
**GUIDELINES FOR MASTER'S THESIS
PREPARATION**

**THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
THE COLLEGE AT BROCKPORT
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

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INTRODUCTION

If you are a master's degree student, your department may require that you research and write a capstone thesis.

If your department requires that you submit the thesis to The College at Brockport's Drake Library, you will need to do so (as of Fall 2013) electronically to Digital Commons, Brockport's online repository. This will increase the visibility of your scholarship and make your thesis available online for broad public and archival access.

Your department may also require printed copies of your thesis, and you may wish to keep a paper copy. These copies, like your Digital Commons submission, need to conform to the following guidelines.

This document will help you properly format your thesis. In addition, you should seek the guidance of your advisor and thesis committee members through the entire process of writing your thesis. Citation and bibliographical style varies by discipline, but the format of every thesis should be consistent with these guidelines.

Uploading your thesis to Digital Commons@Brockport

DigitalCommons@Brockport <digitalcommons.brockport.edu> is the online collection of creative and scholarly work by the faculty, staff and students of The College at Brockport. It is freely available online to researchers worldwide using everyday internet search engines. The majority of departments at Brockport are now adding their graduate students' master's theses to Digital Commons to provide a permanent, online home for this scholarship. Your department will share specific details about if and when to upload your thesis.

Here are some things you need:

1. Permission from your adviser to upload your thesis.
2. Your completed thesis, in pdf or text format, as well as any supplemental parts – such as videos, presentations, etc.
3. Six to ten keywords to help people find your thesis online.
4. An abstract about one page long that concisely describes your research.
5. You will find a guide in Digital Commons, specific to your department, on how to upload your thesis.

Digital Commons Agreement

If your department requires that you submit your thesis to The College at Brockport's Drake Library, you need to do so (as of Fall 2013) electronically to Digital Commons. Students are asked to agree to the following to post their thesis on Digital Commons:

'By checking the box below, I grant The College at Brockport: State University of New York the non-exclusive right to distribute my submission ("the Work") over the Internet and make it part of the Digital Commons @Brockport.

I warrant as follows:

1. that I have the full power and authority to make this agreement;
2. that the Work does not infringe any copyright, nor violate any proprietary rights, nor contain any libelous matter, nor invade the privacy of any person or third party;
3. that the Work has not been published elsewhere with the same content or in the same format; and
4. that no right in the Work has in any way been sold, mortgaged, or otherwise disposed of, and that the Work is free from all liens and claims.

I understand that once a peer-reviewed Work is deposited in the repository, it may not be removed."

NOTE: It is suggested that you print this page for your records.

PARTS OF THE THESIS

Title Page

The title page must include your full legal name, your department's official name, the title of your work, a thesis submission statement, and the name of the degree you are seeking. Be sure to double-space all portions of your title page. Refer to **Figure 1** as an example.

Figure 1 Sample Title Page

<p style="text-align: center;">Full Title of Thesis (centered in top quarter of page)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">by</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Full name of author</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A thesis submitted to the Department of *** of The College at Brockport, State University of New York, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of *** Month, day, and year submitted</p>

Intellectual Property Rights

Copyright

Registering a copyright for your thesis is optional. Under current United States copyright law, the moment you reduce a work to a tangible medium (i.e. write it on paper; store it electronically; take the photograph; record the music; etc.) your thesis is copyrighted. This applies to published work and unpublished manuscripts. It is no longer necessary to formally register your work for copyright and to attach that copyright document to the thesis. Therefore the copyright page is optional.

Creative Commons

You may want to apply a Creative Commons license to your thesis, which requires attribution of your work by others, but can also allow others to share, reuse or make derivatives, depending on your wishes. For more information see: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

Figure 2 OPTIONAL Sample Copyright Page

Example of Copyright statement:

Copyright

by

Full name of author

Year

Example of Creative Commons License:



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/).

Signature Page

Your department may require that your thesis includes a signature page with the **original** signatures of your committee members. If so, this signature page needs to be included in the electronic copy of your thesis uploaded to Digital Commons. If you prepare print copies of your thesis for yourself and/or your department, you should provide a signature page with original signatures for each print copy.

For print copies, signature pages should: be on the same cotton bond paper as the remainder of your thesis; be double-spaced; and follow the prescribed margins (see Page 8). Your advisor should sign the top line. Include the title of your thesis and your full name on the signature page. Refer to **Figure 3** as an example.

Figure 3 Sample Signature Page

Full title of thesis	
by Author's full name (centered and double-spaced)	
APPROVED BY: *	
_____	_____
Advisor	Date
_____	_____
Reader	Date
_____	_____
Reader	Date
_____	_____
Chair, Thesis Committee	Date

*Varies by department

Dedication

A dedication page is optional. If you choose to include one, it must be on its own page.

Acknowledgements

An acknowledgements page is optional. If you choose to include one, it must be on its own page.

Table of Contents

A table of contents is **required**. Place the table of contents immediately before the text of the thesis and any lists of illustrations, charts, etc. that you include (see below). Include all chapter names and main subdivision names in the table of contents. Chapter titles are left-justified and page numbers are right-justified with a dot leader preceding them. Subdivision names should be indented. Make sure to be consistent in the numbering format for chapter and section titles used in the table of contents and that used in the text. For example, do not use Roman numerals for chapter titles in the table of contents and Arabic numerals in the text and do not write out numbers as words in the table of contents, but use an Arabic or Roman numeral in the text. Refer to **Figure 4** as an example.

Figure 4 Sample Table of Contents

Chapter One: Title	1
Chapter Two: Title	16
Subheading Title	22

Lists of Illustrations

If your thesis has illustrations, you must include a list of them. Illustrations include pictures, photographs, tables, figures, charts, and graphs. Use a separate list for each type of illustration and format the list exactly as you would format the table of contents. Additionally, each list must be on a separate page.

Abstract

An abstract of your thesis is **required**. Your abstract should be brief (no more than one page) and double-spaced on its own separate page.

Keywords

Six to ten keywords to help people find your thesis online are required.

Text

The text of your thesis represents the body of your research. Be sure to cite quotations and ideas borrowed from others in a style that is appropriate to your discipline. Consult with your thesis advisor on the appropriate style for your thesis and be consistent in using that style throughout your work. See the Drake Library Citation and Bibliography Help page at <http://www.brockport.edu/library/help/citations.php>.

Footnotes/Endnotes

Place footnotes at the bottom of the page, or place endnotes at the end of the chapter or at the end of the text before the bibliography. Consult the style guide you are using for appropriate use of notes.

Appendices

Use an appendix or appendices to include materials that are not an integral part of the text, but that provide examples or supporting evidence to your research. Include the appendix/appendices after the last page of the text and before the bibliography.

Bibliography/List of References/Works Cited

The bibliography, or list of references, is the last **required** portion of the thesis. Be sure to use the citation style that is approved by your thesis advisor.

Vita

You may include a brief vita with your thesis. A vita tells the reader basic facts about your educational experience. If you choose to include a vita, it must be the last page of your thesis and be numbered. It needs to be written in the third person (i.e. avoid the pronoun “I”). Refer to **Figure 5** for an example of a vita.

Figure 5 Sample Vita

The author (your full name) was born in (city and state). He/She attended (the name of your college/university) from 20xx to 20xx and received a Bachelor of Arts/Science in (your major/majors) in 20xx. He/She began work toward a Master of Arts/Fine Arts/Science in (subject of your graduate studies) at The College at Brockport, State University of New York in the Fall/Spring/Summer of 20xx.

PHYSICAL FORMAT

Prepare your manuscript using a word processing program.

Paper (for printed copies)

Use only one side of high-quality 25 percent or 100 percent cotton bond paper. Check the watermark on the paper to ensure that it is 25 percent or 100 percent cotton bond. Paper must be white and unlined and must be the standard 8-1/2” by 11” size.

Type Size, Font, and Print

Use a 10 or 12-point standard font such as Times New Roman, Helvetica, Geneva, Courier, or Palatino. Avoid using fancy fonts as they are difficult to read and are not appropriate for a thesis. Use the same font throughout the document. While illustrations may be in color, you should use only black type in your manuscript.

When printing your thesis, use a high quality ink jet or laser jet printer. Make sure the type is uniformly dark and crisp throughout the document. If you have your manuscript professionally photocopied, make sure you request that it is photocopied on 25 or 100 percent cotton bond paper and not on regular photocopier paper. Photocopying your thesis yourself may entail inappropriate paper and poor copy quality.

Corrections

The final draft of your thesis should represent a carefully proofread document and be free of grammatical and spelling errors. However, if you need to make a correction to the final printed draft of your thesis, do not use correction fluid as it can flake away. Instead, make corrections directly to the manuscript.

Pagination

Number **ALL** pages of your manuscript with the exception of the title page, signature page, and the copyright page. Begin numbering the pages with the dedication page or the acknowledgements page (if included). Otherwise, begin numbering with the table of contents. All numbered pages preceding the text of your thesis should be numbered with lower case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, ...). The text of your thesis should be numbered with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, ...). Check the style guide that your advisor approved to determine whether numbers should appear in the header or footer and whether they should be centered or in the right corner of the page.

Spacing

Indent every paragraph and double-space your manuscript, including the title page and copyright page. Check your selected style guide to determine whether long quotations, footnotes, the table of contents, and the bibliography should be single-spaced or double-spaced. Do not add extra spaces between paragraphs or sections.

Margins

To facilitate binding of printed copies, the left margin of your thesis must be 1-1/2". The remaining margins should be 1-1/4". Page numbers and illustrations must fit within the specified margins. If an illustration is too large to fit into the margins, reduce it so that it will fit.

Illustrations

Tables, figures, graphs, etc. must be numbered. Numeration can be consecutive (Table 1, Table 2, Table 3, etc.) or can be double numbers according to the placement of illustrations within specific chapters. For example, Table 5.1 would be the first table in chapter five of your thesis.

High-quality photocopies of photographs are preferred to actual photographs. However, you may affix original photographs in printed copies of the thesis using paper cement. Photographs should be mounted on the same cotton bond paper used throughout the thesis. All illustrations, including mounted photographs, must fit into the prescribed margins.

Checklist

1. Is your thesis paginated correctly, corresponding to the Table of Contents?
2. Did you use your full and official name on the title page, copyright page (if included), signature page, and vita?
3. Are the titles on the title page, signature page, and abstract exactly the same?
4. Are your margins correct?
5. If you are printing a copy, is your signature page on cotton bond paper?
6. Did you submit the required copies of your thesis to your department?
7. Depending on department guidelines, did you submit your work to Digital Commons at: Brockport.digitalcommons.edu? Are supplementary materials included as appropriate (e.g. video, data, etc.)?
8. If required, did you provide your department a copy of your thesis?

*Prepared by Natalie Sommerville
revised 2010 JS
revised 2013 MJO*