

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION OF MASTER'S THESES

Prepared by the

Division of Research and Graduate Studies



Research and Graduate Studies
Last Modified 10/12/2022

Every candidate registered in a Master's thesis course must prepare a thesis under the primary direction of an Acadia University supervisor, who **must** be a current faculty member, appointed by their department/school. An appointed adjunct professor outside of Acadia can only act as a co-supervisor. Every candidate is required to defend their thesis either in person or remotely.

The supervisor (or Graduate Coordinator) is encouraged to contact the Graduate Studies Officer as soon as a date and time for the defence have been confirmed with the full committee. **An electronic copy of the thesis** must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Officer at least **four weeks** prior to the defence date. If any committee member requires a hard copy of the thesis, the supervisor will be responsible for providing it directly. **Every effort should be made to accommodate the external examiner when scheduling a defence date.**

The thesis will be examined by a committee of at least four members -- an internal examiner (an Acadia faculty member, professor emeritus or approved adjunct within the dept/school); an external examiner (outside of Acadia) who has been selected by the supervisor/Graduate Coordinator; the thesis supervisor (a current Acadia faculty member); and a delegate (a current Acadia faculty member) of the Division of Research and Graduate Studies who shall serve as Chair of the examination. Individual academic units will determine whether the participation of the Head/Director (or delegate) at the thesis defence is required.

The **internal examiner** should not be a relative of any other person on the thesis committee (e.g. spouse, sibling, or parent).

The **external examiner** must be totally independent of the thesis preparation. The external should also not be a relative of any other person on the thesis committee. In the case that the external examiner does not hold a PhD, the examiner must be a recognized expert in the area and have at least 10 years of experience working in that field. The Dean of Graduate Studies should be consulted in these cases. Any individual who has taught the candidate in a graduate level course, or at the undergraduate level within the last four years, or who has been involved with the candidate's graduate-level research, cannot serve as an external examiner. Furthermore, it is inappropriate to appoint an external examiner who has worked in a collaborative research relationship or co-authored publications with the candidate's supervisor within the last two years. The final decision on any requested exception rests with the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies.

The Graduate Studies Officer will arrange for the full committee to receive the electronic copy of the thesis. All members of the examining committee, **except the Chair**, are expected to review the thesis prior to the defence.

One week prior to the defence, the internal and external examiners must submit an examiner's report to the Graduate Studies Officer.

If the thesis is deemed **not** acceptable, by the internal or external examiner, comments must be submitted detailing the appropriate modifications that must be made. The candidate will work with their supervisor(s) to address the issues and then the revised thesis will be circulated to all members of the **same** examining committee. **This will be the final review.** The revised thesis will be the version



defended. An additional four weeks following resubmission is required for review prior to the new defence date.

The defence will be open to the public.

The defence commences with **the candidate presenting a concise summary of their research, emphasizing the conclusions that have been reached.** This should take a MAXIMUM of 20 minutes.

After questions from the examining committee, anyone else attending the defence may ask questions.

After the question period, the Chair will ask the audience and candidate to leave the meeting to allow the examining committee to assess the thesis defence in relation to thesis acceptability and any modifications required. A majority decision of the committee will be binding. **The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all the required changes to the thesis have been made by the candidate prior to the final submission.**

Preparation of the Thesis:

Templates

This document includes an acceptable thesis template for thesis preparation.

Please note that other templates may be provided by your Department/School or the [Learning Technologies Centre](#), however it is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that their thesis conforms to the formatting required by Graduate Studies as outlined in this document.

Graduate Studies recognizes that each discipline has a style manual or procedures that are recognized by professional or learned societies associated with that discipline. The methods outlined in these style manuals are acceptable if they are consistently applied, and the below guidelines are also incorporated.

- (a) For the draft thesis copy you are encouraged to activate continuous line numbering so a reviewer can easily refer to text on specific lines. You should be able to then “turn that off” for the final version that is submitted. To activate this option in Microsoft Word, go to Layout, choose line numbers, and then choose continuous.
- (b) The thesis can be organized in chapter format if desired.
- (c) A standard font style (Times New Roman, Calibri, etc.), with size no smaller than 11 point, must be used for the text. Font size and style must be consistent throughout. Spelling usage must be consistent within the thesis.
- (d) All text must be double spaced except for those disciplines which allow quotations, footnotes, and bibliographical entries to be single spaced. Lengthy table titles, table content, and figure captions may also be single spaced.
- (e) Thesis margins must be **1 inch / 2.54cm** all around the page (top, bottom, left, right).
- (f) There is no page number on the title page and no text on the backside of this page. The next page starts at iii.
- (g) All new sections and chapters must start on the right-hand side and be odd-numbered (e.g. v, viii, or 3, 5, 7, etc.). This may require a blank page at the end of a section or chapter.
- (h) The front pages of the thesis, before the main body of the thesis, must be numbered consecutively with small Roman numerals at the bottom centre of the page (ii, iii, iv, etc). Chapter 1 starts on Page 1 on a right-hand side page.
- (i) Table of Contents (TOC) includes all section headers and their page numbers. For instructions on how to set up a TOC in Microsoft Word, please enter ‘Table of Contents’ in the Search field at the top of your word document. Or use the ‘Help’ option in Microsoft Word.

- (j) **Abstract** -- the abstract should state concisely and lucidly the objectives, the method of procedure and the findings or conclusions of the thesis. Abstracts are normally 1-2 pages in length.
- (k) **Charts, Graphs, Maps and Tables** -- should be reduced to an 8 1/2 x 11" format to fit within the 1"/ 2.54 cm margins. It is recommended that oversize pages be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Observing the style guidelines of the discipline, charts, graphs and maps can be inserted into the body of the text, provided they can fit on one page. All figure and table legends should begin with a short title sentence. The title sentences appear in the List of Figures and List of Tables in the front pages of the thesis.
- (l) **Citations/Bibliography/References** -- Any factual material or quotation taken from other sources must be properly cited in the text and the source listed in the bibliography/references. List only those materials actually referred to in the thesis. Additional works that have been consulted may be listed, but their secondary nature should be clearly indicated. Footnotes may be at the bottoms of pages, at the ends of chapters, or at the end of the thesis.
- (m) **Illustrated material** will reproduce well if drawn in dark, opaque ink. Students should bear in mind the need to choose sharply contrasting colours to allow for clear reproduction.
- (n) **Coloured images** may be used. Avoid glossy photographs and photographs with dark background.
- (o) **Overlays** must be carefully aligned with underlying maps or charts. In order to produce the most legible image, the underlying sheet is filmed alone. The overlay is then placed on the underlying sheet and both are filmed together.
- (p) For the formatting of any landscape pages (e.g. Tables) within the thesis, detailed instructions can be viewed in this 7 minute tutorial: https://youtu.be/SYZi8T_bVpU

Thesis Copyright

In most properly executed theses, the inclusion of copyrighted material will almost always be either non-substantial or an instance of fair dealing under ss. 29 or 29.1 of the Copyright Act, and neither permission nor payment is required for such inclusions. If you use any substantial amount of a copyrighted work that does **not** qualify as fair dealing, you must obtain the written permission of the copyright owner and submit it with your thesis. See the "theses" tab in the library's copyright guide for more information. The library's copyright guide reflects the current state of the Act and the jurisprudence and is available at <http://libguides.acadiau.ca/copyright>

Order of Items

- (a) Title page (page i -- **do not put a page number on the title page**). The title page must include the following text (see attached sample page):



"Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of _____
Acadia University
Spring Convocation 20xx or Fall Graduation 20xx"
The Universal Copyright mark © must appear on the title page (lower left-hand corner)

- (b) Page (iii) is reserved for the list of names of the thesis committee members (see attached sample page).
- (c) Page (v) is reserved for the copyright language (see attached sample page). The pages following are numbered consecutively using lower case roman numerals. Keeping in mind that new section starts on an odd-numbered page.
- (d) Table of Contents (vii)
- (e) List of Tables (if applicable)
- (f) List of Figures (if applicable)
- (g) Abstract
- (h) List of definitions of abbreviations and symbols used, if any.
- (i) Acknowledgements (statistical consulting services, etc. must be acknowledged),
- (j) Dedication, preface, optional.
- (k) Body of text (the thesis proper) must be numbered consecutively beginning with page 1,2, etc., keeping in mind again that each new section starts on an odd-numbered page.
- (l) Bibliography or References.
- (m) Appendices, if any.

THESIS TITLE

by

NAME IN FULL

Thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts (English)

Acadia University
Spring Convocation 20XX or Fall Graduation 20XX

© by NAME IN FULL, 20XX



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(ii)



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This thesis by CANDIDATE'S NAME IN FULL was defended successfully in an examination on DATE OF DEFENCE.

The examining committee for the thesis defence was:

Dr. X.Y. Zee, Chair

Dr. A.B. Cee, External Examiner

Dr. A.N. Other, Internal Examiner

Dr. U.B. Good, Supervisor (additional supervisors can be listed below)

Dr. O.R. Else, Head/Director (or delegate), if applicable

(iii)



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The author retains copyright in this thesis. Any substantial copying or any other actions that exceed fair dealing or other exceptions in the Copyright Act require the permission of the author.

(v)



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