

# **MASTER'S THESIS MANUAL**

School of Communication  
January 2008



UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

THESIS MANUAL  
OF THE  
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION  
UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

REVISED EDITION

© SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION, January 2008

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Topic	Page
INTRODUCTION .....	5
Thesis Timetable .....	6
The Thesis Process .....	7
Step 1: Deciding to Do A Thesis: .....	7
Step 2: Choosing a Thesis Director .....	7
Step 3: Choosing a Thesis Committee .....	7
Step 4: Reviewing Literature and Choosing a Specific Topic .....	8
Step 5: Preparing the Thesis Proposal .....	8
Step 6: The Thesis Proposal Meeting.....	8
Step 7: Doing the Research.....	9
Step 8: Writing The Thesis .....	9
Selecting a Style Manual.....	9
Selecting Software .....	10
Step 9: Thesis Defense .....	10
Step 10: Making Revisions and Submitting the Thesis .....	11
Binding .....	11
Divisions of the Thesis.....	12
Preliminary Pages:.....	12
The Text Itself:.....	14
Tables, Figures, Illustrations, Etc. ....	15
Material following the text: .....	15
Format and Style.....	17
Format and Style.....	17
Margins .....	17
Page Numbers.....	17
Spacing .....	17
Headings.....	17
Tense and Point of View .....	18
Quotations .....	18
Footnotes, Endnotes, and Parenthetical Citations .....	18
Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols .....	18
Foreign Words and Phrases .....	18
Use of Numbers .....	19
Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation.....	19
Suggested Final Checklist.....	20
General:.....	20
Table of Contents:.....	20

Headings: .....	20
Footnotes/Endnotes/References: .....	20
Quotations: .....	20
Abbreviations: .....	21
Appendices:.....	21
To Complete the Degree:.....	21
Appendices.....	22
Appendix A: Approval of Thesis Committee Form.....	23
Appendix B: Thesis Proposal Approval Form .....	24
Appendix C: Sample Announcement of Thesis Defense.....	25
Appendix D: Results of Thesis Defense Form .....	26
Appendix E: Sample Thesis Approval Sheet.....	27
Appendix F: Form of Heading of Abstract.....	28
Appendix G: Form of Title Page of Thesis .....	29
Appendix H: Form of Simple Table of Contents.....	30
Appendix I: Form of Detailed Table of Contents .....	31

## INTRODUCTION

Dear Student,

This manual represents an attempt to produce a comprehensive set of instructions for completing a Master's thesis in the School of Communication, University of Hartford. No two people have the exact same experience in writing a thesis due to the nature of the research topic and the dynamics of the thesis committee. Hence, a manual of this type is designed only to offer guidelines and to give an overview of the process. Your thesis director and committee ultimately approve the final version of the thesis, so their advice should be sought throughout the process.

During the entire process, please share with the faculty and the Graduate Director any suggestions you have for making this manual more comprehensive, accurate and informative. Our intent is to update the manual each year until students and faculty feel that no more changes are required. We want to hear your suggestions!

We think you will find the thesis experience highly challenging, educational and rewarding. This is an accomplishment of which you can be proud. This thesis will also be available as a soft copy along with all the associated forms on the Blackboard site for graduate students at <http://blackboard.hartford.edu>. You will need a University of Hartford email id to access the site.

Sincerely

The Graduate Faculty  
School of Communication

## Thesis Timetable

There are many factors that affect the pace at which someone completes the thesis process including personal work habits, the nature of the research, whether the student is also working full-time, and so forth. This section, therefore, presents a general timetable for full-time students completing the Master's Degree in two years. This timetable is meant to be suggestive. As for all other aspects of the process, you need to consult your thesis director about your individual timetable. For part-time students there is much more variation in the pace with which the thesis is completed; thus it is not possible to present a timetable of this sort.

In general students take about one academic year (two semesters) to complete the thesis, although many of them decide on a general topic area and do some preliminary reading prior to the fall semester of their second year. The steps that were described in the previous section generally occur as follows:

### Fall Semester

- Step 1: Deciding to do a thesis
- Step 2: Choosing a thesis director
- Step 3: Choosing a thesis committee
- Step 4: Reviewing the literature and choosing a specific topic
- Step 5: Prepare the thesis proposal
- Step 6: The thesis proposal meeting

### Spring Semester

- Step 7: Doing the research
- Step 8: Writing the thesis
- Step 9: Thesis defense
- Step 10: Making revisions and submitting the thesis

If you are not enrolled in classes while you work on the thesis, you need to pay a thesis continuance fee for each semester until you complete the thesis. This fee is approximately \$25.00 each time you file for thesis continuance. Stop by the Bursar's office at the beginning of the semester to confirm and pay the fee and complete the necessary form.

The Arts and Sciences Graduate Studies Committee sets dates for each semester that establish the last day to announce a thesis defense, the last day to defend a thesis, and the last day to submit a completed thesis. Consult your advisor or thesis director or the Communication Department Graduate Program Director for these dates. These dates are also updated regularly on the Blackboard site for graduate students maintained by the School.

## The Thesis Process

This section is designed to provide an overview of the thesis process so that you have a clearer understanding of what it entails. This is intended as a guide; individual thesis directors may suggest slight modifications. You need to work closely with your thesis director and your thesis committee.

### Step 1: Deciding to Do A Thesis:

You need to begin by discussing the idea of a thesis with your program faculty advisor. He or she can help you decide whether the thesis option makes the most sense for you. This manual, of course, takes the decision to write a thesis, as the starting point.

A student earns six credit hours for completing a thesis. To earn these credits you must sign up for 'CMM 790: Thesis Preparation' (3 credits) and 'CMM 791: Thesis' (3 credits).' Students generally enroll in CMM 790 for the semester when they begin the thesis and CMM 791 for the second semester of thesis work. Grades of "I" (incomplete) are given until the thesis defense has been successfully completed. At that point the thesis director assigns the grades.

### Step 2: Choosing a Thesis Director

Once you have made the decision to undertake a thesis, you need to select a full time faculty member to direct that thesis. The thesis director is your primary contact throughout the thesis process and has the greatest influence on all aspects of the thesis, from selection of the specific topic to writing style. This person may or may not be your program faculty advisor. What is most important is that you choose someone who has expertise in the topic you wish to study so that they can provide the kind of direction you will need. This means that you need to have a topic area (although not necessarily a specific research question) in mind before choosing a director. A second consideration in selecting a thesis director is your ability to work with that person. Finally, the faculty member must agree to serve in that capacity.

### Step 3: Choosing a Thesis Committee

In addition to a thesis director, you must **select at least one additional full-time faculty member from the School of Communication** and one full-time faculty member from either the School of Communication or from outside of the department to serve on the thesis committee. The outside member is strongly recommended and must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

These individuals, along with the thesis director, serve the following functions:

- (1) They are consulted in the thesis proposal writing process (described later);
- (2) They reach a decision regarding the approval or disapproval of a thesis proposal;
- (3) They are consulted in the thesis research and writing process;
- (4) They read and evaluate the final submitted version of the thesis and make suggestions for revising the thesis;
- (5) They are the questioners in the thesis oral defense (described later); and
- (6) Their approval is required on the final version of the thesis.

Your thesis director can and should help you select the thesis committee members. The primary criteria for selecting committee members are the same as for choosing a thesis director:

- (1) The individuals have expertise in the topic area and/or research methodology;

- (2) The individuals are people you can work with; and
- (3) The individuals are willing to serve as committee members.

The purposes of recommending the inclusion of a committee member from outside the department are to:

- (1) To provide an alternative perspective, specifically the viewpoint of someone from outside the field who can raise important critical questions;
- (2) To provide additional information/resources from another field with which you may not be familiar; and
- (3) To ensure that the thesis is readable to people from disciplines other than communication.

When your committee has been selected, you need to complete an “Approval of Thesis Committee Form” (See Appendix A). You then submit a copy of the form to the Graduate Director of the School of Communication and the original to the Director of Graduate Studies for the College of Arts and Sciences.

#### Step 4: Reviewing Literature and Choosing a Specific Topic

When you selected your thesis director and committee, you undoubtedly had only a general topic area. Now you need to narrow that topic area to a specific research question or questions. Your thesis director is the primary person to work with in this phase, which involves an extensive review of existing literature on the topic and research method you intend to use. (Reviewing literature on the method usually comes later because at this time you do not yet know what that method will be.) The process of choosing a topic and narrowing that topic cannot be separated from the process of conducting a review of the literature. As you read the published literature and gain familiarity with the topic, you gain a better sense of what questions remain about that topic and how others have studied it. At the completion of this stage, then, you should have your topic narrowed and may even have written specific research questions.

#### Step 5: Preparing the Thesis Proposal

Once you have your specific topic and have reviewed a substantial amount of the literature on that subject, you are ready to work with your thesis director to write a thesis proposal. The proposal is your research plan and details what you intend to study, the rationale for that study, and the specific methods and procedures you will undertake to carry out your study. You may or may not want to consult the rest of your thesis committee during this stage; you should check with your director.

#### Step 6: The Thesis Proposal Meeting

When the thesis proposal is finished, you need to distribute copies to each of your committee members (including your director) and schedule a meeting. The committee generally needs one week or more to read the proposal so be sure to allow time for that when you schedule the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss your specific research plan.

At that meeting you can expect committee members to ask you questions about your proposal, why you made some of the decisions that you did, and to suggest minor or major modifications in the proposal. At some point during the meeting, you will be asked to leave the room, and the committee members and your director will decide whether they can approve the proposal or whether you need to revise it and have another thesis proposal meeting.

You will be called back into the room and notified of the committee’s decision. If the committee approves your proposal, they will complete and sign a form to that effect (see Appendix B), which your

director will file with the Arts and Sciences Graduate Committee. If they do not approve your proposal, you will need to rework it and call a second thesis proposal meeting.

### Step 7: Doing the Research

Research is a highly individual process, although pursuing the approved topic, keeping orderly records or notes, and consulting on a regular basis with one's advisor are essential in all cases. While it is permissible to pay for certain mechanical tasks—the services of a statistical consultant, or assistance in copy editing the final draft—you, the student, are responsible for doing all basic research and writing. The purchase of prepared research reports or the writing of text by another person without proper credit in the final document is inconsistent with the ethics of research.

'Academic honesty is the central value of an academic community. It is expected that graduate students will neither engage in nor facilitate cheating (using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids), fabrication (falsification or invention of any information or citation), or plagiarism (representing the words or ideas of others as one's own) in their academic work. The University Academic Honesty Policy contains strict sanctions, including expulsion, for all forms of academic dishonesty.'

### Step 8: Writing The Thesis

Before doing any writing or formal note-taking, you should select

- (1) A style manual,
- (2) The type of computer on which the manuscript will be written and data recorded, and
- (3) The software that will be used.

Making these decisions beforehand, and adhering to the requirements of the style manual and this Handbook from the outset, will eliminate the need to reformat or convert the manuscript from one computer/word processing program to another once it has been written.

#### **Selecting a Style Manual**

A variety of style manuals are available that set standards for grammar, bibliographic format, word choice, etc. Some of the most commonly used in the School of Communication are the Chicago Manual of Style, the MLA Handbook (Modern Language Association), A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations (Kate L. Turabian), and the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Some professors require the use of a specific style; others leave the choice up to the student. It is important to choose a style manual appropriate for your area of study and approved by your thesis advisor: MLA, for example, is ideal for humanities scholars, but its required spelling out of all numbers under 100 makes it inappropriate for those in the social or natural sciences.

Before doing any writing, you should work with your graduate coordinator and thesis advisor to select a style manual—making sure it is the most recent edition—and familiarize yourself with its contents. This will eliminate the need for time-consuming style conversions once the manuscript has been completed. The thesis must conform strictly to the specifications of this Handbook and the style manual selected. In instances where the Handbook and the style manual differ, follow the Handbook regarding matters of form (preliminary pages, margins, etc.) and the style manual regarding matters of style (grammar, table formatting, bibliography/notes, etc.).

## Selecting Software

When selecting word processing and other software, it is important to ensure beforehand that it will meet your specific needs. For a scientific study, for example, you might ask: Does this word processing program have a built-in table generator, or will I need to use a separate program? Can it insert a horizontally-printed page into the middle of an otherwise vertical document? Are the word processor and database program compatible?—that is, can I easily insert a table generated by one into the text on the other? It is critical to learn the basics of any program before typing the manuscript, e.g., how to set page numbers and margins, lay out tables, change spacing, etc.

The final copy of the manuscript must be printed on a high-quality printer—either a laser printer or a letter-quality inkjet. Laser printers are available for graduate student use in all campus computer labs. It is important to decide at the outset whether the final copy will be printed on the same computer system (hardware and software) as the working drafts. If not, check well in advance to see that the two are compatible. Try printing a variety of sample pages on both systems to resolve any compatibility problems before doing any actual work on the manuscript.

When the proposal has been officially approved, you are ready to start the actual thesis. For some this means beginning the data collection process. For others, this may mean additional library research. You should consult your thesis director for advice about your next steps.

For the actual writing of the thesis you will work with your director. Generally, only the director reads and responds to the various drafts you produce of each chapter. However, you are free to consult other committee members and get their feedback throughout the writing process.

## Step 9: Thesis Defense

When the thesis is completed and your director feels it is ready for defense, you need to distribute copies of the completed thesis to your director and committee members at least two weeks prior to your thesis defense. You are responsible for scheduling the defense, so you need to check with committee members and find time when they are all available. Schedule a two-hour meeting to make sure there is enough time (even though many defense meetings run about one and half hours). Two weeks before the meeting you are to post a notice announcing the defense (See Appendix C).

At the defense you can expect your committee to ask you questions about and explain what you did, your results, and so forth. It is an oral defense of your work and the expectation is that you can explain and justify that work. All work has limitations and problems, and you should be prepared to discuss those as well.

This is an open meeting so other members of the campus community may attend. Other graduate students or faculty may come to the defense to hear about your work, give you moral support, etc. When the questioning and discussion are finished, you and any observers will be asked to leave the room while the committee makes its decision as to whether you have passed or failed the defense. You will be asked to return to the room to hear the committee's decision. If you have passed, the committee will complete a form to that effect (see Appendix C) which your director will file with the Arts and Sciences Graduate Committee. If you have the signature page of your thesis with you (See Appendix D), you can ask members to sign it at this time. Otherwise you will have to obtain the signatures at a later date. If you failed the defense, you will need to get instruction from your committee and director as to what revisions need to be made. You will need to make those revisions and repeat the process of distributing copies of the thesis, announcing the defense, and scheduling a second oral exam.

## Step 10: Making Revisions and Submitting the Thesis

Even if you pass the defense the first time, it is likely that you will have some revisions to make to the thesis. When you leave the defense meeting, be sure you have clarified with your committee members and director what revisions need to be made and your deadline for making them. Find out if all committee members want to see the revised version before you submit it or if just the director will see the revisions.

When the final version of the thesis is ready (See specific preparation instructions in this manual), make the copies you need. (Generally, students give a bound copy to each member of their thesis committee and their thesis director and keep one or two for themselves.) Then, at least two weeks prior to graduation, you must present two copies of the thesis to the Office of the Arts and Sciences Director of Graduate Studies along with a binding fee of \$12.00 per bound copy. You should submit as many copies of the thesis as you would like to have bound, although you are required to submit only two. These copies will be kept on file in the Mortensen Library. You are free to have additional copies bound elsewhere.

### **Binding**

Graduate students must submit two copies of their thesis printed on acid free paper to the Mortensen Library for binding. One copy will be kept in the circulating collection, the other copy will be held in the University Archives. You may also have additional copies for your personal use bound at this time. The cost for binding each copy of a thesis is \$12.00 for gold lettering on the spine and \$25.00 for gold lettering on the spine and cover. Please make checks for binding payable to the Mortensen Library. There is usually a 30-60 day turnaround on binding theses. Please complete the 'Thesis/Dissertation Binding Form' available on the library website and submit all materials that need to be bound to the Technical Services department on the lower level of Mortensen Library.

Related Web link: <http://library.hartford.edu/llr/services/Gradthes.htm>



there is one. Since the abstract describes a completed study, it is ordinarily written in the past tense, using the third person. It should include the following:

- a) **Statement of Problem:** A brief statement of the study's specific objective.
- b) **Methods and Procedures:** A brief statement of the research plan and, if appropriate, of the methods employed, especially if the methods are essential to the interpretation of the results.
- c) **Results:** A summary of the major results obtained. In quantitative research, the basic statistical techniques which were applied to the data should be stated.
- d) **Conclusions:** The major conclusions derived from the research study, including interpretation of results, basic implications, deductions, etc.

Consult Dissertation Abstracts International for examples appropriate to your area in Communication. Keep in mind that scholars reading the abstract in DAI will have no context for in-text citations, so avoid these if at all possible.

At the top of each abstract, the following information should appear:

Title of Thesis  
 Name of author, degree sought, date:  
 Thesis directed by:

The pages of the abstract should not be numbered. For illustrations of format for the abstract heading, see Appendix F.

4. **Title Page.** The title should accurately and concisely describe your topic. Avoid vague beginnings, such as "A Study of..." or "A Report on the Development of..." Do not use abbreviations or acronyms in titles. The date on the title page should be the month and year in which the degree is to be granted. The title page should bear the title of the thesis, the name of the author, the prescribed statement concerning the degree for which the thesis is submitted, and the year in which the degree is to be conferred. For illustration, see Appendix G.
5. **Blank Leaf.** A blank leaf of substantial, plain paper of good quality should be provided.
6. **Copyright Page.** Copyrighting your thesis is optional. If included, the copyright page follows the title page and is not numbered. Copyright information is available from the Copyright Office of the Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20559, or in the Government Documents section of the library. Copyrighting is also available through University Microfilms International.
7. **Preface or Foreword.** This section is optional. The terms, "Preface" and "Foreword," are virtually synonymous. The preface or foreword is used primarily to mention matters of background necessary for an understanding of the thesis. Where pertinent and important, such items as the following may be included: Reason for the selection of the subject and its limitations, explanation as to how the thesis fits into the knowledge and literature in the field in which it is written, the nature and scope of the investigation undertaken, difficulties encountered, and the like, except where these matters are more appropriately dealt with in the body of the thesis.
8. **Acknowledgment Sheet.** The use of an "acknowledgment sheet" is also optional. If a preface or foreword is provided, it should include whatever acknowledgments are believed to be necessary. In the absence of a preface or foreword, if acknowledgments are to be made, a separate page, entitled "Acknowledgment(s)" should be inserted immediately preceding the "Table of Contents".

The purpose of the acknowledgment (s) is to provide a brief and dignified expression of the author's appreciation for the guidance and assistance received in the preparation of the thesis.

9. Table of Contents. A Table of Contents is mandatory. It must list all chapter/major section headings, the bibliography, and (if applicable) appendices. The initial sections of the thesis – that is, the approval sheet, abstract, and title page – are not entered in the table of contents. Therefore, the first item to be listed in the table of contents is the preface, foreword, or acknowledgment (s) or, if there is none, the introductory chapter or the first division of the thesis. Entries are consistently double-spaced, without extra spaces between sections, and each successive level of subheading, if these are included, is block-indented by an additional half an inch. The headings of major sections (chapters, bibliography, appendices) are written in all capital letters.

The Table of Contents headings must be identical to those in the text, including spelling, wording, punctuation, and capitalization, but should not include word format such as italics or underlining, with the exception of Latin names and book/journal/film/play titles. Page numbers listed in the Table of Contents must be right-justified. To do this, highlight the body of the typed Table of Contents and insert a right-tab just before the one-inch right margin. Then add a tab between the leader dots and the page number for each Table of Contents entry.

The table of contents is an important part of the thesis, not only as a guide to the location and arrangement of the various sections of the subject matter, but also as a graphic representation of the internal organization of the material. The relationship between divisions and subdivisions is indicated by the style and size of letters, indentations, and if, desired, by identifying numbers and letters. The presentation should not be so detailed as to be confusing. One or two pages usually are sufficient for the table of contents.

The number of the page on which the division begins in the text of the thesis is given in the table of contents in Arabic numerals flush with the right-hand margin of the page. Double spacing is used except for over-run lines, which are single-spaced. For illustrations, see Appendices H and I.

10. List of Tables, Figures, or Other Materials. If the thesis contains a number of figures, tables or photographs, each series of these should be listed separately in an appropriate list on the page or pages immediately following the table of contents. Each such list should appear on a separate page. In format, such lists should follow the general style of the table of contents.

The number of the item in the table is given at the left-hand margin of the page under the appropriate column heading entitled Figures, Tables or Photographs. After an interval of three spaces, the number is followed by the title of the item, given exactly as it appears in the text of the thesis. The number of the page on which the item appears in the body of the thesis is given flush with the right-hand margin of the page.

### The Text Itself:

The pages that come after the preliminary pages are the body of the text. These include the following and must be modeled after the examples shown at the end of this Handbook.

1. Body of the Text. The thesis proper begins with the first page of the first chapter or section. Each chapter or section should represent an important division of the thesis. The chapters or sections are identified by capital Roman numerals. Each chapter or section should have a title

identifying the subject contained therein, and it should begin on a new page. With the exception of the basic formatting requirements (described in FORMAT AND STYLE section), there are no special formatting requirements for the body of the manuscript. Text should be more or less continuous, without excessive white space between sections or before/after illustrative materials.

### **Tables, Figures, Illustrations, Etc.**

Many manuscripts contain tables, figures, and/or other illustrative materials. The term "Table" refers to data sets, while "figure" refers to graphs, diagrams, drawings, maps, photographs, or charts. All such items are to be inserted in the text near where they are first mentioned or placed together in an appendix at the end of the manuscript. If they are over 4-1/2" in height, including table title heading and any footnotes, they may be given a page of their own after the textual reference. Because of their size, many tables or figures require their placement on the page to be broadside. These should be printed with their tops against the left margin, and should fit within the specified margins. (See FORMAT AND STYLE Section).

Tables, figures, etc., should include a heading, source, and any required footnotes or other explanations. Footnotes crediting an outside source should appear immediately below the table or figure. If a paragraph of explanation is required, it should be single-spaced and placed immediately below the table or figure; if there is insufficient room, put it on a separate page placed to face the table. Number the facing page at the top left-hand corner, instead of the normal top right corner. This is a cumbersome format and should be avoided if possible.

Illustrations, photographs, or other accompanying materials smaller than 8-1/2" x 11" must be firmly mounted (rubber cement or photographic dry-mounting tissue is best) on a full-size sheet of paper stiff enough to resist curling. Photographs and Photostats may be made the full-page size, provided 1-1/2" is left free at the left for binding. Color plates or figures are permissible; however, keep in mind that colors often cause problems in photocopying.

### **Material following the text:**

The material following the body of the text includes the following:

1. Appendix or Appendices (if any)
  2. Bibliography, References, Endnotes or Footnotes
  3. Blank Leaf
1. Appendix. The principal purpose of the appendix is to keep the text of the thesis from being interrupted or cluttered with supplementary, minor, and illustrative materials. Use of appendices is optional. If used, the appendices should appear immediately following the body of the text. Each appendix should be put on a separate page. The appendix pages should continue the regular pagination of the thesis. Appendices should be designated respectively as Appendix A, Appendix B, etc., or as Appendix 1, Appendix 2, etc., and they should appear in the same sequence as reference is made to them in the text. Whenever possible and appropriate, the source for the appendix should be given.

The text of the pertinent documents, tables that present data of minor or ancillary importance, very lengthy quotations, excerpts from behavioral diaries, copies of sample questionnaires, and the like, may be included as appendices if they are pertinent to the subject matter of the thesis and they cannot appropriately be incorporated into the body of the text. Illustrations of appendices are given in the last section of this manual. When previously printed

items are included, they should be reduced in size using a high quality photocopier to fit within the specified required margins.

2. Bibliography, References, Endnotes or Footnotes. The bibliography or reference list includes all works cited in the text, as well as sources consulted during the preparation and writing of the manuscript but not actually cited. Dictionary entries are ordinarily not listed. The spacing, indentation style, information given, and arrangement of the works listed must follow the specifics given in your style manual. You should be sure to consult your style manual for information about the format of references, footnotes, or endnotes. Use whatever format is required for that particular style.
3. Blank Leaf. A blank leaf of substantial, plain paper of good quality should be provided at the beginning and at the end of all copies of the thesis.

## Format and Style

### Margins

The left margin should be set at 1 ½ inch while the rest (right, top, and bottom) margins should be set at one inch. Use these margins throughout the manuscript.

### Page Numbers

Page numbers must be placed in the top right corner, except for facing pages (see Tables, Figures, Illustrations, above) which are numbered in the top left corner. The page number should be set against the 1" right margin and approximately 3/4" from the top of the paper. With the exception of the title page and copyright page, every page of the manuscript must have a page number in the top right corner. The preliminary pages—excluding the title page and copyright page, which are not numbered—are numbered beginning with the lower-case Roman numeral "ii" if there is no copyright page and "iii" if there is one. Page number 1 is assigned to the first page of text.

### Spacing

Manuscript text must be double-spaced throughout, without extra spaces between paragraphs, unless otherwise specified by your style manual. The text should be more or less continuous, without hard page breaks between sections (with the exception of new chapters).

### Headings

Chapters or their equivalents (e.g., METHOD, RESULTS) are often divided into sections, and sometimes further divided into subsections, each preceded by a heading. Chapter/major section headings are always written in all capital letters, both in the text and the Table of Contents. The format of subsection headings varies by style manual, but it must be consistent throughout the manuscript, and once they have been determined, heading levels should not be skipped.

Some style manuals, such as that of the American Psychological Association, require specific formatting for heading levels. Others (e.g., MLA) have no specific requirements, but do not support word-level formatting such as italics or bold type. Check your style manual to see if specific heading formats are required. If not, a scheme such as the APA's would be appropriate:

CHAPTER/MAJOR SECTION: CENTERED UPPERCASE HEADING

First Level: Centered Uppercase and Lowercase heading

*Second Level: Centered, Italicized, Upper and Lowercase Heading*

*Third Level: Left Margin Flush, Italicized, Upper and Lowercase Side Heading*

*Fourth level: indented by half an inch, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.*

## Tense and Point of View

A typical thesis describes something that has already taken place and, therefore, requires consistent usage of the past tense. The "historical present" is customarily used in English and the humanities: events that have already occurred are described in the past tense and written or audio/visual works in the present tense. In the sciences and other disciplines, the past tense is almost always used. Present and future tense may be used, provided you make it clear that the statement is true at the time it is read or will be true in the future; otherwise, the reader may assume that the material is based purely on your opinions.

A thesis is most often a report of a study which has been made in accordance with objective principles, and so is normally written in the third person. Be as objective as possible, using impersonal ("one," "the researcher") rather than personal ("I," "we") pronouns when these are needed. However, use of the first person is becoming increasingly popular in the humanities and the first person plural in the social and natural sciences.

## Quotations

Most style manuals list individual requirements as to the use and format of quotations. If yours does not, use the following rules of thumb: enclose a quotation less than three typewritten lines in length in quotation marks and work it into the existing paragraph. If the quotation is more than three typewritten lines in length, delete the quotation marks and give it its own separate, block-indented paragraph.

## Footnotes, Endnotes, and Parenthetical Citations

Consult your style manual to see whether the preferred method for attributing quotations is footnotes (which appear at the bottom of the page), endnotes (which are grouped together at the end of the chapter or manuscript) or parenthetical citations (which appear in the text, immediately after the quote or reference). Use the same method and formatting throughout the manuscript.

## Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols

The use of abbreviations, acronyms, or symbols is acceptable provided that proper clarification is given the first time they are used. Except for extremely common examples, proper form includes the term or phrase given in full immediately followed by the abbreviation in parentheses, e.g., "electron volts per molecule (ev/m)." The abbreviation "ev/m" would then be used throughout the manuscript without explanation or parentheses. A preface or appendix may also be added listing all abbreviations, acronyms, and symbols with their meanings.

## Foreign Words and Phrases

Except in a thesis written in a language other than English, it is customary to underline or italicize words taken directly from a foreign language (including Latin). Certain exceptions are permitted for words that have been completely absorbed into the language, e.g., "etcetera." Consult an unabridged dictionary or your style manual if you are uncertain whether a foreign term has been accepted into common American English usage.

### Use of Numbers

Consult your style manual to see whether it dictates using numerals at all times, or spelling out numbers under certain conditions.

### Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation

It is expected that students will produce theses free of errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Prior to printing the final copy, run the entire manuscript, including the preliminary pages, reference list, and appendices, through a computer spell-checker. (Do not use Correct All, Automatic, or their equivalent, which can replace unfamiliar or misspelled words with inappropriate substitutes.) Before submitting your thesis, you and your committee should carefully proofread it—using the checklist provided in this Handbook—and make all corrections needed.

## Suggested Final Checklist

The use of this checklist is optional but it is highly recommended. It is provided to assist the author of the thesis in checking certain items in order to provide consistency. Some items listed herein can be dealt with simultaneously, or in groups, whereas in the case of others more satisfactory results accrue from a completely separate recheck.

### General:

1. Has the entire thesis been carefully proofread?
2. Are there sufficient copies of both the thesis and the abstract?
3. Are all copies assembled as required?
4. Are all items and sections included that are required by this manual, and do they appear in their proper sequence? Special care should be exercised that the three blank sheets are properly inserted.
5. Do all chapters or main divisions appear in proper sequence, and are they properly numbered?
6. Do all pages appear in their proper sequence?

### Table of Contents:

1. Are all designations of main headings, major subdivisions, and minor subdivisions identical with chapter, subsection, and sub-subsection titles as they appear in the text as far as wording, spelling, capitalization and punctuation are concerned?
2. Are all page numbers identical with those to which they refer in the text?
3. Are indentations of subdivisions uniform in the Table of Contents?

### Headings:

1. Are all chapter, main division, and major subdivision titles in accordance with the approved style manual?

### Footnotes/Endnotes/References:

1. Are footnotes, endnotes, and references in accordance with the approved style manual?
2. Has consistency of format been rechecked with respect to the following:
  - a. Locations of major items, such as author's name, title, place of publication, name of publisher, and date of publication.
  - b. Capitalization.
  - c. Punctuation. Is the terminal punctuation of entries consistent?
  - d. Italics or underscoring.
  - e. Use of abbreviations, such as abbreviated titles, volume, number, part, section, article, division, series, column, paragraph, and pages.
  - f. Use of *ibid.*, *op.cit.*, *loc. cit.*, *infra* and *supra* and the like.
  - g. Use and format of cross-reference.

### Quotations:

1. Where required, are quotation marks always used at the beginning and at the end of quotations?

2. Are all long quotations uniformly indented and single-spaced?
3. Are colons preceding quotations consistently used?
4. Are ellipses always accurately used and depicted?

#### Abbreviations:

1. Is the use of abbreviations consistent and, if they are used, are they identical?
2. Where used, are abbreviations uniform as far as capitalization and punctuation are concerned?

#### Appendices:

1. Do appendices appear in proper sequence, and are they numbered or lettered appropriately?
2. Where pertinent, are sources for the appendices accurately identified?

#### To Complete the Degree:

1. Have you enrolled in CMM 790 and CMM 791?
2. Have you or your thesis director filed all necessary forms?
  - a. Approval of thesis committee
  - b. Approval of thesis proposal
  - c. Announcement of thesis defense
  - d. Approval of thesis
3. Have you given a final copy or copies to the Arts and Sciences Graduate Director along with the binding fee?
4. Have you got your degree evaluation done by Tina Pesola, the A&S Evaluator?
5. Have you filed for graduation and paid the fee at the Registrar's office?

## Appendices

- Appendix A: Approval of Thesis Committee Form
- Appendix B: Thesis Proposal Approval Form
- Appendix C: Sample Announcement of Thesis Defense
- Appendix D: Results of Thesis Defense Form
- Appendix E: Sample Thesis Approval Sheet
- Appendix F: Form of Heading of Abstract
- Appendix G: Form of Title Page of Thesis
- Appendix H: Form of Simple Table of Contents
- Appendix I: Form of Detailed Table of Contents

## Appendix A: Approval of Thesis Committee Form

School of Communication  
 THESIS COMMITTEE APPROVAL FORM

We hereby request that the following Master Thesis Committee be established for \_\_\_\_\_ who is in good standing and matriculated in the Master of Arts Program of the School of Communication.

Thesis Title:

Committee Members:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name of Thesis Director)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name of 1<sup>st</sup> Member)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name of 2<sup>nd</sup> Member)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name of Outside Member)  
 Representative of the Graduate Studies  
 Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Student's Name)

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name) Graduate Program Director

Received: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Arts & Sciences Director of Graduate Studies)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Thesis Proposal Approval Form

School of Communication

### THESIS PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

This is to certify that the Master Thesis Proposal presented by \_\_\_\_\_ was approved unanimously by the members of the Thesis Committee.

Committee Members:

\_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Director

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate Program Director

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C: Sample Announcement of Thesis Defense

### ANNOUNCEMENT OF THESIS ORAL DEFENSE

For the degree of

**Master of Arts in Communication**

CANDIDATE: XXXXXXX

THESIS TITLE: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, February 7, 2010  
3:00 P.M.

LOCATION: Room E228, Harry Gray Center

THESIS COMMITTEE: XXXXXXX, Ph.D., Advisor  
XXXXXX, Ph.D.  
XXXXXXX, Ph.D.  
XXXXXXX, Ph.D.

**All members of the University community are invited  
to attend.**

PLEASE POST

## Appendix D: Results of Thesis Defense Form

### RESULTS OF THESIS DEFENSE FORM

\_\_\_\_\_, a candidate for the degree of Master of Arts in Communication, has \_\_\_\_/has not \_\_\_\_ successfully completed his/her oral examination on \_\_\_\_\_. The supervisory committee is aware that a copy of this signed thesis title page must be presented to the Director of Graduate Studies and that final thesis copies be issued to the University Librarian not later than \_\_\_\_\_ (two weeks before the anticipated graduation).

Thesis Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Chair)

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate Director, A & S

## Appendix E: Sample Thesis Approval Sheet

(No number on this  
page of the thesis)

### APPROVAL SHEET

Thesis Title: \_\_\_\_\_ (Give Title of Thesis)

Name of Candidate: John Doe  
Master of Arts, 2004

Thesis and Abstract Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature of Thesis Director)

(Name of Thesis Director)

(Rank of Thesis Director)

(Name of Department)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of 1<sup>st</sup> Member)

(Name of 1<sup>st</sup> Member)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of 2<sup>nd</sup> Member)

(Name of 2<sup>nd</sup> Member)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of 3rd Member)

(Name of 3rd Member)

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix F: Form of Heading of Abstract

(No number on this  
page of the thesis)

### ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: (Give thesis title)

John Doe Student, Master of Arts, 2004

Thesis directed by (Give academic title and name of thesis director)

(Follow with body of abstract using double spacing)

## Appendix G: Form of Title Page of Thesis

(No number on this  
page of the thesis)

THE EFFECT OF TELEVISION ON PATTERNS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

By  
John Doe Student

Thesis submitted to the School of Communication  
Of the College of Arts and Sciences of the  
University of Hartford in partial  
Fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
2008

## Appendix H: Form of Simple Table of Contents

(No number on this  
page of the thesis)

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
PREFACE.....	ii
I. TITLE OF FIRST CHAPTER.....	1
II. TITLE OF SECOND CHAPTER.....	12
III. TITLE OF THIRD CHAPTER.....	25
IV. TITLE OF FOURTH CHAPTER.....	33
V. TITLE OF FIFTH CHAPTER.....	39
APPENDIX A. TITLE OF FIRST APPENDIX.....	49
APPENDIX B. TITLE OF SECOND APPENDIX.....	54
REFERENCES.....	60

## Appendix I: Form of Detailed Table of Contents

(No number on this  
page of the thesis)

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
PREFACE.....	ii
I. TITLE OF FIRST CHAPTER.....	1
A. Title of First Major Subheading.....	1
B. Title of Second Major Subheading.....	4
C. Title of Third Major Subheading.....	7
1. Title of First Subsidiary Subheading.....	9
2. Title of Second Subsidiary Subheading.....	10
D. Title of Fourth Major Subheading.....	11
II. TITLE OF SECOND CHAPTER.....	12
A. Title of First Major Subheading.....	12
B. Title of Second Major Subheading.....	20
III. TITLE OF THIRD CHAPTER.....	25
IV. TITLE OF FOURTH CHAPTER.....	33
V. TITLE OF FINAL CHAPTER.....	39
A. Title of First Major Subheading.....	41
B. Title of Second Major Subheading.....	43
C. Title of Third Major Subheading.....	45
APPENDIX A. TITLE OF FIRST APPENDIX.....	49
APPENDIX B. TITLE OF SECOND APPENDIX.....	54
REFERENCES.....	60