



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
**Stanislaus**

# **Master's Thesis/Project Doctoral Dissertation Preparation Guidelines**

*<http://www.csustan.edu/Grad/documents/GuidelinesforThesis-Dissertation.pdf>*

**Office of Graduate Studies**

209-667-3494 • <https://www.csustan.edu/graduate-studies-research/thesis-project-dissertation-information>

**One University Circle • Turlock, CA 95382**

The purpose of the **Preparation Guidelines** is to assist you with the style and format of your thesis, project, or dissertation that conform with **Digital Format Specifications of the ProQuest**. It presents the guidelines established by the University and discusses the requirements you are expected to follow. These guidelines are intended to direct you through the preparation process, making it a simple and straightforward experience.

Each department has approved a style manual for the student's guidance on technical requirements for references, bibliographic styles, tables, figures, etc. Please note, both departmental and University guidelines must be observed; however, in case there is a conflict between the department style manual and the University Guidelines, the University guidelines shall have precedence.

If you have questions not answered by these guidelines, please refer to your department's style manual or contact your thesis/dissertation committee chairperson.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THESIS/PROJECT/DISSERTATION**

A thesis/dissertation normally consists of three or four sections. These are the preliminary pages, body of the text, documentation, and appendices (if used).

The order in which these sections appear in the document is as follows:

### **Preliminary Pages** (Fillable PDF pages: **Template A**)

- Title page
- Committee Member Form
- Copyright
- Dedication (optional)
- Acknowledgements (optional)

### **Body of the Text** (Microsoft Word file: **Template B** with Times New Roman 12 pt. *This template will download to your computer*)

- Table of Contents
- Abstract
- Chapters or sections, tables (if used), and figures (if used) (determined by department's requirements)
- References or bibliography (determined by department's style manual)
- Appendix or Appendices
- Elaborative material (if used)

## PAGE LAYOUTS AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

### Title Page

The correct wording, capitalization, and spacing for the title page are given on the right.

- Text on the title page should be **centered with a minimum of 1” margins for all sides**. Vertically each of the four entries should be **evenly spaced** from the others.
- **The title should be entered in all uppercase.**
- **The remaining text on this page should be single spaced and in uppercase and lowercase.**
- Consult the list of [graduate degrees](#) for the appropriate listing of your degree on the title page, **no concentration should be listed** in the degree area.
- There is **no comma between the month and year, and the month, not the semester**, shall be listed under the name of the author.

### *Sample of Title Page*

<p>ENTER YOUR THESIS TITLE HERE IN ALL CAPS</p> <p>A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of California State University, Stanislaus</p> <p>In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of [Your Degree]</p> <p>By [Name of Student Author] [Month] [Year]</p>
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## Committee Members Page

The correct wording, capitalization, and spacing for the Committee Members page are given on the right.

- The title should appear on the Committee Members page exactly as it does on the title page.
- The correct rank (professor, associate professor, assistant professor, associate librarian, counselor, scientist, etc.) and the discipline/department/unit of each committee member should be included.
- **The page has up to 4 committee members (remove extra lines if you have less than 4 committee members)**

### *Sample Committee Members Page*

<p style="text-align: center;">Committee Members</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ENTER YOUR THESIS TITLE HERE IN ALL CAPS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">by [Name of Student Author]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dr. Major Adviser Professor of [Discipline]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dr. Adviser Associate Professor of [Discipline]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dr. Adviser Assistant Professor of [Discipline]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mr./Ms. Adviser [Department/Unit]</p>
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### Copyright Page (optional)

The correct wording, capitalization, and spacing for the copyright page are given on the right.

### Dedication and Acknowledgements Page (optional)

The correct wording, capitalization, and spacing for the dedication and acknowledgements pages are given on the right.

- If used, the text is in indented paragraph form.
- The titles are typed in capital letters. The margins are at least 1". The page numbers are centered in the footer and printed 1" from the bottom in lower case Roman numerals.

#### *Sample of Copyright Page*

© [Year Thesis Completed]  
[Name of Student Author]  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

#### *Sample of Dedication Page*

DEDICATION  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

iv

#### *Sample of Acknowledgement page*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

v

## Table of Contents

*Sample* on the next page illustrates an example of **format for a table of contents**. The choice of format for the table of contents may depend on your discipline, style manual, or committee recommendation. Consult your thesis or project, or dissertation committee chair for recommendations regarding the organization of your thesis/project/dissertation.

- Specific chapter headings or section titles will vary with each thesis or dissertation; however, **chapter titles and headers in the table of contents must match the body of the text. (The chapter headings and subheadings in samples are examples only).**
- The layout and spacing of the table of contents page are consistent for every thesis, project, or dissertation. All margins are 1” minimum, unless your department has a larger margin requirement.
- **Use leader dots**, not periods, to line up chapter or section headings with the page numbers. In many word processing programs, leader dots are found under the paragraph, tabs format option.

TABLE OF CONTENTS (*Sample*)

	PAGE
Dedication.....	iv
Acknowledgments .....	v
Abstract.....	#
Chapter Title .....	#
Type First Level 1 Header Here .....	#
Type Second Level 1 Header Here.....	#
Chapter Title .....	#
Type First Level 1 Header Here .....	#
Type Second Level 1 Header Here.....	#
Chapter Title .....	#
Type First Level 1 Header Here .....	#
Type Second Level 1 Header Here.....	#
Chapter Title .....	#
Type First Level 1 Header Here .....	#
Type Second Level 1 Header Here.....	#
References .....	#
Appendices	
A. Type Title of First Appendix Here .....	#
B. Type Title of Second Appendix Here.....	#
C. Type Title of Third Appendix Here.....	#
D. Type Title of Fourth Appendix Here.....	#
E. Type Title of Fifth Appendix Here.....	#

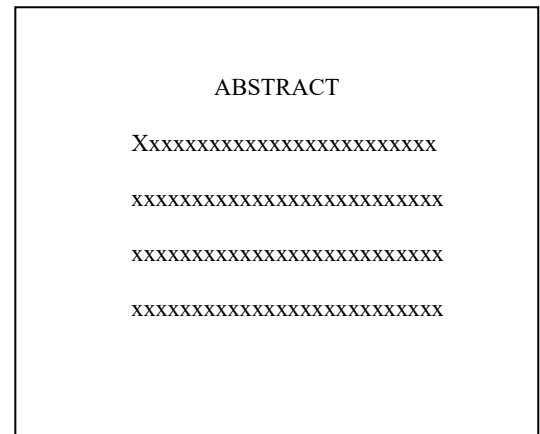
## Abstract

**An abstract (see *sample*) must be submitted as part of the thesis, project, or dissertation.**

The abstract should contain your research topic, research questions, participants, methods, results, data analysis, and conclusions. Consult your program's style manual for guidance.

- The abstract should not exceed a single page, double-spaced with **Times Roman 12 pt.**

## *Sample of Abstract*



## Body of the Thesis or Dissertation

The body of the thesis (or project or dissertation) consists of the text that is organized in a way that is consistent with the scholarly standards of the content area. **Consult your program's style manual.**

- The entire thesis/dissertation is to be double-spaced. Single spacing is acceptable for longer block quotations (i.e., quotation comprising more than 40 words, displayed in a freestanding block of text without quotation marks). Judicious triple and quadruple spacing is acceptable where it improves readability (e.g., before or after tables and figures). Use the tabs feature or the ruler in your word processing program to indent paragraphs uniformly.
  - Embedded fonts of Time New Roman size 12 pt. is **REQUIRED**. Italicized font may be used for non-English words, quotations, and select subheadings. It applies to all text including captions, footnotes/endnotes, citations, etc.
- Native digital manuscripts will appear in color when viewed electronically. Microfilm and print reproductions will **NOT** preserve color; colors will appear in shades of gray and may compromise legibility of figures, illustrations, photographs, and graphics. Data and information that is color-coded or based on color shading may not be interpretable. For best results, have color photographs reprinted in black and white by a professional lab.

## *Chapters or Sections*

In most cases, chapters are used to organize the body of the thesis/project/dissertation. Please follow your program specific structure. An example of scheme for chapter organization is as follows (in align with the index page here)



Introduction  
 Methods and Materials  
 Results  
 Discussion  
 References  
 Appendix

***Format for Headings in the Body of the Text***

Format the headings and subheadings in the body of the text according to the formatting illustrated in the table below. The chapter title is considered level 00. Below the chapter title are headings and subheadings, illustrated in the following table as levels 1 to 5.

**Regardless of the number of levels of subheading within a section, the heading structure for all sections follows the same top-down progression.** Each chapter or section starts with the highest level of heading, even if one chapter or section may have fewer levels of subheading than another chapter or section. (Consult your program’s standard)

<b>Format for Chapter Titles and Headings in the Body of the Text</b>		
<b>Level of Heading</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Example</b>
Level 00	ALL CAP AND CENTERED	METHODOLOGY
Level 1	<b>Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase (Title Case) with Text as a New Paragraph</b>	<b>Data Analysis Procedures</b>
Level 2	<b>Flush Left, Boldface, Title Case with Text as a New Paragraph</b>	<b>Barriers to Minority Women</b>
Level 3	<b>Flush left, Boldface, Italicized, Title Case with Text as a New Paragraph</b>	<i>Barriers to Minority Women Pursuing Higher Education</i>
Level 4	<b>Indented, Boldface, Title Case Heading Ending with a Period.</b> [Text immediately follows]	<b>Other Issues for Minority Women in Attaining Educational Goals in the United States.</b> Text begins here . . .
Level 5	<b><i>Indented, Boldface, Italicized, Title Case Paragraph Heading Ending with a Period.</i></b> [Text immediately follows]	<b><i>Differences Between the States for Minority Women Pursuing a College Education.</i></b> Text begins here. . .

**Sample of Chapter Titles and Headings in the Body of the Text**

<p style="text-align: center;">METHODOLOGY</p> <p>This is level zero of the chapter titles. It would look a little like this. XXXXX XXXXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXX, XXX  XXXXXX.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Data Analysis Procedures</b></p> <p>This is level one of the chapter titles. It would look a little like this. XXXXX XXXXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXX, XXX  XXXXXX.</p> <p><b>Barriers to Minority Women</b></p> <p>This is level two of the chapter titles. XXXXX XXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXX XXXXXXX.</p> <p><b>Barriers to Minority Women Pursuing Higher Education</b></p> <p>Text begins here. This is level three of formatting for chapter titles and headings.  XXXXX XXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXX, XXX  XXXXXX.</p> <p><b>Other Issues for Minority Women in Attaining Educational Goals in the United States.</b> Text begins here. This is level four for formatting your chapter titles and headings. Your</p>	<p>paragraph should begin on the same line if there is available space. XXXXX XXXXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXX  XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXX, XXX  XXXXXX.</p> <p>◇ <i>Differences Between the States for Minority Women Pursuing a College Education.</i></p> <p>Text begins here. This is the fifth level of formatting for chapter titles. Like the fourth level, you will have your heading and paragraph end and begin on the same lines if the space allows for it to happen. XXXXX XXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  XXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXX, XXX  XXXXXX.</p>
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**Reference and Appendix/Appendices Pages**

Both the references and appendices are preceded by a title page with the word REFERENCES (or APPENDIX or APPENDICES as appropriate), typed in **all capital letters**.

- **References are formatted according to your department's style manual.**
- The first page of the references (following the title page) is titled REFERENCES.
- **Use only one title page for the appendix or appendices section.** Label the title page APPENDIX if you have a single appendix. Label the title page APPENDICES if you have more than one appendix.
- The title of the appendix is listed in all upper case and double-spaced below the word APPENDIX.
- If you have more than one appendix, the first page of each appendix should be labeled (APPENDIX A, for example). Each appendix should also have a title in all upper case and double-spaced below the appendix label.
- Begin each appendix on a new page. **Minimum margin of 1” still apply even when materials in the appendices are photocopied from other sources or formatted differently from the rest of the thesis/dissertation.**

## Steps to Complete Thesis/Project/Dissertation Approval and Submission

We strongly encourage students to schedule a 15-minute meeting on [BookMe](#) with a thesis evaluator as early as possible, prior to the [deadline](#). For any additional questions, please contact [GraduateStudies@csustan.edu](mailto:GraduateStudies@csustan.edu) with email subject: **Thesis Format Consultation**.

Please only complete steps 1-6 **after** completing your thesis **and** receiving approval by the committee\*.

1. Download **Template A** and name it “Your last name-First name-Template A”. For example: Hernandez-Luis-TemplateA.PDF. Complete all the required fields.
2. Download **Template B** and name it “Your Last name-First name-Template B”. For example: Hernandez-Luis-TemplateB.doc. Insert your thesis body into **Template B**. After you’ve completed all required fields, and your thesis is approved by your committee member(s), save the final version as a PDF file for submission.
3. Download the **Approval Form for Thesis or Project or Dissertation** form and open it in Adobe. Complete the form and name it “Your Last name-Firstname-ApprovalForm\_signed”. For example: Hernandez-Luis-ApprovalForm\_signed. *Please note this form must be electronically signed by the chair of the thesis/project/dissertation committee for the Graduate office to approve your thesis/project/dissertation.*
4. Upload final three documents (bolded above) into [Thesis/Project Doctoral Dissertation Submission Canvas Course](#). If you are not enrolled in this Canvas course, please enroll yourself first, then upload material in the appropriate assignment, for example, Fall 2023.
5. Once your documents are uploaded and approved by the Office of Graduate Studies in Canvas, you will receive a notice that review is completed. In the comment section of your submission, the Office of Graduate Studies will provide you with a downloadable copy of your final thesis. The copy will package **Template A** and **Template B** together and will be the file you use in Step 6.

\*\* In the case that your documents need to be revised, the notification will include instructions to fix the documents. Please revise your documents according to the reviewer’s comments and resubmit your material to Canvas for approval again within a timeline specified by the reviewer.\*\*

6. Submit the final approved document to [ETD Administrator at California State University, Stanislaus](#).

9/15/05: Updated and approved by Graduate Council  
4/15/10: Updated and approved by Graduate Council  
11/18/10: Updated and approved by Graduate Council  
11/1/11: Updated and approved by Graduate Council  
10/15/13: Updated (Library)  
10/20/16: Updated and approved by Graduate Council  
09/19/2023: Updated (Graduate Studies)

**California State University Stanislaus  
Graduate Degrees**

**Master of Arts in Applied Behavior Analysis**

**Master of Science in Biological Sciences**

Master of Business Administration

Master of Science in Business Administration

**Master of Arts in Counseling**

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice

**Master of Arts in Education: Curriculum and Instruction**

Master of Arts in English

Master of Arts in History

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies

Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies

Master of Science in Marine Sciences

Master of Science in Nursing

Master of Arts in Psychology

Master of Science in Psychology

Master of Public Administration

**Master of Arts in School Administration**

Master of Social Work

**Master of Arts in Writing Studies (added on 7/6/23)**

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership