



Thesis Manual
A Guide for Graduate Students

(updated November 2007)

Graduate School Office
College of Charleston
Charleston, SC 29424

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The Thesis Option

A thesis is a permanent record of information gained through extensive study and research. It is the culmination of the student's efforts, coupled with those of his or her advisor and thesis committee. The thesis reflects upon the credibility of all parties involved: the student, the advisor and committee, the School in which the student is enrolled, and the College of Charleston.

Coursework and Committees

Students enroll in thesis preparation as a formal course or courses during their programs of study. Each master's degree program within the Graduate School of the College of Charleston specifies the coursework, sequence, and requirements for completion of those hours. Individual program guidelines also specify the appointment of the thesis committee and its precise role in guiding the proposal and thesis process. It is the student's responsibility to make certain the committee has been established and all necessary steps completed before beginning the thesis.

Institutional Committees for Human and Animal Research

The Board of Trustees of the College of Charleston and the Office of Research and Grants Administration have established policies, procedures and oversight to ensure the rights and welfare of human subjects and the health and safety of vertebrate animals used in any research undertaking at the College. Some projects may require approval from the Institutional Review Board in the case of research involving human subjects, and others may require approval from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Approvals from these committees must be obtained *in advance* for any research undertaken with human subjects or vertebrate animals. For detailed information on these two policies please visit the website for the Office of Research and Grants Administration at www.orga.cofc.edu.

The Thesis Document

Because a thesis is a public document, archived in the College of Charleston library and available to the public as well as to scholars worldwide, a high degree of consistency is necessary. Regulations common to all programs include margins, fonts, and electronic submission procedures. Documentation, length, and other matters that are discipline-dependent will differ from field to field.

Using the Thesis Manual

The Thesis Manual contains both general regulations pertaining to all programs (e.g., submission deadlines, required forms, and IRB/IACUC requirements) and specific guidelines for individual programs. In cases where no individual guidelines exist, the Thesis Manual's general guidelines will suffice; in cases where the individual guidelines are exceptionally long and detailed, you will be referred to those guidelines for additional information.

Recommended Timeline for Master's Thesis Development

First Year in Program	<p>Begin to investigate thesis topics and identify thesis advisor/director.</p> <p>Refine thesis topic and initiate research plan with the thesis advisor/director. Identify thesis committee members.</p> <p>Formulate a formal thesis proposal. The topic must be approved by the program director and others as appropriate.</p>
Second Year and Beyond	<p>Research and outline chapters. Begin writing. Maintain close collaboration with the thesis advisor.</p> <p>Complete initial draft and after approval from thesis advisor submit draft to the thesis committee.</p> <p>Make changes to the draft as suggested by the committee. Schedule an oral defense of thesis.</p>
Oral Defense	<p>During the last semester of the student's program, the oral defense will be no later than 30 days before the end of classes. In the summer, students must consult with their thesis advisor/director about the schedule for the defense.</p>
Thesis Changes	<p>All changes and refinements to the thesis as indicated by the committee must be completed. A copy of the thesis incorporating the changes must be approved by the thesis advisor/director.</p> <p>The thesis director must approve all revisions to the thesis before it is electronically submitted to the Graduate School Office for binding. The Thesis Release Form must also be completed and signed by the thesis director.</p>
Deadlines for Submission of Thesis	<p>Thesis title page with all original signatures is submitted to the Graduate School Office. The electronic copy of the thesis title page should not have signatures or signature lines on it. A completed "Thesis Release" form must be submitted with the signature page. Submission deadlines are usually early December for the fall and early May for the spring. However, students should consult the academic calendar online (http://www.cofc.edu/gradschool) or in the <i>Graduate Catalog</i> for specific submission dates.</p>

Note: This timetable for initiating and completing a thesis is purposefully broad and is meant as a guide to help students develop their plan of action regarding the thesis process. Plans should be amended given individual program time-to-completion of degree requirements.

Common Regulations Governing Theses in All Programs

Because a master's level thesis is a public document, archived in the College of Charleston library (beginning in 2008 these archives will be electronic) and available to the public as well as to scholars worldwide, a high degree of consistency is necessary. **Regulations common to all programs include margins, fonts, and electronic submission of copies.** *Documentation, length, and other matters that are discipline-dependent will differ from field to field; these are covered in the individual program thesis guides available from graduate program directors.*

MARGINS

With one exception, the entire thesis -- including appendices, works cited, preliminary matter, etc. -- should have a margin of an inch and a half on the left side (for binding) and an inch elsewhere (top, bottom, and right). The single exception is that there should be a two-inch margin for the top of the first page of each new chapter.

The right margin should not be justified.

FONT

Use one of the "Roman" fonts, such as Times New Roman, in either an 11-point or a 12-point size.

Thesis Title Page

Note: A copy of the Thesis Title Page must be turned in by the thesis submission deadline to the Graduate School Office with original signatures. In the electronically submitted copy, the names of the thesis committee members must be present without the signatures, or the signature lines.

Formatting Instructions for the Thesis Title Page

- 1 Margins for the title page are 1.5 inches on the left and 1 inch on the right, top and bottom.
- 2 The font should be a “Roman” font such as Times New Roman, and either an 11-point or a 12-point size – all bold.
- 3 The **THESIS TITLE** should be in all caps and in bold.
- 4 Two spaces down from the title, the phrase “**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree**” should be written in bold upper and lower case.
- 5 Two spaces down from the phrase in #4 above, place the title of the degree (e.g. **MASTER OF SCIENCE**) in all caps, bold.
- 6 Two spaces down from the name of the degree write the word “**in**” in bold.
- 7 Two spaces down from the word “in” write the name of the program (e.g. **MARINE BIOLOGY**) in all caps, bold.
- 8 Two spaces down from the program title write the word “**by**” in bold.
- 9 Two spaces down from the word “by” write the full name of the thesis author, all caps, bold.
- 10 One space down from the author’s name, write the month and year of the submission (e.g., **APRIL 2008**) with the month in all caps, bold.
- 11 Two spaces down from the date write “**at**” in bold.
- 12 Two spaces down from the word “at ” write **THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON**, in all caps, bold. **Note: if the degree was in a joint program the name of the other school must appear below the College’s name in all caps as well. (See sample title page.)**
- 13 The “Approved by” lines should have a line for a signature in which the name each of the thesis committee member and the Dean of the Graduate School entered below the line in 8-point type and signatures above the line.

There should be two lines between the typed name of the committee member and the next signature line. The words “**Approved by**” should be in bold.

An example of a thesis title page follows these instructions on page 9.

Formatting Instructions for the Thesis Abstract

A thesis abstract is a succinct and precise statement of the main focus of the study, the research methods used, the major findings (key results) and conclusions. It can also state the implications of the research to the field of study. It is important that the abstract maintain its focus on the study itself in order to aid future researchers who may review the abstract as a resource for their own study. The abstract should be between 100-300 words and should be well organized so that that it will easily guide a reader in the essentials of the work undertaken. The abstract follows immediately after the title page of the thesis.

- 1 Margins and paper for the abstract page are the same as for all pages of the thesis.
- 2 The font should be a “Roman” font such as Times New Roman, and either an 11-point or a 12-point size for the title and other headers, but can be 10-point for the abstract text if needed.
- 3 The word “**ABSTRACT**” (all caps and bold) should appear two lines down from the margin and centered on the page.
- 4 Two spaces down from the word “Abstract” the Title of the thesis should appear in bold/all caps – single space the title if it is longer than one line. Center the title.
- 5 One space down from the title the phrase “**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree**” should be written in bold upper and lower case and centered.
- 6 Two spaces down from the phrase in #5 above, place the title of the degree (e.g. **MASTER OF SCIENCE**) in all caps, bold, and centered.
- 7 One space down from the name of the degree write the word “**in**” in bold and centered.
- 8 One space down from the word “in” write the name of the program (e.g. **MARINE BIOLOGY**) in all caps, bold, and centered.
- 9 One space down from the program title write the word “**by**” in bold and centered.
- 10 One space down from the word “by” write the full name of the thesis author, all caps, bold and centered.
- 11 One space down from the author’s name, write the month and year of the submission (e.g., **APRIL 2008**) with the month in all caps, bold and centered.
- 12 One space down from the date write “**at**” in bold and centered.
- 13 Two spaces down from the word “at” write **THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON**, in all caps, bold. **Note: if the degree was in a joint program the name of the other school must appear below the College’s name in all caps as well. (See sample title page.)**
- 14 Begin the abstract itself two spaces down from the school name. There should be 1.5 spaces between text lines, and be contained on one page; as previously stated between 100-300 words, and be a 10-point Roman font if needed. Otherwise use 11-point or 12-point Roman font.

An example follows these instructions on page 10.

SAMPLE THESIS TITLE PAGE

(note: all College of Charleston graduate students must use this format)

AN ANALYSIS OF LOGGERHEAD SEA TURTLES

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

MARINE BIOLOGY

by

AARON SMITH

AUGUST 2008

at

THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON AND

THE CITADEL *(or other institution of degree program if it is a joint program)*

Approved by:

Dr. Susan Twillinger, Thesis Advisor

Dr. Lindeke Mills

Dr. Craig Plante

Dr. David Owens

Dr. Amy T. McCandless, Dean of the Graduate School

**SAMPLE THESIS TITLE PAGE FOR ELECTRONIC
SUBMISSION COPY**

(note: all College of Charleston graduate students must use this format)

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Dr. Lindeke Mills

Dr. Craig Plante

Dr. David Owens

Dr. Amy T. McCandless, Dean of the Graduate School

SAMPLE ABSTRACT PAGE

(This format must be used by students in all graduate programs)

ABSTRACT

THESIS TITLE (single space if more than one line)

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF

in

DEGREE PROGRAM

By

STUDENT NAME

DATE

At

**THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON
AND THE CITADEL (or name of the other school if it is a joint program)**

The Preservation Services division of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, charged with preserving the historic resources of Illinois, can more effectively and efficiently make day-to-day decisions regarding historic properties by using a Geographic Information System (GIS). A prototype GIS, named NRGIS, was developed to demonstrate how staff can access data, photographs, and National Register applications in PDF. The NRGIS prototype, created in ArcView, gave staff an opportunity to explore basic GIS functionality; additional functionality specific to Preservation Services needs was added over the course of this project to make tasks in the application easier and make staff more productive. The data for NRGIS came primarily from the online National Park Service database of National Register properties. Other State Historic Preservation Offices could utilize this prototype as a model to quickly and inexpensively create a GIS for National Register properties in their state.

(Note: This example is taken from a thesis abstract by Martha L. Benner published online by the University of Illinois-Springfield.)

Submitting Your Thesis Online

Please see <http://dissertations.umi.com/cofc/> to begin the online submission process.

Proquest has created a step by step process for submitting your thesis online. This website is your starting platform.

There is also an extremely useful FAQ link to guide you through the submission process. Please see this FAQ section before contacting the Graduate School at gradstud@cofc.edu for general questions. The FAQ section can be found at <http://dissertations.umi.com/cofc/faq.html>.

If at any time you encounter problems of a more technical nature, contact information for customer service is available on the online submission webpage.

Converting Your Thesis Document to PDF

In order to submit your thesis online, you will have to convert your thesis file to PDF. Do not worry if you do not have Adobe, or are not sure of how to do it. On the online submission webpage, there is a ***Word-to-PDF converter*** available to you. It is extremely easy to use, and Proquest will email you once your conversion is complete. Follow the link in the email, and save a copy to your computer/file storage, so that you can continue with the submission process. ***You cannot continue with the submission process until you have a PDF document version of your thesis.***

A Brief Explanation of Different Publishing Options for Online Submission

When you submit your thesis online, you will be asked to choose a publishing option. This determines whether or not people searching for your thesis outside of the College of Charleston community will have to pay to view and order a copy of your thesis, as well as when your thesis will be available to be searched for online. You can request that Proquest “embargo” your thesis, meaning that they will wait a certain length of time before posting your thesis online. This *may* be a recommended course of action for students in the process of submitting their thesis for publication in a professional publication.

If you want your entire thesis to be viewable and obtainable for free, you will want to choose the *Open Access* option when submitting your thesis.

If you want to receive copy sales and royalty payments (i.e., have people pay to view and obtain your thesis), you will want to choose the *Traditional Publishing* option. Searchers will only be able to view your abstract for free.

Both options allow the author to defer publication for a certain length of time. The amount of time can be changed after submission if necessary by contacting Proquest.

When submitting your thesis, you will also have the option of having your thesis copyrighted.

For both publishing and copyright advice, speak to your program director or thesis advisor regarding the nature of your work and future plans for publishing.

Abstract

The purpose of abstract section of the online thesis submission is slightly different than the purpose of the abstract in your actual thesis document. This abstract is what will be displayed as the abstract to your thesis to parties searching online for your thesis. ***You do not need to format your abstract in the same way for the online submission as you did for your thesis document.*** Simply use the paragraph from the abstract for your thesis document. ***Note: It is not recommended that you use cut and paste,*** due to the fact that the online abstract submission area uses html code for formatting, and this could conflict with how your abstract is formatted for your thesis document. For help on how to add html tags to your abstract for text formatting such as bold, italic, etc, please see <http://dissertations.umi.com/faq.html#faq-18> .

Supplemental File Submission

In the event that you have extremely large image, music, data files, etc. as part of your thesis, you may need to submit them separately from your thesis. If your converted PDF is too large, try submitting your large image files this way. The best format to use is JPG or TIFF.

Advisor and other Committee Members

Be sure to begin your list of Committee members with your primary thesis advisor. All of the names on your thesis title page should be present in this list of committee members. Do not forget to include the Dean of the Graduate School as a committee member.

Subject Categories and Keywords

When you are submitting your thesis, you will be asked to choose a subject category for your thesis. The keywords and categories are what help determine how and when your thesis will show up on online searches. Do not be alarmed if your actual program's name is not available as a subject selection. Simply choose the one that most closely resembles it. Use the sub-category and keyword options to help narrow down and clarify exactly what your thesis is about.

Fees

Each student will have to pay a \$45 submission fee to submit their thesis online (note: this will increase to \$55 beginning in January 2008 semester).

Choosing the Open Access publishing option will add \$95 to your total.

Choosing the Copyright option will add \$65 to your total.

When you complete the online submission, you will have the option of ordering copies of your thesis. The prices for each type of binding option will be displayed on Proquest's submission website.

Using Copyrighted Material in your Thesis

Proquest supplies a guide in their FAQ regarding copyright infringement information, and a sample letter to request the use of copyrighted material in your thesis.

Thesis Title Page

Note: A copy of the Thesis Title Page must be turned in by the thesis submission deadline to the Graduate School Office with original signatures. In the electronically submitted copy, the names of the thesis committee members must be present without the signatures or the signature lines.

Program Submission Requirements

Each program has its own guidelines regarding what publishing options you should choose when submitting your thesis online. Additionally, each program also may require you to order a copy of your thesis for your program or committee.

PROGRAM	PUBLISHING OPTION REQUIREMENTS	REQUIRED NUMBER OF COPIES TO ORDER
Education	optional	optional
English	optional	optional
Mathematics	optional	optional
Marine Biology	optional	2
Environmental Studies	optional	1
History	optional	optional
Communications	optional	optional
Other Programs	See Program Director	See Program Director

COLLEGE of
CHARLESTON

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

THESIS RELEASE

Student Name _____

SSN _____

Program (degree and major) _____

THESIS DEFENSE

Thesis successfully defended on _____

Date Thesis released to student to make changes _____

Thesis Director _____

REQUIRED CHANGES TO THESIS COMPLETED

REQUIRED CHANGES TO THESIS COMPLETED

Changes to thesis have been successfully completed and accepted by the thesis committee.

Date _____

Signature of Thesis Director _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____