CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
FULLERTON

THESIS MANUAL

UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS
AND GUIDELINES

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The master's thesis is the culminating experience of your graduate program and a demonstration of your ability to develop and present a clear and scholarly work within your chosen field of study. Our goal in this final editorial process is to ensure that your thesis is a credit to this university and ultimately a lifelong source of pride for you.

Although our format requirements may differ from other formats in your particular field, our universally accepted style ensures that other scholars, wherever they may be or in whatever field, will understand the organization of ideas in your final published and archived work. Our format requirements are thus designed to provide a solid but "invisible" background to showcase your research and writing to as wide an audience as possible.

This manual includes general information regarding all university policies and procedures, and format requirements.

The manual answers most commonly asked questions about the thesis preparation and format and provides instructions on each step of the thesis process at CSUF. My final addition to this thesis manual would be to *get an early start!*

This manual cannot cover all situations or problems that may arise in the preparation of the manuscript. Any additional questions should first be discussed with the chair of your committee, of course, but do not hesitate to consult our staff at the Office of Graduate Studies or visit our website, since we are the official campus authority for reviewing and approving thesis form and style.

Finally, I note in some recent census data that only nine percent of the population holds an advanced degree; when CSUF publishes your thesis and places it in Pollak Library, you will join that select community of scholars. We are here to support you in accomplishing this important scholarly milestone.

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Dr. Elaine Frey
Assistant Vice President for Graduate Studies

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GENERAL INFORMATION

UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS

University regulations apply to all theses. Each section of the thesis will be checked by the University Thesis/Dissertation Reader for conformity to these requirements.

The CSUF thesis publication process requires a bound copy and a microfilm copy be deposited and catalogued in Pollak Library and the abstract to be published in an online database through ProQuest.

Your academic department may require an approved copy of your thesis as part of its graduation requirements, so you should check with your graduate program advisor as to what you need to provide to your department. Additional copies of your thesis may be ordered for personal use during your account creation with ProQuest.

Do not use previously approved work as your thesis guide; rather, use the Thesis Template available on our website. Any requests for deviations from our procedures and regulations must be made to the Office of Graduate Studies *prior to formal submission.*

DEADLINES

You must allow adequate time for reading and approval by your committee members prior to the submission deadline and for the formatting review process by the University Thesis/Dissertation Reader. Theses deadline dates are listed on the thesis and dissertation website. As you approach the end of your program, check the website frequently, as adjustments in various university-wide policies may affect these dates.

Typically, the deadline for submission for review by the University Thesis/Dissertation Reader is approximately four weeks before the last day of classes (see list below). Therefore, we recommend you schedule your thesis defense at least six weeks prior to the last day of classes of the appropriate semester—this will provide you around two weeks to make any changes before the submission deadline. The thesis MUST meet the submission deadlines posted on the thesis and dissertation website in order to graduate on time. Students may not request exceptions to our deadlines.

Student submission deadlines are typically:

- Summer graduation: early July

- Fall graduation: mid-November

- Spring graduation: late April

The University Thesis/Dissertation Reader will communicate with you using your CSUF email address. Please check your email regularly. Failure to promptly respond to these emails may delay your paper.

THESIS PLANNING

THE THESIS COMMITTEE

Before you begin writing your thesis, you need to choose a committee. The thesis committee is composed of a minimum of three full-time faculty members who supervise the research and writing of the thesis and approve its content. It is possible for a qualified person who is not a full-time university faculty member to serve as a visiting examiner and join in the approval of the thesis. This person then serves as the fourth member of the committee and is not a replacement for a full-time faculty committee member.

You and the chair of your committee will then choose a topic. The CSUF Library offers many helpful resources, workshops, and services to assist you in your choice of topic and your subsequent research.

Reference librarians will work one-on-one with individuals requesting research assistance on a specific research assignment, topic, or thesis. Research consultation sessions can be requested on-line under Get Help. This is a great way to explore the literature on topics you may be considering as a thesis subject.

The Graduate Student Success Center is a great resource for graduate students. Specialists can assist with writing, research strategies, and citation sourcing. Appointments with a Graduate Success Consultant should be made well in advance of your formal submission.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is solely your responsibility to comply with this manual and meet the required deadlines.

Departmental programs may specify the style manual and use of technical terminology (if applicable) for the thesis. University guidelines govern all form and physical requirements such as font, margins, spacing, page numbering, etc. Remember that you are producing a final product for archiving on several different platforms; therefore, university requirements take precedence if there is conflict between departmental or style requirements and this manual or the Thesis Template.

Before thesis submission, be sure that your thesis meets all departmental and university style and formatting guidelines and proofread thoroughly and to the best of your ability. If this manual does not answer your questions adequately, feel free to contact the Office of Graduate Studies for assistance. Failure to properly format and proofread you work may lead to delay of your paper.

In addition to your committee, the library, the University Learning Center, Graduate Success Consultants, the Graduate Student Success Center, and our office, the internet abounds with practical help for thesis writers. Use your favorite search engines to find answers or tutorials to questions like how to cite a film correctly and when to use a semicolon. Be careful to make sure that the information you find is consistent with university and style guide requirements and remember: in the case of discrepancy, university requirements take precedence.

RESEARCH SUBJECTS, COPYRIGHT, OR
UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL APPROVAL

If you plan to use human participants in your thesis, you may be required to obtain approval for their use from the CSUF Institutional Review Board (IRB). Their office is located at ASC-228. This approval process is based on various federal regulations and university policies intended to protect you as well as your subjects. The process may take several weeks, so check with your committee chair and the IRB early on how to obtain this approval. The IRB website provides valuable information and forms.

If you use copyrighted or unpublished material in your thesis, whether directly copied or paraphrased, you must give full credit to the author and/or publisher. This includes images, graphs, charts, etc., as well as text. Be sure to obtain the appropriate permission, cite your sources appropriately, and abide by fair use guidelines.

Common citations styles include APA, IEEE, Chicago, and JSCR, but committees are free to chose any style that is well-documented. Please note that the Reader may request documentation style guidelines for less common formats.

If you are unsure if your citations are correct, are concerned that something may not be fair use, or have any questions about citation and references, please contact the University Thesis/Dissertation Reader and consider making an appointment with a Graduate Success Consultant or seeking help through the library. It is much easier to make citation and reference corrections earlier in the process, rather than later, so please plan accordingly.

MANUSCRIPT GUIDELINES

THE THESIS TEMPLATE

The Thesis Template is available on our website and contains complete instructions, guidelines, and examples for formatting requirements. It also serves as the final file into which content must be copied before submission.

The Thesis Template is divided into parts that appear in the following order:

1. TITLE PAGE
2. ABSTRACT
3. TABLE OF CONTENTS
4. LIST OF TABLES (if any)
5. LIST OF FIGURES (if any)
6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (if any)
7. BODY
8. APPENDIX or APPENDICES (if any)
9. REFERENCES

This section provides very brief descriptions of each part. For full instructions please refer to the Thesis Template.

TITLE PAGE. Contains the paper title, student name, degree title, department, etc.

ABSTRACT. Limited to one page, your Abstract is also uploaded to ProQuest. It should include a statement of the problem, procedures or methods, results, and conclusion—the equivalent of a short statement you might use in response to the question "What is your thesis about?"

TABLE OF CONTENTS, LIST OF FIGURES, LIST OF TABLES. The Table of Contents includes all sections, headings, and some subheadings in your thesis. The List of Figures and List of Tables list all figures and tables, respectively, except those that only appear in appendices. Please be sure to double-check all page numbers before submission.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS. An optional personal statement.

BODY. Your work divided into chapters. The body may optionally include tables and/or figures. Tables must be created using Word's table feature (please do not use images of tables). All images, including maps, graphs, charts, etc., are considered figures.

APPENDICES. Appendices cover a range of different formats and materials, and as such, they are not subject to regular formatting rules. The most important requirement for appendices is that all material fits with the Thesis Template margins.

REFERENCES. Committees must select a documentation style, and the student is responsible for ensuring all references and citations match that style. The Reader may request a copy of style documentation.

STYLE MANUALS

The academic unit, through the student's advisor and/or committee, is responsible for the academic content and English usage in the thesis and for the student's correct use of forms of documentation and bibliography. Students should consult their graduate program advisor or committee chair concerning the style manual used. Students must use the latest edition of any particular style manual.

The standardized set of procedures that codify written communications is referred to as a "style method." Each department follows a particular style method, which includes how to cite sources in the text (parenthetically or footnote) and reference them. The Pollak Library website is a terrific resource, and the internet has a variety of sites that display style guides. In the case of conflicts between style guidelines refer to university requirements.

When signing off to approve your paper, your chair will identify which style you are using. The University Thesis/Dissertation Reader will then check that your thesis complies with that style.

Identify your style early and comply with it. It is far easier to do your citations correctly from the beginning than to go in and revise them. When in doubt, follow the template.

THESIS REVIEW PROCESS

The thesis review process can go smoothly and quickly if the student has reviewed this manual and the Thesis Template thoroughly and followed all guidelines during the thesis preparation phase. Please remember that it is always better to ask about anything you are unsure of and to receive an answer than to do something incorrectly and to have to revise it after submission.

UNIVERSITY THESIS/DISSERTATION READER

The University Thesis/Dissertation Reader verifies that all CSUF thesis and dissertation manuscripts comply with university regulations and format requirements and are consistent in style. For further information or clarification of any of the regulations in this manual or in the Thesis Template, contact the Office of Graduate Studies at thesisdisshelpdesk@fullerton.edu or (657) 278-2618.

PRELIMINARY CHECK

We urge each candidate to obtain a preliminary review by the University Thesis/Dissertation Reader after completing a chapter or two. While this review is not mandatory, it is highly recommended.

The University Thesis/Dissertation Reader will check general formatting (including table and figure conformity), as well as briefly review citation and style requirements. These checks can save you needless reformatting headaches and wasted time. In general, papers that receive preliminary checks are reviewed more quickly and with fewer revisions at the end of the semester.

Requests for preliminary checks may be made to the Office of Graduate Studies via thesisdisshelpdesk@fullerton.edu.

THESIS SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

When officially submitting their thesis to the Office of Graduate Studies by the submission deadline, students must create an account with ProQuest (for printing and archiving) and must complete the CSUF Thesis/Dissertation Submission Form online.

Once you have submitted your thesis to the Office of Graduate Studies, no changes or additions in content will be allowed by you or your faculty. This is referred to as a content-lock.

Your thesis is then reviewed for formatting compliance, as described in the Thesis Template. The University Thesis/Dissertation Reader does not proofread—that is the student's responsibility—but during the formal review, issues may be brought to the student's attention for correction.

When your thesis meets all minimal submission requirements (formatting and proofing to the best of your ability and defense and approval by all committee members), you are ready to submit the manuscript for formal review by the University Thesis/Dissertation Reader, who verifies that each thesis meets all formal requirements established by the university.

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW

1. At the time of submission, the student provides the following materials. The thesis is reviewed only after both items are completed:

    i. *ProQuest* student account creation and fees verification. A detailed guide is available on the Office of Graduate Studies website to assist with this process. Students may order personal copies of their thesis at this time in addition to the required library copies. Students must pay all associated fees.

    ii. *CSUF Thesis/Dissertation Submission Form.* This is a simple online form which collects student and committee contact information, ScholarWorks visibility options and publishing agreement, and requires the student to upload their finalized, committee-approved paper.

2. Upon the creation of a ProQuest account and completion of the CSUF Thesis/Dissertation Submission Form, the Office of Graduate Studies will review the submission forms to make sure all requirements have been met and that all provided information is consistent. The University Thesis/Dissertation Reader is notified that the thesis is ready for review.

3. The University Thesis/Dissertation Reader reviews all papers in the order in which they were submitted—no exceptions—to verify adherence to the guidelines listed in this manual and the Thesis Template.

4. After this review, the student is notified if (a) any general corrections are needed, or (b) all university regulations have been met. If there are corrections, is it the student's responsibility to correct the thesis and resubmit it directly to the Reader in accordance with their instructions. This process continues until all university regulations have been met, at which point the student is sent the final PDF for approval. All communication with the Reader will take place via the student's CSUF email address. Please check regularly to avoid delay during the review process. If the Reader asks for corrections, please resubmit them directly to the via email, rather than re-uploading the paper to ProQuest.

5. Upon student approval, the University Thesis/Dissertation Reader uploads the approved thesis PDF to the student's ProQuest account, approves it on ProQuest, and the student is notified that all thesis requirements have been met.

6. ProQuest notifies the Office of Graduate Studies that the thesis has been finalized and sends the bound thesis and microfilm directly to the Pollak Library and any other bound copies directly to the student, if requested.

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

COPYWRITING YOUR OWN WORK. We advise students to consider a copyright of their thesis, as their papers are now accessible worldwide; however, please note that copyright privileges now vest immediately upon creating your work, without the requirement of notice or registration.

USING THE WORK OF OTHERS. We advise you to consult your committee. Acquire permission to reproduce materials early on, so that if you are unable to obtain permission you can work around it. More detailed information on copyright use and infringement is available at United States Copyright Office and ProQuest. ProQuest will publish your abstract and then profit from sales of copies of your thesis, and so will require permission letters for copyrighted material. ProQuest provides sample permission letters and links to more expert copyright information. Permissions must be obtained prior to thesis submission.

PUBLICATION

BINDING AND MICROFILMING REQUIREMENTS. One hardbound copy and one microfilm of your thesis designated for Pollak Library must be ordered through ProQuest during the online submission process, and you are responsible for payment of the fees for this copy and its microfilm. Students must enter into an agreement with ProQuest authorizing them to both publish their abstract in the *Masters Abstracts International* bulletin and database, and to archive and distribute their thesis.

DEPOSIT OF THE THESIS IN THE LIBRARY. ProQuest sends the bound copy and the microfilm directly to Pollak Library, where they are catalogued and housed in the appropriate collection. Thus, your thesis will have permanent on-demand access to full text in three media (print, microform, and digital).

AWARD OF THE DEGREE

The appropriate faculty reports the grade for the thesis to the registrar in the usual manner. ProQuest notifies the Office of Graduate Studies that the approved thesis has been deposited, the fees paid, and the agreement for microfilming and publication of the abstract has been completed by the student. After all the steps in the thesis submission and review process have been completed, and assuming that an Application for Graduation Check for the Master's Degree has been filed by the appropriate deadline; the Office of Graduate Studies will review and determine if all other university requirements are complete. Only after these reviews and certifications is the student recommended for the award of the master's degree. This review occurs in the weeks following the end of the semester and can take from one to three months.