

McNeese State University  
Dore' School of Graduate Studies

Instructions Concerning Advisory Committees,  
Preparation of Thesis Proposals  
And  
Final Thesis Submission

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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook is presented to assist graduate students in preparing theses for final submission to the Dore' School of Graduate Studies at McNeese State University. The Graduate School requires that all theses adhere to these standard formatting conventions while still permitting some variation from discipline to discipline. In general, the Graduate School extends to each discipline the privilege of determining most of the major sections of the work and, in some instances, the order of those sections; such instances are noted where applicable in this handbook. Regardless of discipline, a thesis should demonstrate a student's capacity for creative expression; research; and/or organization, interpretation, and reporting of data in an acceptable, consistent style.

## RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Any research involving human subjects must be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to initiating any type of data collection on human subjects. IRB procedures and forms are available online at <http://www.mcneese.edu/hsirb>. Once approved, the IRB chairperson will provide the student and/or major professor with written approval of the study. Students will be expected to provide this written approval to the School upon request. The School will not accept a thesis involving human subject research unless IRB approval was granted, and the approval form is placed in the appendices of the thesis.

## RESEARCH INVOLVING ANIMAL SUBJECTS

For research involving live animals, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Form must be completed. This form is available at <https://www.mcneese.edu/f/c/02004ea5/AnimalUseProtocol.pdf>. Approval by the

committee is required before any animal can be ordered or used. The IACUC approval letter must be in the appendices of thesis.

## PARTS OF THE MANUSCRIPT

The thesis must be assembled in the following order. Theses for which some of the following elements are unrelated should adhere to the order but simply exclude inapplicable elements. However, students should make note of the elements marked with asterisks (\*); these elements are required—regardless of discipline or thesis topic.

1. Preliminary Pages (in the following order)
  - a. Fly Page (blank)\*
  - b. Title Page\*
  - c. Dedication page (optional)
  - d. Acknowledgments\*
  - e. Abstract\*
  - f. Table of Contents\*
  - g. List of Tables (if more than one Table is used)\*
  - h. List of Figures (if more than one Figure is used)\*
2. Text (normally requires the following parts)
  - a. Literature Review
  - b. Main narrative body--The journal model chosen should provide the guidelines on how the main body of the text is set up. Headings and subheadings are usually necessary to divide the text into appropriate divisions such as Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, etc...
  - c. Conclusion and/or Summary

3. Supplementary Pages (in the following order)

- a. References or Literature Cited\*
- b. Appendix or Appendices (if needed)
- c. Vita\*

All preliminary page titles, major chapter or major section designations and titles, and supplementary page titles are centered at the top of the page (within the specified margins) and are typed in all capital letters. This format overrules any differences in format or layout followed by the journal model.

The Acknowledgements' section should be used to show appreciation to individuals who have been influential in the student's personal and/or professional pursuits. Acknowledging thesis committee members is customary and appreciated. The Abstract should be formatted per cataloging conventions, should be of appropriate length and reflect the style of the student's discipline.

The Table of Contents must include the titles and page numbers of the elements above except the blank page, Title Page, and Table of Contents. It must also include all headings from within the body and the corresponding page numbers. Headings must be formatted with the same capitalization as in the body. For each item in the Table of Contents, only the beginning page number is listed. Dot leaders must be used between each heading and the corresponding page number. Right tabs must be used for the page numbers to ensure a flush-right alignment.

Each table or figure in the main body of the thesis must have a separate number and a title, which must be indicated on the List of Tables page or the List of Figures page. This is also true for all tables and figures that appear in the Appendices, where their

numbering follows, in a consecutive manner, the numbers of those found in the text. The numbering, wording, and pagination of titles and headings must be the same on the Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures page as they are in the text of the thesis.

Each appendix must be listed individually and labeled in all caps with the word “Appendix” and appropriate Arabic numeral in sequence. The appendix title must also be included. The Vita should present a brief biography of the student and should not exceed 300 words. Examples of all parts of the manuscript are provided in the appendices of this document.

## FORMAT

### Appearance

Each page of the document shall appear neat; formatted consistently within the page and among all other pages; and free of creases, folds, spots, smudges, or any other physical imperfection.

### Style

The narrative text may be divided into chapters or sections. A student must use either the chapter or section style. A combination of these styles is not acceptable. The journal model or the conventional style of the student's academic discipline can help determine which system is more appropriate. The completed thesis must conform as closely as possible to the general format and organization of a published article in a journal in the major field of study with the exception of specific variations required by the School of Graduate Studies as indicated in this manual. If a conflict occurs between those guidelines and the requirements presented in this handbook, this handbook's requirements take precedence (e.g., spacing and/or margin requirements). Questions

about style requirements should always be directed to the major professor and/or the School.

### Margins

Document margins shall be:

Left: 1.5” Top: 1”

Right: 1” Bottom: 1”

No element of the body (text, headings, captions, illustrations, etc.) may intrude into any margin.

### Pagination

Page numbers should be inserted in the footer, centered and 0.5” inches from the bottom margin. On each page, only the numeral for that page should be used; the word “page” should not be used with the numeral nor should a format like “Page X of X” be used.

### Font and Spacing

The permitted font type for all text within the thesis is Times New Roman. All text, including headings, body, references, page numbers, and table or figure captions, must be in 12 point font. Widow/orphan controls should be activated in the word processing software used to create the thesis. A widow/orphan control will keep paragraph text together and prevent a single line of a paragraph from being isolated on a page. In general, this type of control by default is activated in word processing software.

With the exception of selections on the title/signature page and within the abstract, the entire document must be double-spaced without any additional paragraph spacing before or after a paragraph. **(Note: Some word processing software typically**



**have a default setting of 10 points-worth of spacing after paragraphs. This setting must be changed from 10 to 0.)** Figure and Table headings along with information contained within them may be single spaced if appropriate.

The document text must be left-aligned, except for indentations, headings that may be center-aligned, or other elements like illustrations that may be aligned differently for visual appeal. Full-justified text formatting is not permitted. Paragraphs within the body and reference entries must be indented 0.5” only. Headings within the table of contents may be indented more than 0.5” to show a hierarchical relationship among major sections, headings, and sub-headings; however, indentations must be created in 0.5” increments. Alignment of subheadings in the body of the thesis should follow the journal style from the students major.

Capitalization in the body should follow the format in the Table of Contents. For example, CHAPTER 1 would be typed in all caps in both the Table of Contents and in the body. Whether to capitalize all words or only proper nouns in captions is at the student’s discretion; however, the capitalization formatting chosen must be consistent throughout each illustration and in the lists of figures and tables that follow the table of contents. The style of capitalization should reflect the journal style chosen.

#### Illustrations, Tables, and Figures

Illustrations such as tables, charts, graphs, music examples, etc., are permitted and may be either black/white or full color. Illustrations must of print-quality; pixelated or otherwise distorted illustrations are not acceptable. Illustrations, including any rule lines, borders, etc., embedded within the body must fit within the document margins.

Illustrations that must exceed the margins should be included as appendices and

referenced within the body appropriately. Any illustration that exceeds 8.5” by 11” may be folded and bound in the thesis or placed in a pocket on the inside back cover; however, students are encouraged to avoid this if at all possible.

Tables and figures should be placed as close as possible to the first reference made to them in the text. A full-page table or figure must be placed on the page following the first reference to it. A table or figure may be placed on a separate page, regardless of the size of the table or figure. A short table or small figure may be placed on the text page itself, in which case the table or figure should be separated from the text by a single line that uses triple spacing at the top and bottom.

Titles should be concise, but should also clearly describe the content of the table or figure. No two titles should be identical in wording. Placement of titles should follow the style and format of the journal which is being used as a model for the thesis. For example, a figure heading is typically placed below the figure, and a table heading is placed above the table.

If tables or figures must be placed lengthwise, or broadside, the top of the table or figure should be at the left-hand, binding side of the page. The caption must be at either the top or the bottom of the table or figure, not at the top or bottom of the page. Tables or figures longer than one page in length should have the complete title and table or figure number on the first page only. Subsequent pages of the same table or figure should have the table or figure number and the word "Continued" plus the necessary column headings for ease of reading and reference.

## THESIS SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

### REVIEW, APPROVAL, ACCEPTANCE, AND BINDING

The School requires one complete, printed and bound copy. It must be laser printed on white, 20#, 25% cotton bond paper with watermark, and the title/signature pages must have original signatures. Inkjet-printed submissions or submissions printed on non-white paper will not be accepted., nor is double-sided printing permitted.

This will be housed at Frazar Memorial Library. Additionally, a final PDF copy of the thesis is required to be submitted to the graduate school with the printed copy. A digital PDF copy will be kept by the graduate school and by the library. Academic departments have the right to request copies for departmental archives, and students are expected to contact their major professors regarding these departmental requirements. Students may order additional copies for personal use. Once a thesis is complete, it is submitted for review and subsequent approval, acceptance, and binding.

A completed thesis is submitted to the committee for review and approval. Once approved, the thesis is submitted to the School for acceptance. *Approval by the committee* indicates that all committee members concur that the work is scholarly and substantive, meets departmental and School guidelines, and is representative of graduate-level study within the discipline. *Acceptance by the School's director* indicates that the committee's approval is validated, that all standard formatting requirements have been met, and that the document is ready for binding.

#### Step 1: Submission to Committee for Approval

The completed thesis—with the major professor's consent—is submitted to committee members for review. Students, however, should work closely with committee

members throughout all stages of the thesis preparation; therefore, this submission should not be the first instance where committee members are exposed to the student's work. Approval of the thesis lies with the student's committee, and its defense becomes either part of the final comprehensive examination or serves as the examination.

#### Step 2: Submission to School for Acceptance

Once the thesis is defended, revised (if necessary), and the final draft is approved by the committee, the student must submit it to the School for format review.

Submission is via email to [elyons@mcneese.edu](mailto:elyons@mcneese.edu). Step 2 must be completed by the prescribed date in the academic calendar.

#### Step 3: Acceptance and/or Remission for Revision

The thesis will be reviewed for format, and a representative of the School will notify the student whether format revisions are required. If no revisions are required, the student may prepare the copies for final approval and acceptance. If revisions are required, those will be described in an email message to the student, and the student must make all revisions prior to preparing copies for final approval by the committee and acceptance by the School's Director. Step 3 must be completed no less than ten business days prior to commencement.

#### Step 4: Submission for Binding

All thesis copies for binding must be submitted to the School. At this time, a final PDF of the thesis must be emailed to the Graduate School at [elyons@mcneese.edu](mailto:elyons@mcneese.edu).

These must include the School's copies plus any other copies the student wishes to be bound. All copies must be submitted in a box with a piece of colored paper placed between each copy. Each hard copy requires a signature page. At this time, the student

must place the binding order and remit payment at the Cashier's Office for binding.

Once bound, the copies will be shipped to the Frazar Memorial Library, and the School will notify the student when bound copies are ready for pickup.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

Any questions related to the information presented in this handbook should be addressed to the School. Students and/or major professors are encouraged strongly to contact the School with questions *before* students begin preparing their theses to ensure that all parties understand the requirements fully from the beginning of the preparation process.

Dore School of Graduate Studies

Dr. Eddie K. Lyons, Director

Box 92220

337-475-5692

[elyons@mneese.edu](mailto:elyons@mneese.edu)

THE THESIS TITLE IS INSERTED AT THE TOP OF THIS PAGE  
IN ALL CAPS AND FORMATTED IN AN INVERTED  
PYRAMID FASHION LIKE THIS EXAMPLE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of  
McNeese State University  
in Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements for the

Name of Degree  
Date Master's Degree Conferred

by  
Student Full Name  
Name of Bachelor Degree, University, Year

APPROVED:

---

Major Professor Name, Honorific  
Assistant Professor of

---

Committee Member Name, Honorific  
Associate Professor of

---

Committee Member Name, Honorific  
Professor of

ACCEPTED:

---

Eddie K. Lyons, Ph.D.  
Director, Dore' School of Graduate Studies

## DEDICATION

Optional dedication begins here

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



## ABSTRACT

Student Name, Name of Degree, University, Date Conferred

Master of Science, Date Conferred

Major: Name of Major Here

Title of Thesis: Thesis Title Here with Capital and Lowercase Letters

Thesis directed by: Major Professor's Name and Title

Abstract text begins here and is formatted with the same font, spacing, and other formatting requirements as the body of the document.

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# Thesis Binding Order Form

DATE:

STUDENT NAME:

STUDENT ID#:

THESIS TITLE:

Copies	Quantity	Cost	Total
Frazar Memorial Library	1	\$20.00	\$20.00
Additional copies		\$20.00	
TOTALS			

**TO BE COMPLETED BY CASHIER'S OFFICE**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount paid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Receipt #: \_\_\_\_\_

**After payment, return this form to the Doré School of Graduate Studies. Your binding order will not be processed until then.**