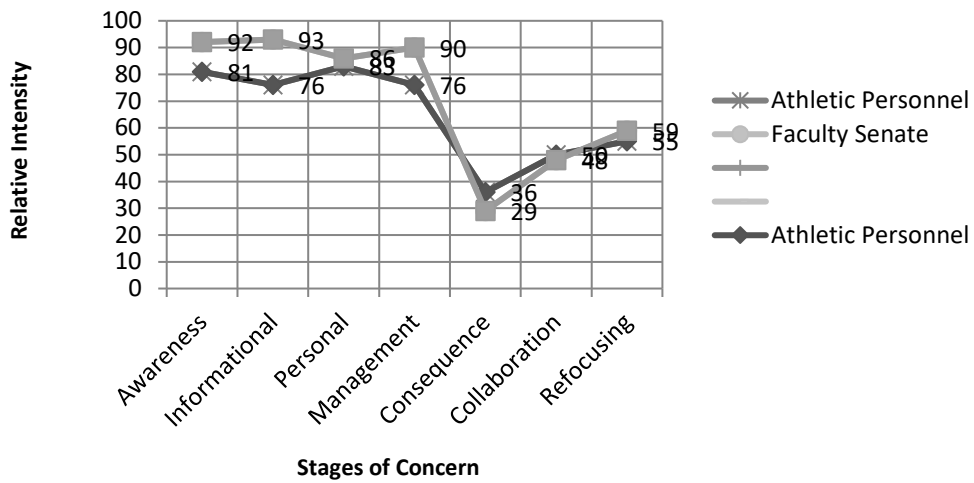
Factor Variable	Factor		
	1	2	3
Openly discuss cultural differences and similarities between the client and yourself	.666		
Address issues of cultural mistrust in ways that can improve the therapeutic relationship	.604		

Table 5 (continued)

Factor Variable	Factor		
	1	2	3
Deal with power-related disparities (i.e., counselor power versus client powerlessness) with a client who has experience racism or discrimination	.580		
Take into account the impact that family may have on the client in case conceptualization	.627		
Assess relevant cultural factors (e.g., the client's acculturation level, racial identity, cultural values, and beliefs)	.744		
Take into account cultural explanations of the client's presenting issues in case conceptualization	.764		
Repair cross-cultural impasses that arise due to problems in the use or timing of particular skills (e.g., introduce the topic of race into therapy when the client is not ready to discuss	.543		
Conduct a mental status examination in a culturally sensitive way	.609		
Help the client to develop culturally appropriate ways to deal with systems (e.g., school, community) that affect him or her	.653		

Figure 1

Webb University Faculty Athletic Representative Stages of Concern, Fall 2008 Through Spring 2009



Example of a figure with panels labeled:

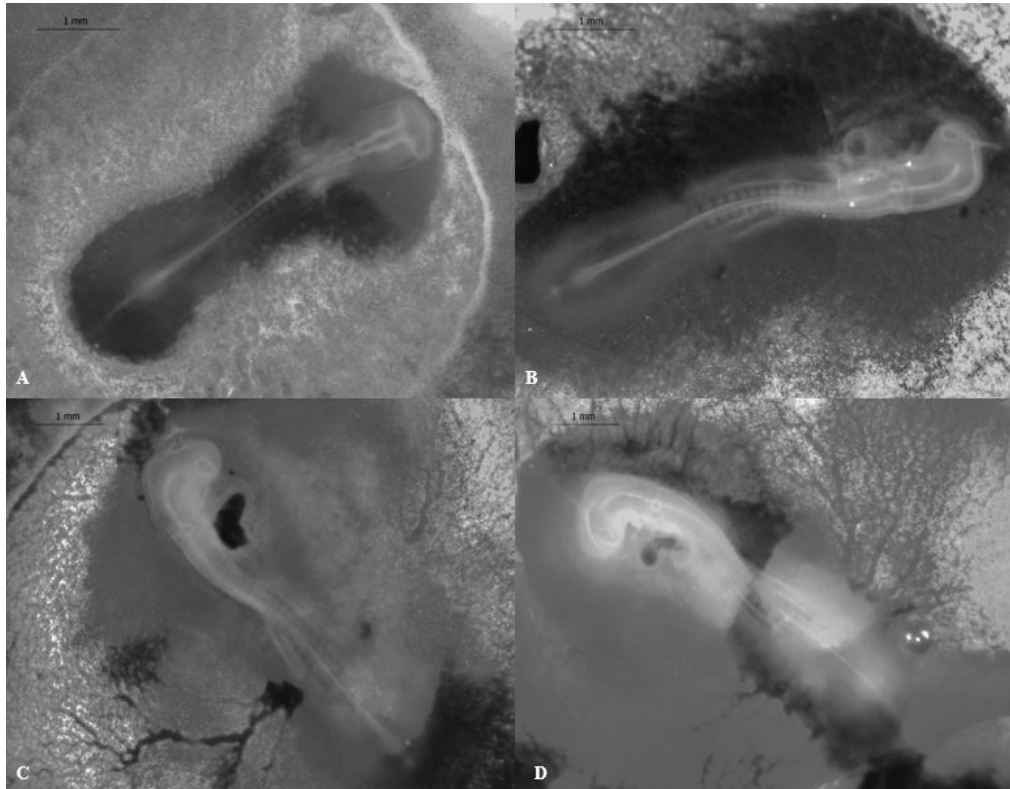


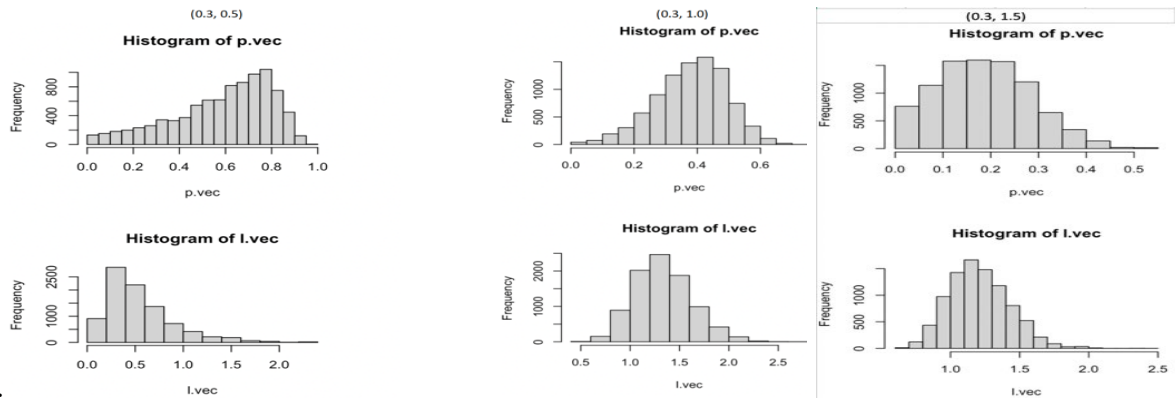
Figure 1. Stages 11–14 (52–60 h) of the California valley quail's embryological development A) Stage 11, 13 somite pairs visible, B) Stage 12, 16 somite pairs visible. Telencephalon, optic vesicles, and auditory pit present, C) Stage 13, 19 somite pairs visible. Telencephalon and heart more prominent than previous stage, D) Stage 14, 22 somite pairs present. Optic lens, and Rathke's pouch can be identified.

Example of a labeled figure that is continued to another page:

Figure 8

Histogram of P and λ Vectors

A



B

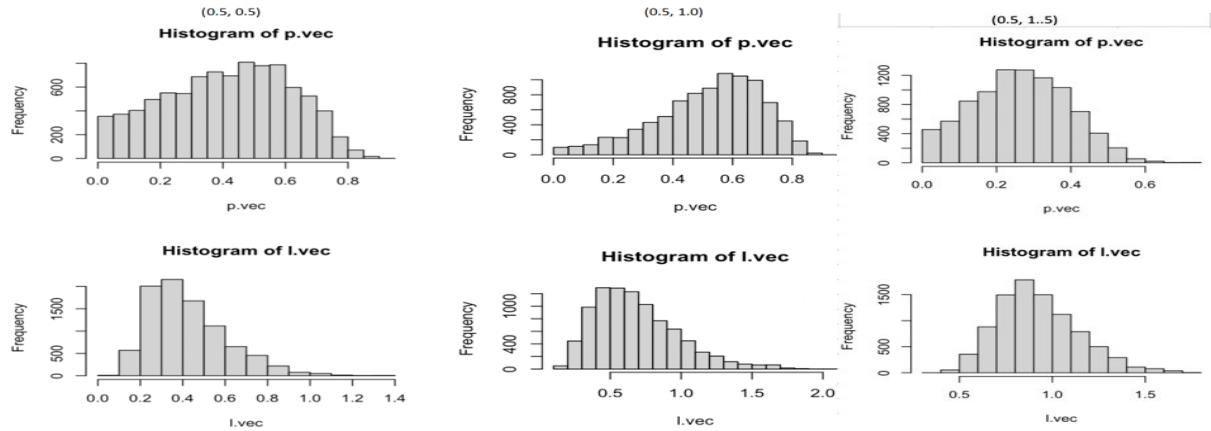
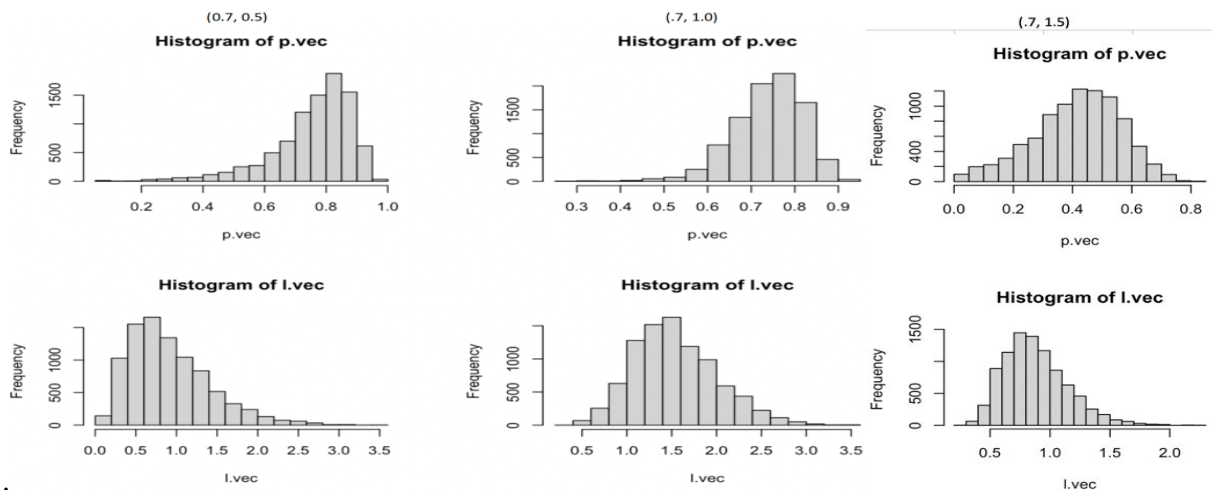


Figure 8 (continued)

C



Note. A is a Histogram of P and λ Vectors Where $p = 0.3$ and $\lambda = 0.5$, B is a Histogram of P and λ Vectors Where $p = 0.3$ and $\lambda = 1.0$, and C is a Histogram of P and λ Vectors Where $p = 0.3$ and $\lambda = 1.5$.