



Organization, Formatting, and PDF Guidelines for Theses, Dissertations, and Doctoral/Lecture Essays

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines describe the Graduate School's general organization and formatting requirements and provide detailed editorial advice that will be useful as you prepare the final draft of your dissertation, doctoral/lecture essay, or Master's thesis. Adherence to the Graduate School's guidelines is expected of all graduate students in addition to compliance with the requirements of advisor and committee in the preparation of the final draft.

Although the final ETD is electronic, all UM theses and dissertations must be formatted to standards that make the manuscript suitable for hard copy binding.

Make sure you have the most current ETD formatting guidelines before you begin work on your final thesis or dissertation. The revision date can be found in the bottom right corner on the first page of this document.

MANUSCRIPT ORGANIZATION

The Dissertation/Thesis Is Not a Collection of Articles

The Graduate School requires the dissertation or thesis to be conceived as a single, unified, and complete work of scholarship that is organized in book-like, monograph form.

Often, one or more chapters in a thesis, dissertation, or doctoral essay may have been previously published or will be published as a journal article. As separately conceived articles, each of those chapters may include an "Introduction," "Abstract," "References," or appendices section. In the thesis, dissertation, or doctoral essay, however, the Graduate School requests that the subheads "Introduction" or "Abstract" that were part of what was a journal article be removed or reworded to something other than "Introduction" or "Abstract" to ensure the unity of the dissertation or thesis. In short, **there should be only ONE Abstract, ONE Introduction, ONE Reference, and ONE appendices section in the manuscript.** The sole Abstract should be placed in the front matter, the Introduction is typically Chapter 1, and the sole References or appendices section are placed at the end of the manuscript.

The Graduate School also allows an alternative to the above, i.e., the three-study thesis or dissertation, that preserves the published version of each article or study as a separate chapter in the dissertation. In a dissertation organized like this, an overall introductory chapter that ties the separate works together and overall conclusion is added by the student in the final document. There must be coherence between the separate works that make up the final dissertation and the rationale for grouping the three works together must be clear. Also, there should be only one References or Appendices section at the end of the document, not a section for these at the end of each chapter.

STYLISTIC CONSISTENCY

Stylistic consistency and precision of presentation are essential features of a scholarly work. If the confidence of the reader is lost due to inaccuracies in the author's presentation, the entirety of the author's work is devalued.

The graduate document must conform to the practices of standard written English without exception, and both the student and the graduate committee must make every effort to prevent inaccuracy and error in the copy to be submitted. If you have doubts about English grammar or spelling, consult your committee or fellow students for assistance. Graduate documents that do not conform to the practices of standard written English, especially in terms of grammar and spelling, will be returned to the author for revision.

FINAL PDF

The final Master's thesis/dissertation/doctoral or lecture recital essay you upload in the [Scholarship@Miami ETD repository](#) must be one PDF of the entire document. Adobe Acrobat Pro can be used to produce the final PDF, and is available via Adobe Creative Cloud, which includes Adobe Acrobat Pro. The software can be downloaded free of charge by UM students from this [link](#).

UM RESOURCES

WRITING HELP

[The Writing Center at the University of Miami](#), located in the Richter Library Learning Commons, first floor, left side, (305) 284-2956, e-mail writingcenter@miami.edu has tutors available to help students with their writing project. To schedule a consultation, please visit the [Writing Center Web site](#)..

FORMATTING HELP

The **ETD Formatting Support Team** can assist with formatting the final document. The team helps with the technical aspects of **Microsoft Word formatting**, offering guidance and troubleshooting support for common and complex formatting issues such as:

- Pagination and layout inconsistencies (page breaks, margins, etc.)
- Table of Contents formatting errors
- Setting up headings and applying consistent styles
- Converting a Word document into a properly formatted PDF

To schedule an appointment, please use the following form: [Electronic Thesis & Dissertation Formatting Assistance](#). You can also contact the ETD Support Services via email at dfs@miami.edu. Someone will respond to your message within 24-48 hours.

Also, the [ETD Formatting Support Team](#) recently hosted an “[ETD Formatting Made Easy Workshop](#)” and posted the video of the workshop online.

In the video, the Team describes solutions to a variety of ETD formatting issues that students encounter when preparing the ETD. There is a video transcript to the right of the video that allows you to see where in the video the Team discuss specific ETD formatting-related topics. The table below pinpoints the time stamps in the video transcript to the right of the video that will provide you with the Team's helpful tips about handling commonly encountered ETD formatting-related topics like

<u>Time Stamp</u>	<u>Topic</u>
5:04	Starting Each Chapter on a New Page
5:34	Updating Headings
7:47	Headings and Styles
9:40	Using the Navigation Pane
10:44	Section and Page Breaks
13:41	Table of Contents
15:49	List of Figures and List of Tables
17:45	Managing Page Number Styles

Microsoft Word, Adobe Acrobat Pro, LaTeX

Microsoft Word: Microsoft Word is available to UM students by downloading Microsoft 365 from the link, <https://www.it.miami.edu/a-z-listing/microsoft-office-365/index.html>.

Adobe Acrobat Professional: Adobe Creative Cloud, which includes Adobe Acrobat Pro, can be downloaded free of charge by UM students from the link <https://www.it.miami.edu/services-and-products/it-software/index.html>.

LaTeX: Students working in LaTeX can get access to a template created by UM students specifically formatted for a UM dissertation or thesis by e-mailing the Sr. Editor, grad.dissertation@miami.edu.

FORMATTING YOUR MANUSCRIPT

Margins, Spacing, and Font Size

Margins:

Margins should be set as follows: 1.5 inches on the left side, 1 inch at the top, bottom, and right side. Your final document is required to be formatted so it can be printed as book that is printed on one side of the paper. The bookbinder will likely trim the edges of the pages in the binding process, so **there is no flexibility in the size of the margins for any page of your paper.** You may fully justify or use ragged right, whichever looks most pleasing to your eye and causes the least difficulty with respect to the formatting requirements laid out here.

Spacing:

Text must be double spaced. Single-spacing of the text is not allowed, except for footnotes, indented block quotations, figure/table legends, and citations in the References section. These items must be single-spaced.

Spacing between sections, above and below block quotations, etc. should be maintained consistently throughout the text. Pages with large, empty gaps in the text that exceed more than half a page should be avoided. Normally, paragraphs within a given section of the text follow consecutively one after another with no breaks or extra spaces. Paragraphs should be indented to indicate their beginning unless the paragraphs are meant to be different subsections. The use of spacing between ordinary paragraphs, while acceptable for a document written in pamphlet format (e.g., these guidelines) is not acceptable for theses, dissertations, or doctoral essays.

Font Size and Style:

Authors must use **12-point font exclusively, for all textual materials, including appendices** (see exception for tables and figures below). **Acceptable fonts include Arial, Times New Roman, and Courier New.**

Make sure the font style and size used in the unnumbered and numbered front matter is the same as the font used in the main body.

Page Numbering

Your manuscript will be comprised of the following sections in the order listed below with different styles of page numbers in each section:

1. **UNNUMBERED (NO PAGE NUMBER) FRONT MATTER at the Beginning of the Manuscript: These pages (a-e) do not display a page number and are placed at the beginning of the ETD in the following order:**
 - (a) Blank page or front flyleaf (optional).
 - (b) Title page
 - (c) Copyright page – Master's and Ph.D. students must include
 - (d) Signature page
 - (e) Abstract

To help you format these pages, the Graduate School created unnumbered front matter templates by degree that can be downloaded from the ETD Web site.

2. **LOWER-CASE ROMAN NUMERAL PAGE NUMBER FRONT MATTER:** These pages display lower-case Roman numeral page numbers that are placed at the bottom of the page, centered, on all pages in the section.

The pages (f-l) should each begin on a new page and are numbered with lower-case Roman numerals, beginning with “iii” on the first page in the section. If an optional page (f-h) is included, the page number on the first page in the section should be page number “iii”. The page numbers in this section are always placed at the bottom of the page, centered. This style of page number is carried through to the last page in the section, i.e., the page before the first page of Chapter 1.

- (f) Dedication page (optional)
- (g) Acknowledgment page (optional)
- (h) Preface (optional)
- (i) Table of Contents
- (j) List of Figures
- (k) List of Tables
- (l) List of Abbreviations/Examples/ (optional)

3. **MAIN TEXT:** These pages display Arabic numeral page numbers, i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, ...

The first page of Chapter 1 in the main text should begin with page number “1”. **Beginning in Fall 2026 semester, the placement of page numbers in this section changed. All the page numbers in the main text are placed at the bottom of the page, centered.**

- (m) Each individual chapter. See note ** below.
- (n) References section
- (o) Appendices, Tables or Figures section, if included.

**** Note the following when preparing each chapter in the main text:**

- The first page of a new chapter **MUST** begin on a new page.
- Clearly identify the beginning of each new chapter by adding the word “Chapter” at the beginning of each chapter title so the title is displayed as “Chapter 1,” “Chapter 2,” and so forth.

4. **END OF MANUSCRIPT: Unnumbered Pages**

- VITA (optional—no page number on this page). The VITA page is not included in the total page number count of the ETD.
- Blank flyleaf (optional—no page number on this page).

Title, Signature, Copyright, and Abstract Pages
--

Please use the unnumbered templates provided by the Graduate School on the [ETD Web site](#) to format the unnumbered front matter pages. **The Title, Signature, Copyright, and Abstract templates should look the same in all ETDs so please reproduce the wording and spacing exactly as they appear in the template. Maintain the letter case that appears in the template and do not add to or subtract anything from the existing template.** Please note that the sample templates are formatted in Times New Roman 12-pt.; if you used Arial or Courier New in the rest of the document, you should change the font style in the unnumbered front matter to match what you used in the rest of the document.

Dates for Title, Abstract, and VITA pages

The date of graduation that appears on the Title and Abstract pages should follow this format:

- Fall’s date is **December 2026**

- Spring's date is **May 2027**
- Summer's date is **July 2027**

Note: There is NO comma between the month and year.

The date in your document is the one on which the degree is to be awarded—do not list the date of your defense in your document. If you do not complete your ETD submission to the Graduate School in time for graduation in a certain semester, you must then fill out a new application for graduation in a later semester and change the graduation date on the Title and Abstract pages of your document to the new date.

Copyright Page

Master's and Ph.D. students must include the copyright page in their manuscript. It is placed after the Title page.

Signature Page

- Format the Signature Page exactly like the template. DO NOT add to or embellish it in any way.
- It is recommended that you check with each committee member to make sure you have included his or her correct title on the Signature page.
- The Signature Page in the final electronic version (PDF) of your manuscript should be displayed WITHOUT the committee members' actual signatures.
- If you would like a signed hard copy of the Signature page for your personal use, please obtain signatures from your committee members then drop off the form at the Graduate School. The Sr. Editor will obtain the Dean of the Graduate School's signature on the form then return it to you in the self-addressed stamped envelope you provide or for you to pick it up at the Graduate School.

Table of Contents and List of Figures/Tables

Line Entries in the Table of Contents, List of Figures, and List of Tables

The Table of Contents typically includes entries for chapters and subchapters, references, figure or table sections if they are not embedded in the manuscript, appendices, etc. The Table of Contents can be formatted using the template with or without subchapters posted on the [ETD Web site](#).

A List of Figures and/or List of Tables follows the Table of Contents. The List of Figures and List of Tables should start on a new page and can be formatted using the Table of Contents template.

Anything that **precedes** the Table of Contents page(s), e.g., the "Abstract," "Dedication," "Acknowledgments," "Preface," or "Table of Contents," should NOT be included in the Table of Contents as line entries. However, items that come after the Table of Contents, e.g., the "List of Figures," "List of Tables," "List of Abbreviations," "List of Examples," "Terminology," "Glossary," etc., should be included as line entries in the Table of Contents.

Page numbers should be included with each individual entry in the Table of Contents, List of Figures, or List of Tables. The page number should be listed at the end of the line entry on the right and vertically aligned so the numbers are not ragged on the right side.

References Section and Appendices sections should have an individual entry in the Table of Contents. However, the References and appendices sections are not chapters and should not have the word "Chapter" in the title or be assigned a chapter number in the Table of Contents or in the main text.

Chapters in the Main Text

Each new chapter in the main text should begin on a new page.

Clearly identify each new chapter in the main text by including the word “Chapter” and appropriate number in the chapter title that is displayed at the top of the page.

Two-Line Rule: There must be at least two complete lines of text at the **BOTTOM** of each page. If there is only one line of text at the bottom of a page because it is the first line of a new paragraph or subhead, correct this by moving the line to the top of the next page.

Likewise, there must be at least two complete lines of text at the TOP of each page. If there is only one line of text at the top of a page because it is the last line in a paragraph, correct this by moving one line of text from the previous page over to the top of the page so there are two lines of text at the top of the page.

Tables, Figures, Examples and Other Graphics

Be sure all information in tables, figures, and examples falls within the margin requirements. This includes all data, grid lines, IRB stamps, musical notation, etc. The font size for the text in tables, figures, and examples and accompanying ledgers/captions is flexible, i.e., can be smaller than 12-point, if needed, however, consistent application of conventions is required throughout the entire document.

If you place a landscape figure, example, or table in your manuscript, be sure that all the margins and page numbers are correctly adjusted when the page is viewed in portrait style. Visualize how the document will look when it is bound. The landscape graphic must have page numbers placed and margins set in the same position as they are on portrait-style pages in the document.

Figure, table, or example legends or captions should be placed on the same page as the figure/table/example whenever space allows. Only if the figure is too large to allow its page to accommodate any added legend/caption should the student produce the legend on the **previous** page.

Follow your style guide’s guidelines for placement of figure/table captions/ledgers, i.e., above or below the figure or table, and consistently apply the convention to all the figures and tables in the document.

References and Footnotes

Citations

You should use the citation style your committee recommends in the dissertation or thesis and apply it uniformly throughout the document. The Sr. Editor will check to see that conventions are consistently applied in the document. Consult your style guide or discuss with your advisor or other committee members questions you may have about the style you have used in your dissertation or thesis.

Once you have selected a style, follow it carefully and consistently with attention to detail. All manuals clearly define the use, placement, punctuation, and numbering of footnotes as well as the correct format for the reference section of your dissertation. **Pay particular attention to punctuation, abbreviations, capitalization, and font style. A sloppy reference section is a red flag for a problematic submission.**

Single space each citation and leave one line of space between each citation even if the style guide you are using requires otherwise. This is a Graduate School formatting requirement that supersedes your chosen style guide.

Do not cite to Wikipedia in the reference section of your thesis or dissertation. Wikipedia is regarded as an unreliable source for citation in a serious, scholarly work. Please find the same information in a printed source, e.g., a book or journal, or a more stable Web site and cite to that instead. Printed sources are preferred.

Likewise, citations to sites such as YouTube may pose problems with copyright issues and, like other Internet materials, may only be available for a limited period of time so citation to such sources **should be avoided**.

Footnotes

- Footnotes should be set in 10-pt. font.
- **Footnotes should start with footnote 1 in Chapter 1 and be consecutively numbered throughout the entire manuscript. DO NOT** begin again with footnote number 1 in chapters that come after Chapter 1. If, for example, the last footnote in Chapter 1 is footnote 10, then the first footnote in Chapter 2 should be footnote 11. This is a Graduate School formatting requirement that supersedes your chosen style guide.
- Superscripted footnote numbers in the text are placed outside of commas, periods, or other punctuation.

Web Addresses

Change any Web addresses that appear in the text, footnotes, or reference section in blue font to black font, i.e., remove the hyperlink.

Titles or Subheads that Exceed One Line

Single space all titles and subheads that exceed one line.

Punctuation Placement: Quotation Marks and Footnotes

Place punctuation such as commas and periods inside the closing double or single quotation mark per U.S. usage. Footnote numbers in the text are placed after commas and periods.

Block Quotes

Remember that when you have long quotations (typically of three lines or more) the text is indented five spaces on the right and left and single-spaced. Do not use quotation marks around indented block quotes; do not double-space them. **Spacing above and below block quotations, etc. should be maintained consistently throughout the text.**

Display Quotes

Display quotes used at the beginning of a chapter should be set in italicized 10-pt. font, inset five spaces on the right and left, and single-spaced. Do not use double quotation marks around the quotation.

Foreign Words and British Spellings

Foreign words should be italicized, but ordinary technical Latin phrases are not italicized.

British spellings should be Americanized unless content dictates otherwise.

Your text must maintain proper punctuation of common academic Latin abbreviations: et al. ; e.g. ; i.e.

Dates

Dates should be cited in U.S. style, e.g., January 1, 2026 , **NOT** 1 January 2026.

Ampersands

The ampersand (&) is an often over-used abbreviation for the word *and*. Its use should be limited to a few situations.

We use an ampersand:

- in certain company names; e.g., *Smith & Jones Consulting*;
- if space is very limited; e.g., in a table with a lot of text;
- when artistic considerations dictate; e.g., a logo; and
- in some academic references; e.g., (*Grant & Smith, 1998*).

Do not use an ampersand in general writing simply to abbreviate the word *and*. For example, we write:

We need to reorder toner cartridges and paper
not:

We need to reorder toner cartridges & paper.

Ampersands are generally not used in formal academic writing.

VITA Page (optional)

The VITA page is optional, not required. This page does not call for your C.V./resume. Please use the template example provided on the ETD Web site at **grad.miami.edu**. The VITA page should not have a page number displayed on it and it is not counted in the total page count listed in the Abstract. The VITA page is placed at the very end of the manuscript.

GENERAL CONTACT INFO: University of Miami, Graduate School, 1252 Memorial Dr., 235 Ashe Administrative Bldg., Coral Gables, Florida 33146. E-Mail: grad.dissertation@miami.edu

Phone: (305) 284-4154
Web site: grad.miami.edu