



SMUSM

BOBBY B. LYLE
SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

Thesis & Dissertation Guide

Revised
3/6/2020

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

The dissertation or thesis, as a requirement in a student's graduate education at Southern Methodist University for some master degrees (thesis) and all doctoral degrees (dissertation), serves the primary purpose of training the student in the processes of scholarly inquiry and writing under the direction of members of the graduate faculty. After publication your thesis ideally adds to the store of human knowledge and serves as a contribution to future scholars and researchers. Because it bears the university's name, as well as yours, it represents the instructional and research functions of this university to the outside world. For these reasons, it is expected that your thesis be of the highest quality, in both content and form.

This *Thesis/Dissertation Guide* provides information on policies and procedures which will assist you in this process. Some of this information addresses purely technical requirements; e.g. specifications for paper, print, pagination, and margins and other requirements, insuring that certain vital information is presented in an orderly, uniform manner. Included in this category are such items as the title page and abstract, among others. The appendix of this guide provides sample pages to assist you. A number of specifications reflect generally accepted conventions of writing, especially scholarly writing, that have evolved to aid communication between author and reader. As an overall guide, the principles of thesis writing are *clarity*, *correctness*, and *consistency*.

This *Thesis/Dissertation Guide* governs the framework for all theses originating from graduate studies in the Lyle School of Engineering. Because a thesis or dissertation should reflect the standards within each discipline, the format of the text and documentation will be in accordance with professional style manuals selected by the departments. The titles of these style manuals are listed in the section titled PREPARATION OF MANUSCRIPT. Regardless of the manual of style used in the preparation of your thesis, certain specifications must be met and these are detailed in the following pages. Should a conflict arise between the style manual and this *Guide*, and the Lyle Graduate Office will help you find a solution within the framework of the stated requirements.

In writing the thesis, you may call on a number of people for assistance. Your thesis advisor and committee provide guidance throughout the process, particularly in evaluating the content of the thesis and your adherence to the specified style manual. The Lyle Graduate Office is available at most times to aid you in preparing an acceptable final manuscript. The initial thesis check provides the opportunity for a spot check and consultation. You, however, assume ultimate responsibility for the academic integrity of the manuscript, in addition to meeting deadlines for submission and correction. The best advice is to start early with the preparation of the thesis and meet the requirements of this guide.

Chapter 2 STEPS TO COMPLETE IN FINAL SEMESTER

The following is a checklist of required forms, listed by degree. Consult your department for the deadline dates posted for their completion.

Lyle School of Engineering

Contact: Jim Dees, Engineering Graduate Office jdees@smu.edu

Ph.D. or D.E. or M.A./M.S. with Thesis

1. ACG*
2. Degree Plan*
3. Recommendation & Certification of Appointment of Supervisory Committee*
4. Admission to Candidacy
5. Report on Thesis or Dissertation and/or Final Examination*
6. Thesis/Praxis/Dissertation Formatting Release – via email from Lyle Graduate Office*
7. Survey of Earned Doctorates – submitted electronically
8. Graduation Exit Survey – emailed by the SMU Registrar's Office

* Also required for M.A./M.S. with thesis.

Your first step in this process is to file an Application for Candidacy to Graduate (ACG) on your my.SMU.edu student portal. Check with your school for the deadlines for filing, which are scheduled at the beginning of each semester. An ACG completed for the previous semester is NOT valid; you will need to re-file. Diplomas will bear the names exactly as they appear in my.SMU.edu, and they will be sent to the address you designate in my.SMU.edu. Please email Jim Dees, jdees@smu.edu with any questions or issues related to applying for graduation.

A calendar of important dates for Lyle Graduate Students are on the following website:

<https://www.smu.edu/Lyle/Graduate/CurrentStudents/GradEnrollment>

Dissertation and thesis related instructions and deadlines are on the following website:

<https://www.smu.edu/Lyle/Graduate/CurrentStudents/ThesisDissertation>

Required forms (Supervisory Committee, etc.) are available on the Lyle School of Engineering forms website:

<https://www.smu.edu/Lyle/Graduate/CurrentStudents/Forms>

Supervisory Committee, Degree plan, Oral and Written Qualifying Examination and Dissertation/Thesis Defense Report Forms must be filled out and on file with the Lyle Graduate Office.

Chapter 3

PREPARATION OF MANUSCRIPT

Set margins: Left-1.0", Right/Bottom-1.0", Top-2.0" or 1.1"- depending on page

A manuscript generally has three main parts: The preliminaries, the text and the reference material. Place these in the following order:

Preliminary Pages

1. Signature page (do not number but count in pagination)
2. Title page (do not number but count)
3. Copyright page (optional, do not number but count)
4. Acknowledgment page (optional, begin numbering with lower case Roman numerals) **Place here only if you also have a dedication page**
5. Abstract
6. Table of Contents
7. List of Illustrations
8. List of Tables
9. List of Abbreviations
10. Glossary
11. Acknowledgment OR Dedication page
(if only one is used. Dedication page is not numbered)

Text

12. Introduction or Chapter 1
13. Text

References

14. Appendix or Illustrations
15. Bibliography or References

Approved Style Manuals

This guide will dictate the format for all preliminary pages. The text, all materials included in the text, and references should reflect the requirements of the discipline, and documentation should be in accord with professional style manuals. The Lyle Graduate Office does reserve the right to ask for some deviations from the style manuals.

LaTeX is the preferred editor to be used for Dissertations and Theses in the Lyle School of Engineering. There is a LaTeX style file located on the Lyle Dissertation and Thesis formatting website, or you may email Jim Dees, jdees@lyle.smu.edu to see if an updated version is available.

A LaTeX resources can be found at the sources below:

<https://www.latex-tutorial.com/tutorials/>

<https://www.latex-project.org/>

Students who do not utilize LaTeX may use a style guide such as *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8th edition (Chicago, 2013) by Kate L. Turabian or *The Chicago Manual of Style, Sixteenth Edition* (2010).

Please contact Jim Dees in the Lyle Graduate Office if you prefer to use another style guide.

<https://www.smu.edu/Lyle/Graduate/CurrentStudents/ThesisDissertation>

Description of the Preliminary Pages

1. **Signature page—(2" top margin)** This signature page is an approval page that the thesis/dissertation committee members sign after the student passes the oral defense. Prepare the signature page on high quality printer paper. The committee only needs to sign **one** original, which goes to the Graduate Office. Do not number this page. (See sample page)

2. **Title page—(2" top margin)** For this particular page, disregard the format and wording provided in Turabian or any other style manual. Follow the specific form provided in the sample page. Do not number this page. (See sample page)

3. **Copyright page—(2" top margin)** This page is **optional**. If included, do not number. (See sample page) Do not number, but count in pagination.

4. **Acknowledgment page—(2" top margin)** This page is also **optional**, although it is usually included. If you wish to include an acknowledgment ONLY (no dedication page), then place it just before the text. (See listing under MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION.) If you are going to include both a dedication and acknowledgment, then place the acknowledgment here. Number this page with Roman numeral iv if copyright page is included or iii, if no copyright page is included. All Roman numerals are centered **one inch** from the bottom of the page. Be sure that all page numbers are the **same font and size** as your text. (See sample page)

5. **Abstract page—(1.1" top margin)** The thesis or dissertation must contain an abstract. This is a concise summary of the thesis, intended to inform a prospective reader about its content. Usually this includes a brief description of the problem investigated, the procedure or methods, the results and the conclusions.

Headings from the text should be omitted in the abstract. It should not contain parenthetical citations of items listed in the bibliography or reference section. A reasonable length for an abstract is 300-400 words. Like the text, it must be double-spaced. The thesis/dissertation title needs to have the same layout as used on the half page and title page. The page number depends on what has been included to this point. Number with the next consecutive Roman numeral. (See sample page)

6. **Table of Contents—(1.1" top margin)** This is essentially a topic outline of the thesis, compiled by listing the headings in the paper, including as many subheading levels as you choose. Keep in mind that there is no index in a thesis, and thus a fairly detailed Table of Contents can serve as a useful guide for the reader.

Type the heading "TABLE OF CONTENTS" at the top of the page, allowing a 1.1" margin from the top. List the divisions of the thesis that follow this page, beginning with the LIST OF FIGURES or TABLES, if applicable, and continuing through any other items that follow the Table of Contents, the text, and the back matter. Do not list anything that precedes the TABLE OF CONTENTS.

List all chapter headings and other major divisions. Be consistent in listing headings and subheadings; e.g., if you list the second-level subheadings from one chapter, list the second-level subheadings from all chapters. Be sure that the headings listed in the TABLE OF CONTENTS match word-for-word the headings in the text. Capitalization should also follow what is used in the text. Do not, however, underline headings that may be underlined in the text. Also, if you use all capital letters for your table heading, use headline style capitalization in the LIST OF TABLES.

Page numbers and **chapter numbers** need to be **right justified in TOC**. The use of dot leaders to connect each heading with its page number, which is used in Turabian, is **optional**. Whichever you choose, leaders or no leaders, be consistent throughout. **Each level of subheading should be indented 3 character spaces** from the beginning of the previous title. Also indent run-over or wraparound lines 3 character spaces. (See sample page)

7. **Lists of Figures, Illustrations, Tables, Glossary, or other lists—(2" top margin)** Include a list of figures, illustrations, etc., if you have one or more items in these categories. Use a separate page for each list, even if both would fit on the same page. Type the heading--for example, "TABLES" or "LIST OF TABLES"--allowing a 2" margin from the top. All major headings need to be all capitalized.

On these lists, include the number, caption (title), and page number of every figure and table in the body of the thesis. You must also list figures and tables in the appendix if they have individual numbers and captions. List captions exactly as they appear in the text, if they are relatively brief. If they are long, stop at the first period or other logical stopping point.

Double spacing must be used between entries. Single entries that exceed one line are **single**-spaced and the 2nd/3rd lines are indented 3 character spaces. Use dot leaders if used in TABLE OF CONTENTS. **Right justify** all page numbers.

8. **Dedication page—(2" top margin)** This page is **optional**. Place dedication page here, if you choose to use one. (See sample page) Do not number this page. If you have **ONLY** an acknowledgment page and no dedication page, place acknowledgment here and number appropriately with a Roman numeral.

This ends the preliminary pages and the next page will begin the text. Your thesis/dissertation must adhere to the general guidelines listed under "TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS." All other questions regarding the style (footnotes, references, use of equations in text, layout of figures, graphs, illustrations, bibliography, etc.) will be left to the thesis advisor and will be dictated by the style manual for your department and discipline.

General Requirements for the entire thesis/dissertation without exception.

Margins—With the exception of the pages noted previously, all other page margins should be 1” from the edge of the page – top, bottom, left and right.

Font Style/Size-- The thesis/dissertation must be **double-spaced** on only one side of the 8 1/2" by 11" page. Allow 2 character spaces between sentences. It must be typed with the same font and typeface throughout. Exceptions can only be made in the wording *within* the figures and tables when a different computer graphics program or when the figures and tables are enlarged or reduced prints these. *The captions and labels of the figures should be in the same size and font as the text.* Figures and tables not inserted in text must be centered horizontally and vertically on a separate page. Oversized figures and tables should be avoided. If reduction is impossible, try dividing large charts into sections and arrange on continuing pages of standard size. Photographic reproduction is another method of arranging oversized material on regular size paper.

Individual footnotes or endnotes, blocked quotations, bibliographies, and figure legends will be single-spaced, with a double space between entries.

A standard font type and size should be used. Recommended fonts include Arial (10 pt), Courier New (10 pt), Times New Roman (12 pt), and Verdana (10 pt). If you have any questions about a font type or size, email a sample to the Lyle Graduate Office for approval. If you choose to use boldface, use it sparingly so that it is effective and use it in a consistent manner. For example, if you choose to bold chapter titles, they must all be bolded. Do not bold two items in a row.. The same judgments would apply when using *italics*.

Pagination-- Small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.) will be used for the preliminary pages and these will be centered and one inch (1") from the bottom. If you count *but do not number* the signature page and the title page, then the page following the title page will be page iii. This could be the copyright, acknowledgment or abstract page, depending on what you choose to include. Continue numbering with Roman numerals until you reach the text.

For the remainder of the manuscript, including the text, illustrations, appendices, and bibliography, Arabic numerals are used. All page numbers are **footers**, centered at the bottom, allowing a 1" margin.

Paper-- The paper recommended for presentation at your defense if a printed copy is requested is a high quality printer paper.

Photographs: Black and white and color photographs can be impactfully used. You will want to get the best high resolution photographs if you elect to use them in your manuscript.

Chapter 4

APPROVAL AND FINAL SUBMISSION OF THESIS/DISSERTATION

Advisor Review

The first person to evaluate the content and format of your thesis/dissertation is your thesis advisor. At the beginning of the semester of anticipated graduation, you should send your thesis major advisor a draft of the dissertation or thesis. After your advisor reviews the document, follow the deadlines posted on the Lyle Dissertation and Thesis formatting website:

<https://www.smu.edu/Lyle/Graduate/CurrentStudents/ThesisDissertation>

Initial Sample Check

You are encouraged to bring a sample of your thesis/dissertation for an initial check to your school's graduate office. Samples should include such items as the title page, table of contents, one chapter, a sample of figures or illustrations, and one sample reference or bibliography. Identifying problems at this early stage, if any exist, will make the process easier in the latter stages.

First Formal Check

After the thesis advisor has approved your manuscript, bring a copy of the thesis and the signed **Thesis Release Form** to the graduate office of your school. Again, there are stated deadlines for this step and these dates will be posted in your school's graduate office. For all graduate programs in Dedman, the Office of Research and Graduate Studies in 336 Dallas Hall is your graduate office. The copy of the thesis /dissertation that you submit should reflect a finished manuscript. Corrections and additions can still be made but the bulk of the writing of the text should be finished. The thesis at this point should comply with the format specified in this guide and be free of errors in grammar, syntax, headings and spacing. Students who have passed an oral examination before the graduate office's check must submit the half-title page bearing the signatures of the committee members.

Final Check

A final check of the dissertation is made when any requested edits have been entered. Once you receive written release from the Lyle Graduate Office, you may proceed to submit your dissertation or thesis to SMU on the SMU Scholar portal.

Final Submission

Although you prepare your dissertation or thesis using a word processor or other software (LaTeX is recommended), you will submit the final copy to SMU Scholar in a PDF. A deposit agreement signed by student and advisor is accessible on SMU Scholar and it must be submitted as a supplemental document on the SMU Scholar account. Please refer to the Lyle Dissertation and Thesis formatting website for deadlines.

<http://scholar.smu.edu/>

All graduates should receive diplomas in the mail within a month of graduation. If a student files the ACG form late, he/she will receive the diploma late, approximately 6 weeks after graduation. Any questions about diplomas should be addressed to the Registrar's Office at registrar@smu.edu

We hope that this information is helpful and realize that you may still have questions. Feel free to contact your graduate office at any time during the process. And at the successful completion of your degree, we want to add our sincere CONGRATUATIONS.

APPENDIX

(Allow 2" top margin)

THE TITLE IS IN ALL CAPS, NO MORE THAN 48 CHARACTERS SPACES
TO A LINE, CENTERED BETWEEN MARGINS, DOUBLE SPACED
ARRANGED IN AN INVERTED PYRAMID SHAPE

Approved by:

Single space name & title below line

List in order of Advisor, others alpha order
by last name

Allow adequate space for signatures

(Allow 2" top margin)

THE TITLE IS IN ALL CAPS, NO MORE THAN 48 CHARACTERS SPACES
TO A LINE, CENTERED BETWEEN MARGINS, DOUBLE SPACED
ARRANGED IN AN INVERTED PYRAMID SHAPE

(Allow 2 double spaces between)

A Dissertation (or Thesis) Presented to the Graduate Faculty of

(Your School)

Southern Methodist University

in

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (or Master of Arts or Master of Science)

with a

Major in (your department)

by

(Allow 2 double spaces)

Your Name

(B.A., B.S., previous degree(s), institution, each on a separate line, single space this section)

(Allow 2 double spaces)

Official date degree will be conferred

(Allow 2" top margin)

Copyright (year)

Your Name

All Rights Reserved

(If you include this page, do not use page number but it will be counted
as one of the preliminary pages when you do begin numbering)

(Allow 1.1" top margin)

Last name, First name

B.A., or B.S., Institution, year

M.A, or M.S., Institution, year

(1 double space)

Title, Underlined, Left Justified, Headline-Style Capitalization

With the Same Separation (Structure) as on the

Half and Title Pages

Advisor: Professor John Doe

Doctor of Philosophy (Master of Arts, etc) conferred Month, Day, Year (from Official Calendar)

Dissertation (or Thesis) completed Month, Day, Year (real date you finished writing)

(allow 2 double spaces)

Abstract will be a short summary or overview of the thesis. Length can vary; 1-2 pages is a desirable length. Suggest you avoid using direct wording from other parts of the paper

This page is numbered with lower case Roman numerals.

(Allow 1.1" top margin)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(Allow 2 Double Spaces)

LIST OF TABLES (List only what comes after the Table of Contents) p.#

LIST OF FIGURES (Dot leaders are an option)

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION (Center Chapter number under the word "Chapter", Titles are all caps)

II. METHODOLOGY (**Right justify** all numbers)

Subjects (subheadings are indented 3 character spaces in from chapter titles)

Procedure (All entries are double spaced; single entries are single spaced)

Instruments

Analysis

III. RESULTS

Supplemental Analysis

IV. DISCUSSION

APPENDIX (lines up with "Chapter, as it is a separate part of the thesis)

A.

B.

C.

REFERENCES (or BIBLIOGRAPHY)

(Allow 2" top margin)

LIST OF TABLES

(Allow 2 Double Spaces)

Table	Page
1. Demographic Frequencies (dot leaders are an option; if used, use for all tables)	xx
2. Titles that need to be wrapped around (or run-over lines) Need to be indented 3 character spaces from the beginning of The title and single spaced	xx
3. Right justify all numbers, double space between entries.	
4. Second and succeeding pages of table listings will have a 1" top margin.	

(2" top margin)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

(Allow 2 double spaces)

This page is usually included but is not required. If included, it goes here ONLY IF YOU ALSO HAVE A DEDICATION PAGE. If you do not have a dedication page, the acknowledgement page comes directly before the text--as the last preliminary page.

Whether it is the Acknowledgement page or the Abstract page (see next exhibit), this is the first page to be numbered with lower case Roman numerals. Count the half page, title page, and copyright (if included) and this first numbered page will be either iii or iv. Page numbers need to be 1" from bottom, centered under the text.

(Allow 2" top margin)

Chapter 1

(1 double space)

TITLE IN ALL CAPS

(2 double spaces)

(If subheading title, place here and allow 1 double space or)

Begin text immediately after spacing. Double space all text. **Preferences:** 5 character space indents for paragraphs, 2 character spaces between periods and new sentences, no extra spacing between paragraphs. Publishing companies have changed some of these standards. The general guiding principle is consistency and logic.

Begin using Arabic numbers with this page (1" bottom, centered under text.) All succeeding pages will be numbered consecutively to the end of the manuscript.

If integrating figures or tables in text, allow 2 double spaces **before and after** any figure/table. Avoid leaving single lines at bottom or top of pages. Create a page break that leaves the extra space at the bottom of the page, allowing you to move single lines to top of next page. Rule of thumb is to use **bold** as seldom as possible on subheadings, etc.

(Allow 2" top margin)

BIBLIOGRAPHY or REFERENCES

(1 double space)

Follow a style that is consistent with your discipline.
Use either a journal or textbook for the format style.
Check with your advisor on the preferred style.