

Organization and Formatting of the Final Electronic Thesis, Dissertation, or Doctoral/Lecture Recital Essay

These University of Miami Graduate School guidelines explain how the final electronic Master's thesis, dissertation, or doctoral or lecture recital essay (ETD) should be organized and formatted. The final ETD must be a unified, formal academic manuscript, organized in book-like form, that meets both electronic and hard-copy binding standards.

Manuscript Organization and Scholarly Consistency

Unified Manuscript Structure

A thesis, dissertation, or doctoral/lecture recital essay should generally be conceived as a single, complete work rather than a collection of journal articles. Although individual chapters may have been published or prepared for previous publication, the manuscript should contain only:

- **One Abstract**, placed in the front matter
- **One Introduction**, typically Chapter 1
- **One References section** at the end of the document, not at the end of each chapter
- **One Appendices section**, also placed at the end of the document, if included.

Article-derived chapter headings such as “Introduction” or “Abstract” should be removed or renamed to preserve the unity of the document.

The Graduate School also permits ETDs organized in a three-study format in which published studies remain as separate chapters. This structure must include an overall introduction chapter connecting the studies, an overall Conclusion chapter that provides a clear rationale for grouping the studies together, and coherence among the individual works provided by information added at the beginning and end of each chapter. In this format, References or Appendices should appear only once at the end of the document rather than at the end of each chapter.

Consult with your main advisor and other committee members about the appropriate organization of your final ETD.

Editorial Standards and Importance of Consistency

The document must follow standard written English, with careful attention to grammar, spelling, accuracy, and precision. Errors or sloppy presentation will reduce the reader's confidence in the scholarship presented.

Required ETD Formatting Specifics

Margins, Line Spacing, and Fonts

The manuscript must use the following general settings:

- **Left margin:** 1.5 inches.
- **Top, bottom, and right margins:** 1 inch.
- **Main text line spacing:** Double-spaced.
- **Footnotes, block quotations, figure and table legends, and References individual citations line spacing:** Single-spaced.
- **Font:** 12-point throughout textual materials, including appendices.
- Acceptable fonts include **Arial, Times New Roman, and Courier New.**

Maintain Stylistic Consistency Throughout the Document

- The selected font and size should remain consistent between the front matter, main text, and References/Appendices sections. Tables and figures may use smaller text when necessary, but the application should be consistent.
- Ordinary paragraphs should follow consecutively without extra blank lines, and paragraphs should normally be indented. Large empty spaces exceeding half a page should be avoided.

Page Numbering, Manuscript Order, Required Details within Each Section

The manuscript uses different page-numbering systems in three distinct sections.

I. UNNUMBERED FRONT MATTER – NO PAGE NUMBERS

The unnumbered front matter is the first section of the ETD. No page number appears on the pages in this section. The section is placed at the beginning of the document and consists of the following items in the following order:

1. Title page
2. Copyright page
3. Signature page
4. Abstract.

Students should download the [Graduate School's prepared templates for the unnumbered front matter](#) and reproduce the wording, capitalization, and spacing exactly in their ETD. However, the prepared template is set in Times New Roman 12-pt. font so if you used a different font style in your ETD you should change the font style and size for these pages in your document so the unnumbered front matter in your document is the same font style and size you applied in the rest of the manuscript.

Title and Abstract Pages

The **Title and Abstract pages** must note the date the degree is awarded, not the date of defense. The date that appears in your ETD should not include a comma:

- Fall: December 2026
- Spring: May 2027
- Summer: July 2027

Copyright Page

The **Copyright page** appears after the Title page.

Signature Page

The **Signature page** follows the Copyright page and should include the following:

- The individuals named on this page must also display their full academic title.
- The Signature page in your ETD must be included in the final PDF of your ETD, **but without the actual ink signature of any individual named on this page**. For legal reasons, ink signatures are not displayed on this page.

Abstract Page

The **Abstract page** heading in the prepared Graduate School template must appear at the top of this page. Suggested length of the Abstract is one page.

II. FRONT MATTER – LOWER-CASE ROMAN NUMERAL PAGE NUMBER SECTION (iii, iv, v, ...)

The lower-case Roman Numeral front matter section appears next. This section displays **lower-case Roman numeral page numbers** that are centered at the bottom of each page. Numbering begins with “iii” on the first page of this section. This section includes the following items:

- Optional Dedication
- Optional Acknowledgments
- Optional Preface
- Table of Contents
- List of Figures/Tables/Abbreviations/Examples/Equations/Schema/etc.

Page Numbering

The first page in the lower-case Roman numeral section should begin with page number “iii”. If one or more of the optional pages are included, the page number on the first page in the section should be page number “iii”. If no optional pages are included, then the first page of the Table of Contents should begin with page number “iii”. This style of page number is applied up through the last page in this section.

Table of Contents

The **Table of Contents** lists chapters, subheads, and sections like the References, Appendices (or Table or Figure sections if tables and figures are not embedded in the main text).

- Items appearing before the Table of Contents—such as the Abstract, Dedication, Acknowledgments, Preface, and the Table of Contents itself—should not appear as entries in the Table of Contents.
- Items appearing after the Table of Contents such as the Lists of Figures/Tables/Abbreviations/Examples/etc., should have separate entries included in the Table of Contents.
- Each Table of Contents entry item must include the page number in the main text on which the item appears.
- The List of Figures/Tables/etc. and References/Bibliography/Appendices section should have individual Table of Contents entries that include the page number in the main text on which the section begins.

List of Figures/Tables/etc.

The **List of Figures, List of Tables, or other included lists** must each begin on a new page in this front matter section. Like the Table of Contents, each entry in these lists must include the page number in the main text on which the item appears.

III. MAIN TEXT: CHAPTERS, REFERENCES/APPENDICES SECTIONS – ARABIC NUMERALS (1, 2, 3, 4, ...)

The main text should display Arabic numeral page numbers beginning with page number “1” on the first page of Chapter 1 that continue from there in proper numeric order through the last page of the document. **Beginning in Fall 2026, all the page numbers in the main text are consistently placed at the bottom of the page, centered.**

Individual Chapters:

- Each new chapter must begin on a new page and must be clearly identified with the word “Chapter” and its number, such as “Chapter 1” or “Chapter 2”, in the chapter title that appears at the top of the first page of each new chapter.
- The **Two-Line Rule requires at least two complete lines of text at both the bottom and top of each page**. Orphaned lines created by a new paragraph, subhead, or the end of a paragraph should be moved to maintain this requirement.

Tables and Figures:

- All content in tables, figures, and examples must fit within the required margin settings. Text in these elements and their captions may be smaller than 12-point when needed.
- Landscape pages must be designed so that their margins and page numbers appear correctly when viewed in portrait orientation and when the manuscript is bound. Captions or legends should normally remain on the same page as the associated figure, table, or example. Caption placement—above or below the item—should consistently follow the chosen style guide’s rules.

References/Bibliography Section Citations:

- Students should apply the citations/reference style dictated by the rules of the style guide your committee recommended. The rules should be applied to all citations consistently including punctuation, abbreviations, capitalization, numbering, and

font conventions. **However, the line spacing rules of your style guide will be superseded by the Graduate School's requirement that citations in the section be single-spaced with one line of space between each citation.**

- Do not cite to Wikipedia, YouTube, or other unstable or potentially problematic Internet sources. It is recommended that you instead provide source information in the citation that cites to printed or other stable sources.

Footnotes, Block/Display Quotations, Web Addresses:

- **Footnotes** must be in **10-pt. font** and must be numbered consecutively throughout the manuscript, beginning with footnote 1 in Chapter 1 rather than restarting in later chapters. Superscripted footnote numbers are placed outside commas, periods, and other punctuation.
- **Block quotations** should be indented five spaces on both sides, single-spaced, and presented without quotation marks.
- **Display quotations** at the beginning of a chapter should be italicized, set in 10-point font, indented five spaces on both sides, single-spaced, and presented without double quotation marks.
- **Web addresses** appearing in the manuscript, footnotes, or References should be changed from blue, active hyperlinks to black text without hyperlinks.

Language and Punctuation:

- **Foreign words** should be italicized, except for ordinary technical Latin phrases.
- British spellings should generally be converted to American spellings unless the subject requires otherwise.
- **Academic abbreviations** such as *et al.*, *e.g.*, and *i.e.* must be punctuated correctly.
- **Dates** should use U.S. style, such as **January 1, 2026**, rather than **1 January 2026**.
- **Commas and periods** should appear inside closing quotation marks under U.S. usage.
- The **ampersand** should be used sparingly—for example, in company names, space-limited tables, logos, or some academic references. It should not replace the word “and” in ordinary formal academic prose.

Optional VITA Page:

- The optional **VITA page** is a brief, biographical sketch of the author, not a curriculum vitae or résumé. No page number should be displayed on this page and the VITA is

not included in the total page count reported in the Abstract. The Graduate School provides a [sample VITA template](#) for you to use.

Final PDF and University Support

The final submitted ETD must be **one PDF containing the entire thesis, dissertation, or doctoral/lecture recital essay**. For preservation reasons, the final PDF must have embedded and subset fonts in the file. Adobe Acrobat Pro is the tool for producing the final PDF and is available to UM students through Adobe Creative Cloud.

The University provides the following writing and formatting assistance to help you prepare your final ETD:

- The [Writing Center](#) offers consultations for writing projects.
- The [ETD Formatting Support Team](#) assists with pagination, page breaks, margins, headings, styles, tables of contents, and Word-to-PDF conversion. Appointments can be scheduled through the Electronic Thesis & Dissertation Formatting Assistance form, and ETD Support Services can be contacted at dfs@miami.edu, with responses expected within **24–48 hours**.
- UM students can download Adobe Acrobat Pro to create the final PDF.
- Students who wish to work in **LaTeX** can request access to a UM ETD-specific LaTeX template that was created by previous graduate students from the Sr. Editor, grad.dissertation@miami.edu.

If you have questions about any of the above information, please contact the Sr. Editor, grad.dissertation@miami.edu.