

# UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

## DISSERTATION/THESIS/PROJECT FORMATTING HANDBOOK

A guide for UAF graduate students on how to prepare their  
Doctoral Dissertation, Master's Thesis, or Master's Project

Spring 2024



University of Alaska Fairbanks

*Our Troth Yeddha' Campus is located on the ancestral lands of the Dena people of the lower Tanana River. As the late Chief Peter John of Minto reminds us, Athabaskan people have gathered in this place of thinking and working for a long time. We are honored to continue in that tradition.*

UAF Graduate School  
(907) 474-7464  
[www.uaf.edu/gradschool](http://www.uaf.edu/gradschool)  
[uaf-grad-school@alaska.edu](mailto:uaf-grad-school@alaska.edu)

## Foreword

Dear UAF Student,

Congratulations, you have worked hard and done significant work to get to this point in your degree. As you complete your dissertation, thesis or project, I want to thank you for your perseverance and commitment to graduate scholarship at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. I also acknowledge Derek Arnold, of the Department of Biology and Wildlife, for his assistance in preparing the dissertation, thesis and project templates.

Richard Collins, Graduate School Director

University of Alaska Fairbanks, Troth Yeddha' Campus,

October 2023

### 1. Form of Dissertations/Theses/Projects

Templates of Dissertation/Thesis/Project are available in LaTeX and Microsoft Word. All dissertations/theses/projects are organized with front material (i.e., title page, abstract that have page numbers in Roman numerals) and the content material (i.e., chapters and appendices in dissertations/theses, chapters, presentation slides or other material in projects that have page numbers in Arabic numerals). The content material in a Project can be a series of chapters with figures and tables or can be a presentation of art work, design, music, software, or other creative work. If the project is organized with formal chapters, figures, and tables, then the front material should include a Table of Contents, List of Figures, and List of Tables.

The front material for each of these is shown in Table 1.1. Items in italics are optional.

Dissertation/Thesis/Project Front Material			
Order	Page Number	Dissertation or Thesis	Project
1	i	Title Page	Title Page
2	ii	Blank	Blank
3	iii	Copyright	Copyright
4	iv	<i>Dedication</i>	<i>Dedication</i>
5	v or iv	Abstract	Abstract
6	vi or v	<i>Plain Word Summary</i>	<i>Plain Word Summary</i>
7	vii, vi, or v	<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>Acknowledgements</i>
8	viii, vii or vi	Table of Contents	<i>Table of Contents</i>
9	...	List of Figures	<i>List of Figures</i>
10	....	List of Tables	<i>List of Tables</i>

Table 1.1: Front material required for Dissertations, Theses, and Projects at the UAF.

The Abstract and Plain Word Summary do not exceed 300 words each. If either Abstract or Plain Word Summary are omitted the page number of the subsequent sections are decreased accordingly. For example, if the Dedication is included then the Abstract is on page v, and if it is omitted then the Abstract appears on page iv.

## **1.1 Form of Dissertation & Thesis**

A dissertation or thesis can be written in “monograph style” or in “manuscript style”. The “monograph style” allows you present your work as a book on a single specialized topic. The “manuscript style” allows you present your work as a collection of papers. For theses submitted in partial fulfillment of the Master of Fine Arts that are based on poems, plays, screen plays, and/or short stories the document can follow an “MFA style”.

### **1.1.1 Monograph Style**

In the “monograph style” the document is a series of chapters that address specific areas of your study (i.e., Introduction, Literature review, Methods and materials, Results, ...). The monograph style document includes a single abstract, one introductory chapter, one concluding chapter, and one references section. Thus, for example a monograph style dissertation/thesis may have five chapters; Chapter 1: Introduction, Chapter 2: Literature review, Chapter 3: Methods and Materials, Chapter 4: Results, Chapter 5: Conclusions. The document can also include Appendices as required.

### **1.1.2 Manuscript Style**

In the “manuscript style” the document is a series of chapters that starts with a general introduction, a series of chapters that is each a paper, and a final chapter that is a general conclusion. The abstract of the document summarizes the series of papers. Each chapter of the manuscript style document includes its own reference section as a section of the chapter. The abstracts of each of the papers appear as the first section of their corresponding chapters. The appendices of each of the papers appear as the final sections of their corresponding chapters. Thus, for example a manuscript style dissertation/thesis based on three papers has five chapters; Chapter 1: General Introduction, Chapter 2: First Paper, Chapter 3: Second Paper, Chapter 4: Third Paper, Chapter 5: General Conclusions. The document can also include Appendices as required. In the event that the document is based on a single paper, the document has three chapters; Chapter 1: General Introduction, Chapter 2: Paper, Chapter 3: General Conclusions. The formal citations of each of the papers should be listed in Chapter 1: General Introduction.

### 1.1.3 MFA Style

In the “MFA style” the document starts with an introductory chapter that provides a general introduction or artist’s statement. This introductory chapter is followed by the artistic work in a consistent style that meets professional standards (e.g., screen play) or a style approved by the program (e.g., collection of poems). The requirements for the “MFA Style” thesis are that the document has a Title Page, Blank, Copyright, Abstract, Table of Contents, List of Figures (if necessary), List of Tables (if necessary), and Introductory Chapter. The Dedication, Plain Word Summary, and Acknowledgements are optional.

### 1.1.4 File Names

Each semester we work with 50-60 students and their document files as they go through several revisions in the rough-and-tumble of the last weeks of the semester. A standard naming convention would be very helpful for your files and avoid confusion in working through different versions of your documents. We recommend the following approach based on a student called Anthony Stark graduating in May 2024;

Stark_PhD_May24_vXX	PhD Dissertation
Stark_M_Thesis_May24_vXX	Master’s Thesis
Stark_M_Project_May24_vXX	Master’s Project

Students graduate in May, August and December. Use “May”, “Aug” and “Dec” to indicate the month. The “v” indicates the version number which can be numbered “XX” as “01”, “02”, as you progressively edit the document.

## 1.2 Form of Project

A project can be formatted like a conventional book thesis where work is presented in chapters, or it can be formatted to present art work, design, music, software, or other creative work. In both cases the title page differs from the thesis, in that the college/school dean and graduate school director do not appear, as they are not required to approve a project. Only the names of the graduate advisory committee members and the department/program chair appear on the title page. The minimum requirements for the project are that the document has a Title Page, Blank, Copyright, and Abstract. All other pages are optional.

## 2 Authorship

A dissertation/thesis/project is a single-author piece of work and represents your work. Increasingly, scholars are conducting their work in teams and papers are being published with groups of co-authors. If

you include co-authored work in your document, you must explicitly explain your contribution to the work with the citation in the General Introduction. You can also present co-authored work by editing the paper to focus on your contribution and presenting it as a chapter in a “monograph style” document. In this case, again explain the context of the work in the Introduction.

### **3 Research Approval**

If your research requires Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), Institutional Review Board (IRB) or other review, demonstrate that approval by including a copy of the approval letter as an Appendix in your document.

### **4 Copyright**

Your dissertation/thesis/project is your original work that you have captured in a “sufficiently permanent” medium. You are the author and the owner of your dissertation/thesis/project even in the absence of an explicit statement of copyright. However, to make your ownership of the document explicit, a formal copyright page is included as the third page of the document. You as the author are responsible for the use and presentation of the copyrighted material of others in your document. Written permission must be obtained for inclusion of copyrighted material and should be cited in the Introductory chapter. Copyright applies to most published materials including most information, illustrations, and images available on the Internet, regardless of whether there is an explicit statement of copyright. Materials on the websites of some U.S. government agencies are not copyrighted. However, the source of each of these materials should be included in the references.

### **5 Important Formatting Details**

Margins, numbering, and more.....

#### **5.1 Margins**

All margins should be one inch (1”) on all sides. These margins apply to all text, figures, tables, and appendices in the document.

#### **5.2 Page Numbering**

Lower-case Roman numerals are used to number the front material of the document from the Blank Page (ii) onwards. The Title Page is number (i), though the number does not appear on the page. Arabic numerals are then used beginning with the first page. Page numbers are centered one-half inch (1/2”) from the bottom of the page, with the text ending one-inch (1”) from the bottom. The page numbers on

pages that have a landscape format (e.g., figures and tables) have the same orientation and position as the pages with portrait format.

Chapters and major sections begin on right-hand pages (odd-numbered) to allow double-sided printing. Insert blank pages with page numbers as necessary. Sections and sub-sections within the chapters do not need to start on new pages, unless the (sub-)section heading appears alone at the bottom of a page.

### **5.3 Line Spacing & Font Size**

The text is one-and-one-half- spaced throughout. Font type is any simple, non-script font between 10 pt and 12 pt. The font size can be reduced in Figure and Table captions but remain larger than 6 pt. Insert 12 pt space after chapter (and front material) headings. Insert 12 pt space before section and sub-section headings. If a subsection heading immediately follows a section heading with no text between them, do not add the 12 pt spacing before the subsection. If a section heading immediately follows a chapter title, do not add the 12 pt spacing before the heading, the spacing after the chapter title is sufficient. If text from figures, titles, or equations is running too close to the chapter text following it, insert space between them.

### **5.4 Spelling, Punctuation & General Neatness**

Use language, grammar, and punctuation in a professional manner as this is the final (and arguably the most significant) indicator of your scholarship. Use punctuation that is “neat in form and consistent”;

- a) Use the same font throughout your document
- b) Use consistent fonts, styles and capitalization in all headings and subheadings
- c) Use consistent formats for the references throughout the “monograph style” document or within the chapters of the “manuscript style” document.
- d) Avoid separating section and subsection headings from their text at the bottom of pages. Use page breaks to keep headings and text together.

### **5.5 Headings**

Use bold font for Chapter (and Front Material) headings, section headings, subsection headings, and sub-subsection headings. Heading appear as plain text in the table of contents.

### **5.6 Footnotes & Endnotes**

Avoid footnotes and endnotes.

## **6 The Details of the Front Material**

The front material or preliminary pages includes the following pages in the sequence shown in Table 1.1

## **6.1 The Title Page**

The Title Page is page ‘i’, but the page number does not appear on the page. Acronyms and abbreviations are avoided, unless they are commonly understood (e.g., DNA, USA) or more commonly recognized than the written-out version (e.g., MODIS).

The date of the degree is the month and year that the degree is awarded. The degree is awarded by the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF). UAF degrees are awarded in May (spring semester), August (summer semester), and December (fall semester).

Dissertations and theses are approved by the graduate advisory committee, the department/program chair, the college/school dean, and the director of the graduate school. The members of the graduate advisory committee, the department/program chair, the college/school dean, and the director of the graduate school are listed on the title page of dissertations and theses. The chair(s) of the committee are listed first. Projects are approved by the graduate advisory committee and the department/program chair. The members of the graduate advisory committee, and the department/program chair, are listed on the title page of projects. Your committee members may choose to use middle initials you can confirm with them and use as they request.

## **6.2 Blank Page**

Page ‘ii’ is a blank page, but the page number does not appear on the page. This blank page is required to facilitate printing hardcopies of the document. It is required by ProQuest, the organization which serves as an archive for the University of Alaska, as well as the Library of Congress and Universities across the nation and around the world. All UAF theses and dissertations are archived with ProQuest. ProQuest sells bound hardcopies of dissertations and theses on request.

## **6.3 Copyright**

The Copyright Page is page ‘iii’ and numbered. This page serves as an explicit reminder that the dissertation/thesis/projects is your personal intellectual work. The page is numbered.

## **6.4 Dedication (Optional)**

The Dedication page is page ‘iv’ and numbered. This is where you can give special mention, thanks, or acknowledgements to a certain person, group of people, or place. The style is to type the name the person or group (e.g., parents, spouse, partner, sibling, mentor, etc.) and then if you wish, add a brief message explaining the dedication (e.g., mentor who inspired you in high school). If you add a message add a colon “:” at the end of the name, if you do not add a message end the list of names with a period “.”. You can also choose to base your dedication on a Land Acknowledgement, dedicating it to the



traditional residents or communities of the place(s) associated with your study. The Dedication appears as a single page.

## **6.5 Abstract**

The Abstract is page ‘v’ or ‘iv’ and numbered. The Abstract is a summary of the work that does not exceed 300 words. The Abstract is a single paragraph. References do not appear in the abstract. The abstract includes the following;

- a) The topic/problem that is addressed
- b) The significance of the topic/problem
- c) The work that was completed
- d) The important results and their implications (the “take home” message).

Acronyms and abbreviations are avoided, unless they are commonly understood (e.g., DNA, USA) or more commonly recognized than the written-out version (e.g., MODIS).

## **6.6 Plain Word Summary (Optional)**

The Plain Word Summary follows the abstract, and is an optional summary of the work that does not exceed 300 words. The Plain Word Summary is a single paragraph. The Plain Word Summary should summarize your scientific study, its results, and their broader relevance without using jargon so that it is understandable by readers from outside of your discipline, as well as journalists and educators. The Plain Word Summary is page ‘vi’ or ‘v’, and is numbered.

## **6.7 Acknowledgements (Optional)**

The Acknowledgments section is where you recognize and thank everyone (mentor, committee, friends, family, colleagues, organizations, agencies) who helped you with your dissertation/thesis/project. It’s a way to show your appreciation to them in a public and permanent forum. It is also the section where you can formally report any agencies and organizations that provided financial or other material support for your work (e.g., I thank the UAF graduate school for a degree completion fellowship). You can also include a Land Acknowledgement in the Acknowledgements. Refer to persons, organizations, and places consistently in the Acknowledgements. The Acknowledgement pages are numbered in Roman numerals following the preceding section.

## **6.8 Table of Contents**

The title block “Table of Contents” appear at the upper margin of the first page and be centered. The title block is not repeated on any subsequent pages. Dotted leaders should be used between headings and page numbers. The Table of Contents lists all chapters and sections (at all levels) from the main body of

the document. Distinct sections must have section headings. Specifically, the list must contain all chapter and section numbers (if used), their titles, and the page numbers on which they begin. Each title in the Table of Contents must match the title in the text exactly. Appendices (regardless of number) are listed with their titles in the same style as the chapters. Appendices can be listed as a series numbered as A1, A2, A3, ... (i.e., Appendix A1: Title, Appendix A2: Title ...) or A, B, C, ... (i.e., Appendix A: Title, Appendix B: Title ...). If the Table of Contents spans several pages, the title block only appears on the first page. The Table of Contents pages are numbered in Roman numerals following the preceding section.

## **6.9 List of Figures**

The title block "List of Figures" must appear at the upper margin of the page and be centered. The title block is not repeated on any subsequent pages. The first page of the List of Figures is listed in the Table of Contents. Dotted leader lines are used between headings and page numbers. There are two ways to list the caption of each Figure. You can choose one style and use it consistently;

- a) Use the entire caption as it appears with its corresponding Figure in the document.
- b) Use a short version of the entire caption, either the complete first sentence or enough words in the first sentence to provide a unique entry.

If the List of Figures spans several pages, the title block only appears on the first page. The List of Figures pages are numbered in Roman numerals following the preceding section.

## **6.10 List of Tables**

The List of Tables follows the List of Figures and uses the same format. Other comments relevant to the List of Figures and its captions or titles apply. If the List of Tables spans several pages, the title block only appears on the first page. The List of Tables pages are numbered in Roman numerals following the preceding section.

## **7 List of abbreviations**

If you wish to present a list of abbreviations, present it as the first Appendix of your dissertation/thesis/project. Reference this Appendix in the first chapter of the document. Abbreviations should be avoided in the Title Page and Abstract.

## **8 Prefaces & Forewords**

A preface is an introduction that typically states its subject, scope, or aims. A foreword is a short introductory statement, often written by someone other than the author. Prefaces and forewords are not included as specific elements of UAF dissertations/theses/projects. The introductory comments associated with a preface/forward can be included in the introductory (or first) chapter.

## **9 First & Last Chapters**

The first (or introductory) chapter of a dissertation/thesis is an introduction to the work, and the last chapter is usually a conclusion and summary of the work.

## 9.1 First Chapter

The first Chapter, Chapter 1, begins on page “1” of the document. This Introductory chapter (which may be titled “General Introduction” in a “manuscript style” document) can serve a variety purposes, including;

- a) A technical introduction to the subject of the dissertation/thesis/project,
- b) A statement that explains your personal/professional motivation of the work and shares your journey,
- c) Documentation of related work that you completed as a graduate student is not included in the dissertation/thesis/project,
- d) Tying the papers together thematically that constitute the chapters in a “manuscript style” dissertation/thesis,
- e) Land and community acknowledgements that you wish to explain in terms of the subject matter of the dissertation/thesis/project,
- f) Note any variations in geographic names,
- g) Highlight any IACUC, IBC, or IRB research approvals,
- h) The organization of the document, noting where if any elements of work has been formally presented or published. This is where you formally cite the publications associated with the chapters in a “manuscript style” dissertation/thesis.

## 9.2 Last Chapter

The last chapter is the conclusion of the document. It may provide a summary of the main findings of the dissertation/thesis/project, the associated conclusions, and suggestions for further work. In a “manuscript style” dissertation/thesis (where this chapter may be titled “General Conclusions”) it may summarize the conclusions of the individual papers and then provide a synthesizing statement and/or some additional general conclusions. Furthermore, the chapter may present conclusions that were rejected by the reviewers in the peer review of the papers, but are considered significant by the student and graduate advisory committee.

## 10 References

The style of the references can be chosen by the student. The only requirement is that the referencing style is consistent throughout the document. In a “monograph style” document the references appear in a single chapter that is unnumbered after the last chapter and before the appendices. In a “manuscript style” document the references appear at the end of each chapter as a numbered section. The reference style used by the specific journal can be used in the associated chapter, and so the style may vary chapter

to chapter. However, the first and last chapters (e.g., General Introduction, General Conclusions) must use the same reference style.

## 11 Archive

As scholars we would like every dissertation, thesis, and project to be a public document. This represents our academic commitment to open enquiry, as well as our goal of providing a public record of the work that has been done at the university. This latter point is particularly important for a public state university, like UAF, where public monies are supporting the work that is presented in dissertations, theses, and projects (if not directly, certainly through the expertise of the faculty and institutional resources). University of Alaska Board of Regents Policy Regulation (R.10.070.050.C.3.c) specifies that while a student retains the copyright of their work, as part of their degree award the university has the right to reproduce and distribute copies of the dissertations, thesis, and project.

Accordingly, we archive Dissertations and Theses with ProQuest and ScholarWorks@UA, while we archive Projects at ScholarWorks@UA alone. ProQuest is a company, based in Michigan, that archives dissertations and theses for access by libraries around the world. The ProQuest Digital Database is designated as an official off-site repository of the United States Library of Congress. The ProQuest also serves as the off-site archive of the University of Alaska. ScholarWorks@UA serves as the institutional open repository for the University of Alaska.