

MANUAL FOR THE PREPARATION OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

By

HARRIS COLLEGE OF
NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Texas Christian University
Fort Worth, Texas

To be used by students in the
Harris College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Texas Christian University
as a guide for
preparation of
theses and
dissertations
for the degrees of
Master of Science
and Doctor of
Philosophy

2021-2022

This document is intended to guide students in preparation of a thesis and/ or dissertation document PhD students should also read the [Dissertation Proposal Preparation](#) and [Dissertation Guidelines](#) .

MANUAL FOR PREPARATION OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

Harris College of Nursing and Health Sciences

August 2020

Section I: Procedures to follow for the final semester

- a. File an “Intent to Graduate” (available from the College website at the following link: <https://harriscollege.tcu.edu/resources/graduate/intent-to-graduate-graduate-students/>) during the first four weeks of the semester. **NOTE:** A graduation fee is charged when the “intent” is filed. If you postpone your graduation, you must cancel the intent. You will need to file a new intent the next semester and pay the graduation fee again.
- b. You will receive information from the College office about graduation. Be sure to note deadlines that will be included. The Registrar’s office will send instructions, forms to complete, and information about payment of graduation fees. **NOTE:** There are deadlines for refunds of cap and gown rental and diploma fees.
- c. Submit a completed draft of your thesis or dissertation to your committee for review. *For Dissertation Requirements, also see the Dissertation Manual.*

All committee members must read the draft of a thesis.

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- d. Prepare a revised draft incorporating all changes required by your committee.
- e. Schedule the final thesis/dissertation oral defense with the help of your major professor at least one week prior to graduation date deadlines. Make sure the Associate Dean for Research knows the date and title of the thesis/dissertation.

Section II: Submitting final copies of theses/dissertations

- a. Make corrections called for by the College and your committee. Have the approval page signed by your committee members. Then submit the thesis/dissertation with the approval page to the Associate Dean’s office for final signature. You may attach a copy of the thesis/dissertation to the Associate Dean for Research by email if preferred. The approval page may be inserted as an *unnumbered* page immediately after the title page in bound copies of the thesis (see Appendix, p.10). A scanned completed approval page can also be included in the same location in the PDF file that you upload.
- b. A \$10 required library fee will be added to your student account prior to filing your thesis or dissertation with the library. All information related to filing your thesis or dissertation with the library (required) is at this link: <https://library.tcu.edu/submit-thesis-or-dissertation.asp>.
- c. If you are interested in copyrighting your document refer to the information on the following web page: <https://library.tcu.edu/submit-thesis-or-dissertation.asp>.
- d. You must upload a copy of your thesis dissertation to ProQuest through <https://library.tcu.edu/submit-thesis-or-dissertation.asp>. Be aware that there may be copyright issues if any figures or manuscripts included as part of your project are already published. Students are responsible for following up to secure permissions to publish the document/ figure as part of the thesis/dissertation document.

Section III. Manuals and formbooks

Harris College of Nursing and Health Sciences does not require all departments to use the same format, but most use APA style. For general guidance on formatting, consult Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Because the thesis/dissertation should reflect the requirements of the discipline, documentation should be in accordance with professional stylebooks. The Departments listed below have provided the titles of style manuals. In all cases the latest editions are to be consulted. The References section of this manual has given APA style examples.

Communication Sciences and Disorders

American Psychological Association Manual (APA style)

Kinesiology

American Psychological Association Manual (APA style)

American College of Science and Medicine (ACSM style)

Nursing

American Psychological Association Manual (APA style)

Social Work

American Psychological Association Manual (APA style)

School of Nurse Anesthesia

American Medical Association Manual (AMA style)

Doctor of Nursing Practice

American Psychological Association Manual (APA style)

Section IV. Parts and order of the manuscript

A manuscript generally has three main parts: the preliminary pages, the text, and the reference material. The order of these is usually as follows:

The Preliminaries

Title page

Approval

One blank page or copyright notice if the thesis/dissertation is to be copyrighted (see preliminary pages of this manual)

Preface, including acknowledgments or dedication (optional)

Table of contents, with page references

List of figures, with titles and page references (if there are figures)

List of tables, with titles and page references (if there are tables)

(NOTE: All tables and figures should be embedded in the text of the document, *not* presented in a separate section at the end of the document)

Thesis Text (typically as follows):

Chapter I: Introduction

Chapter II: Review of Literature

Main body, with the larger divisions and important minor divisions indicated by suitable, consistent headings

Chapter III: Method

Participants, Procedures, Data Collection, Data Analysis

Chapter IV: Results

(NOTE: For dissertations, Chapters II to IV will consist of the three manuscripts that include their own literature review, method, results and discussion)

Chapter V: Discussion

Reference (In this order following Chapter V)

References
 Appendices
 Vita
 Abstract

NOTE: Special instructions for the main body of the dissertation are as follows:

1. Introduction: The introduction should function as the cord that weaves the various manuscripts together and describes, for the reader, their ‘collective meaning’ and ‘combined contribution’ to the field. The introduction should include the following:
 - a. A clear statement of the study’s purpose and hypotheses to be tested, or research questions for a qualitative study.
 - b. The importance of the problem, i.e., why it is worth researching, why it matters to the student’s field of study.
 - c. The theoretical foundation(s) supporting the problem/issue.
 - d. An overview of the important literature (overview, because each article will have its own unique literature review).
 - e. Statements about the relationships among the dissertation manuscripts.
2. Manuscript #1
3. Manuscript #2
4. Manuscript #3
5. Discussion – The discussion will summarize the dissertation’s findings of the three manuscripts into a synopsis that relates the work to the extant literature. The discussion will also address similarities and differences between the separate manuscripts that are included in the dissertation, striving as much as possible to present the document as representative of a coherent body of work. The discussion chapter ‘ties’ everything together and helps the reader see how the various manuscripts, taken together, contribute to the knowledge base regarding the problem. The discussion chapter should present/discuss research imperatives, or knowledge gaps, not visible when each manuscript is considered individually and should articulate how the findings from the three articles guide research and practice, and sets an agenda for future research on the issues addressed in the dissertation.

Section V. Manuscript presentation

The manuscript, as a demonstration of your ability in research, analysis, and effectiveness of expression, should have an appearance in keeping with such a document. Unsightly irregularities, such as handwritten insertions and obvious use of correction fluids or erasures are not permitted. Unacceptable theses will be rejected by the department and college.

You are responsible for final proofreading. This is to be done before bringing it to the Thesis/ Dissertation Committee and Associate Dean for final signatures (see II a). An indication that careful proofreading has not been done is cause for complete rejection of the manuscript and possible delay of graduation by at least one semester. Because it is difficult for proofreading to be done adequately by persons already familiar with the material, competent outside proofreaders are advisable, but you retain full responsibility for good proofreading and satisfactory correction, and you should wait until after your oral defense to make final corrections. In this way you will have a composite list of all corrections requested by your examination committee.

Section VI. Official University copies in electronic format

The University does not require a bound copy of your thesis or dissertation. Instead you are required to upload the final version of your document to ProQuest/UMI in PDF format. In addition, the university requires you to upload a native (e.g. Microsoft Word) version of your document to a local TCU database. This copy will be used as a backup copy of your document. Details on the UMI uploading process as well as details on font embedding etc. can be found at <https://library.tcu.edu/submit-thesis-or-dissertation.asp>.

Section VII. Margins and spacing

- a. The text of the manuscript is double-spaced. Footnotes are single-spaced. Indented quotations may be single or double-spaced. Consult the approved format for your discipline for additional guidance on spacing.
- b. The left margin (binding side) should be no less than 1.25 inches, and the top margin not less than 1 inch. The right and bottom margins must have a clearance of not less than .75 inch from the typed material. Any of the approved formbooks will give rules for margins well within these limits. Charts, maps, and other illustrative material must meet these margin requirements also.

Section VIII. Pagination

- a. Except the blank pages preceding the title page and following the approval page and the abstract page, each page in the manuscript should be assigned a number. Header and footer margins for page numbers are $\frac{1}{2}$ inch; i.e., there is $\frac{1}{2}$ inch margin between the page number and the top or bottom of the page. The page number is the only mark that should appear within the margins specified above in VIIb.
- b. For the preliminary pages, small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.) are used. The numbering should begin with "ii"; the title page counts as page "i", but the number does not appear. The blank page or copyright page is not counted or numbered. These page numbers are centered at the bottom of the page. Preliminary pages of this manual illustrate this.
- c. For the remainder of the manuscript including the text, illustrations, appendices, and references, Arabic numerals are used. All pages are numbered, except the abstract page. Do not use letter suffixes such as 10a, 10b, etc. The numbering should begin with "1", and run consecutively to the end of the thesis. Page numbers should be placed at the upper right margin, consistently above the text.

Section IX. Special problems

All special problems encountered in preparing your manuscript should be discussed with the Chair of your committee prior to preparation of the final copy.

FLOW CHART FOR THESIS APPROVAL

Fall Semester, 1st Year

Student Seeks Faculty Mentor to Advise Thesis

Faculty Mentor serves as thesis advisor and Chair of Thesis committee



Selection of Thesis Committee Members

Committee must be comprised of three graduate faculty (Chair of thesis & two others) with a minimum of 2 graduate faculty members from the thesis student's department. The other graduate faculty member can be from the same department or another department on TCU campus. If an outside committee member is warranted, this would have to be the 3rd committee member.



Fall/Spring Semester, 1st Year

Preparation of Thesis Proposal

Thesis proposal developed under advisement and guidance of Thesis mentor and committee as needed

Organization of thesis proposal consists of (A)Title, (B)Review of Literature, (C)Purpose, (D)Research Questions, (E)Methodology, (F)References



Spring/Summer Semester, 1st Year

Defense of Thesis Proposal

Oral presentation of the thesis proposal. Presentation will be announced via flyers posted in selected locations of department no later than 1-week before the date of the proposal.

This meeting will be open to any interested faculty, staff, & students of the university.

Thesis committee must approve thesis before data collection begins.



Spring/Summer Semester, 1st Year

IRB Protocol Review

Document prepared and sent to either Departmental or University IRB before collection of human subjects data is initiated. IRB "**Protocol Review Request**" student form (<https://harriscollege.tcu.edu/research/student-research/>) or University IRB form (<https://research.tcu.edu/research-compliance/irb/irb-forms-templates/>).

All revisions from thesis committee regarding thesis proposal and presentation must be included in methodology reported on the IRB protocol form and consent form. IRB protocol approval is required before study begins.



Summer/Fall Semester, 2nd Year

Student Collects, Analyzes, and Reports Data in Manuscript form

Use formatting style appropriate to the applicable professional audience

Student consults with thesis committee during the development of the final draft of manuscript.

Committee members must approve written document before oral defense is scheduled.



Spring Semester, 2nd Year*

Final Defense of Thesis

Oral presentation and defense of the study. Presentation will be announced via flyers posted in selected locations of department no later than 1-week before the date of the defense. This meeting will be open to any interested faculty, staff, & students of the university.

Final draft of manuscript must be approved by all thesis committee members before submission to college (signature form will need Associate Dean's signature)

"Report of Oral Examination/Thesis Grade" form completed and sent to Registrar.

Spring Semester, 2nd Year

Digital Submission/Library Recording/Binding

(1) Student goes to library website (<https://library.tcu.edu/submit-thesis-or-dissertation.asp>) and follows instructions for submitting thesis to the library. Follow associated instructions.

*At the beginning of the Spring semester in the 2nd year, all graduate students must complete an **"Intent to Graduate"** Form. Students who complete a Thesis must indicate "Yes" in the Thesis Plan box of this form, indicate who the Thesis advisor is, and indicate the number of bound copies to be made. However, this form does not require any bound copies to actually be printed.those are at the expense of the student and she or he will decide later on if they wish to pay for binding or not. They can simply put "0" in that box.