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*(Updated 11/2013)*

## **RESEARCH GUIDE FOR WRITERS OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS**

### **AND ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION**

#### **PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The completion of a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation is a major requirement for many graduate degrees at Boston University. A thesis or dissertation is a scholarly work that must be approved by a committee of readers in the candidate's department of study. In order to preserve a record of the achievement of Boston University scholars, and to share the benefits of their research with others, students in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences are now required to submit their manuscript electronically to ProQuest Information and Learning (formerly University Microfilms International, or UMI). ProQuest provides the University with a full-text copy for our open-access site OpenBU (<http://open.bu.edu/xmlui/>), where it may be available for worldwide distribution.

With the possible exception of copyrighted materials that the author may have included in the manuscript, a thesis or dissertation remains exactly the same as when a student submits it. It is neither edited nor retyped. Therefore, the manuscript should be error free when submitted. Electronic and microtext versions of each thesis and dissertation will remain at ProQuest so that other scholars may download PDF versions directly from the ProQuest website, or order positive microfilm, microfiche, or paper copies from them.

Before you submit the electronic version of your manuscript to the ETD Administrator site, you must review the final draft, either in paper or electronic form, with the person responsible for your school or college. For the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GRS), it's Martha Khan. For the Medical School/Division of Graduate Medical Sciences (MED), it's Millie Agosto. For all other schools, it's Brendan McDermott at Mugar Memorial Library. Do NOT submit your manuscript to the ETD Administrator until the final draft has been reviewed. (Please note: A student in the School of Theology will submit his/her thesis or dissertation through the Theology Library, not through Mugar Memorial Library).

You submit your thesis or dissertation electronically here <http://www.etdadmin.com/bu>. Click on "Submit my dissertation/thesis," and then on "Create an Account." You must use your B.U. e-mail address when creating your account. The University will not accept your submission otherwise.

ProQuest provides a Help page for questions or problems you may encounter here <http://www.etdadmin.com/GlobalTemplates/ETDAdmin/StudentHelp/faq.html#pdf>

Brief, instructional videos can also be found here <http://www.bu.edu/buniverse/search/?q=dioa>

Note: View these videos in numerical order (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) not in the order they appear on the above web page.

PDF versions of nearly all B.U. dissertations that have been scanned since 1997 are available for free to all currently-registered University students, faculty, and staff via ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, to which the Boston University Libraries subscribe, at <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.bu.edu/pqdtft/index?accountid=9676>. After you have found a record for a B.U. dissertation, just look for a link that says “Full text - PDF” and click on it. Full text is available for some B.U. dissertations from ca. 1960–1996, but coverage is incomplete. Full text is also now available for hundreds of thousands of theses and dissertations from other institutions that submit manuscripts to ProQuest. Please make free use of this extensive and powerful database when conducting your own research.

The University also is systematically scanning all theses and dissertations in the collection from 1885–1963. A link to the PDF of each of these can be found either in OpenBU (<http://open.bu.edu/xmlui/handle/2144/3722>), or through the record in the library’s catalog (<http://www.bu.edu/library/>).

## **DEADLINES FOR SUBMITTING THESES AND DISSERTATIONS**

Please check with the administrator in your school or college graduate office for those dates. Do not submit your manuscript to ProQuest until you have completed **all** of your other requirements. Submitting your thesis or dissertation should be the last requirement you fulfill at the University before you graduate and are awarded your degree.

## **PREPARING THE MANUSCRIPT**

The purpose of this Research Guide is to inform graduate students of certain standards and formats established by Mugar Memorial Library and ProQuest. This guide does not provide directions on how to research or write a thesis or dissertation. Nor does this guide set major stylistic or bibliographic rules for the author. Your advisor(s) or department may suggest or require you to follow a specific journal or other style for your work. Where a departmental style requirement or ProQuest instruction conflicts with a specific requirement in this Guide, however, the Guide takes precedence. Some sources on thesis/dissertation styles include *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian (7th ed., 2007), *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, by Joseph Gibaldi (3rd ed., 2008), *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, (6th ed., 2010), and the *Chicago Manual of Style*, (16th ed., 2010). A bibliography of sources that may be helpful to you, including those mentioned above, is provided starting on page 11.

**Titling Your Thesis/Dissertation:** A thesis or dissertation can be a valuable source for other scholars, but only if it can be located with relative ease. Modern electronic retrieval systems

often use words or short phrases in the title, the abstract, and perhaps a few more keywords to locate a dissertation. Therefore, it is essential that the title be a brief, meaningful description of the contents of the work. Try to avoid making oblique or obscure references. ProQuest cannot reproduce such characters as mathematical formulae, non-alphabetical symbols, superscripts, subscripts, or other, non-Roman scripts such as Greek. The use of acronyms is also discouraged, but not prohibited. If you are using any item described above or something similar in your title, you must substitute its English equivalent. Diacriticals, or accent marks, are acceptable.

The following sample titles are cited by ProQuest as being acceptable:

Surface and colloid chemical studies of gamma ferric oxide dispersions.

Neutral kaon and lambda production in electron-positron annihilation at 29 GeV and the Z boson resonance.

Chromosomal localization of the alpha- and beta-globulin of the chicken, *Gallus domesticus*

Sample title pages for both theses and dissertations are in the file of Sample Pages to show the author how that page should be presented and formatted. Please note, only include the year in which you are graduating officially, not the month, and do **not** include the discipline from which you are graduating (e.g., Doctor of Philosophy in Biology; Master of Arts in Chemistry); in these cases, simply say Doctor of Philosophy or Master of Arts.

**Copyright Page:** A copyright page is now required in each and every thesis and dissertation. It is your decision, however, whether or not to register your copyright officially. You may want to ask your advisor their opinion on the subject, but even if you do not officially register, you still will have some basic copyright protections. However, you cannot file a copyright infringement suit until you have officially registered your copyright, and then you can sue only for infringement that occurred after the official date of registration. A sample copyright page is provided in the file of Sample Pages. Writers may either register copyright on their own by downloading forms from the Copyright Office at <http://www.copyright.gov/>, or they can authorize ProQuest to do it for them for a \$55 fee.

If you have published one or more chapters of your work previously, and the copyright is registered for that publisher, you must include a line in the copyright notice saying so (e.g., © 2013 by Joan Q. Public. All rights reserved except for Chapters 2 and 3, which are © 2011 Journal of Academic Studies).

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etc.). If one or more of your readers is not a B.U. faculty member, you should place the name of their institution after their official title. The line “Boston University” is typically not included in official titles, since it’s assumed that your readers are University faculty unless otherwise indicated. If you are on the Charles River Campus and any of your readers is from the University’s School of Medicine or School of Public Health, that information can be included. Conversely, if you are on the Medical Campus, and any of your readers is from one of the schools on the Charles River Campus, you can include that school or college name.

**Abstract Page(s):** All authors must include an abstract with their work. Only master’s candidates in the Creative Writing Program of the Department of English are exempt from this requirement. Authors who are writing their work in a foreign language must write their abstract in English.

The abstract should be prepared carefully, as it will be published in ProQuest’s *Dissertations & Theses* database. The abstract should contain a clear and brief statement of the problem, the procedure(s) and/or method(s) followed, the results, and the conclusions. It should be a succinct account of the thesis or dissertation so that a reader can decide whether or not they want to read the complete work. Sample abstract pages for both theses and dissertations are provided in the file of Sample Pages. They show how the title, author, and other information should be formatted at the head of the abstract.

Graphs, charts, tables, and illustrations should not be included in the abstract. Symbols and foreign words or phrases should be printed clearly and accurately. Relevant place names, full personal names, and other proper nouns should be included as they are useful in automated retrieval. Include all accents and/or diacritical marks.

A dissertation abstract is limited to 350 words, or approximately 2,450 characters. A thesis abstract is limited to 250 words. ProQuest suggests counting the number of characters, including spaces and punctuation marks, in one line of average length, and multiplying by the number of lines. Many modern word-processing applications also automatically count the number of words or characters in a given file. Any abstract that exceeds the specified word limit will be shortened by editors at ProQuest for publication in their database. The abstract within the manuscript will not be affected.

**Printing:** You must compose your thesis or dissertation so that it can be printed single sided and facing in one direction only. If you have a figure caption on a separate page, you cannot arrange the caption so that it is facing the figure. All textual material and preliminary pages must be double-spaced. This includes your Table of Contents. Footnotes, figure and table captions, and long quotations may be single-spaced if need be. Your bibliography may be single-spaced, with one extra space between each citation. Use 12-point type for your main text, all headings and subheadings. (This guide is printed in 12-point Times). Type of 11pt or 10pt may be used for footnotes, long quotes, and tables that cannot fit comfortably within the required margins. Do not use type smaller than 10pt. Titles or major headings may be in all upper case letters, bold, italics, or underlined, but they cannot be larger than 12 point. Use standard fonts such as Arial, Times, Palatino Linotype, Bookman, etc. Please try to avoid using Times Roman at sizes smaller than 12pt, since it prints out nearly illegibly. Avoid using Calibri, the default typeface for MS-Word. Font type and point sizes must be used consistently throughout the work for both text and page numbers. All print must be dark, unbroken, and legible, including material copied from other sources.

**Margins:** Top Margin: 1.5 inches to first line of text or heading.  
Left Margin: 1.5 inches.  
Right Margin: 1 inch. You may choose to justify the right margin (see below).  
Bottom Margin: at least 1 inch from the bottom of the page.

These margins must be used **at all times** and apply not just to your text, but to all of your footnotes, figures, tables, illustrations, etc. The only print that can be outside of the margins is the page number, which is subject to its own margin rules (see section below). Running headers or footers are not allowed. Extra wide margins are not acceptable. If a chart, graph, table, footnote, or figure exceeds any margin, it must be reset or reduced to fit within the given space. As mentioned above, the author may choose to justify the right margin. This does not mean that you may exceed the one-inch right margin if you feel you have a good reason. It means that each line will end at the one-inch margin. This paragraph is right justified.

If the author has a table or figure that is too wide to fit within the left and right margins, they may rotate the page 90 degrees (i.e., print the page in landscape format). If this is done the margins and page numbers do not move along with the figure. In rare cases, if a table or figure cannot fit onto 8.5" x 11", then legal size (8.5" x 14") or 11" x 17" may be used. Use of larger sizes should be approved prior to final submission either at the Graduate School or with the thesis/dissertation coordinator at Mugar Memorial Library.

**Pagination:** Every page in a dissertation or thesis must be assigned a number, starting with the title page and ending with the last page of the vita. Numbering must be sequential. The use of letter suffixes (e.g., 10a) for inserting extra pages is not allowed, nor can appendices be paginated as A-1, A-2 etc. Any and all appendices should continue the same sequential numbering from the last page of your last chapter. Check the document for pagination errors before submitting the final copy. Such errors can be created when using numerous section breaks in the text instead of simple page breaks. You will be required to revise and resubmit the document if you omit a page number or assign the same number to two or more different pages. Also, avoid leaving blank, numbered pages in the text (e.g., between chapters), or you will have to repaginate the work from that page to the very end.

**Page Number Placement:** Page numbers should be placed no more and no less than one inch from the top of the page or .75 inches from the bottom of the page. The default settings in MS-Word for PC are half an inch (0.5") for both top and bottom. To change them, go to Page Layout in the pulldown menus and click on Margins. Go to Custom Margins and click on the tab for Layout. You will see boxes that contain the settings for the Header and the Footer (H/F) that can be reset to one inch and .75 inches, respectively. You can also double click on the top and bottom of a page, which will open the H/F. The From Edge settings should appear in the tool bar at the top of the window. After resetting the H/F, check to make sure that an extra line has not been added to either of them, pushing the page number further up or down on the page than desired. If extra space has been added, delete it. If the H/F is double spaced, make it single spaced. Page number placement is also detailed in "Thesis & Dissertation Prep 5: Pagination in MS Word" and available at <http://www.bu.edu/buniverse/view/?v=1MUcM21Lu>.

The preliminary pages must have lower case Roman numerals (e.g., iv, viii, xii) placed at the bottom center of the page. The main text will have Arabic numerals (e.g., 1, 2, 3) which

must be placed at the top center or top right of the page for GRS. Students in other schools and colleges can place the page number at the bottom center or bottom right if they wish. No page number should be placed on the left-hand side of the page either in regular or landscape format. The title page, copyright page (if any), and approval page will have page numbers assigned to them, but these numbers should not be printed on the pages themselves. Below is the order in which your preliminary pages should appear:

| <b><u>Preliminary Pages</u></b>                 | <b><u>Page No.</u></b>     |
|---|----------------------------|
| Title Page**                                    | i (counted, not printed)   |
| Copyright Page**                                | ii (counted, not printed)  |
| Reader's Approval Page**                        | iii (counted, not printed) |
| Dedication Page (optional)                      | iv                         |
| Acknowledgments (optional)                      | v                          |
| Abstract**                                      | vi                         |
| Preface (optional)                              | vii                        |
| Table of Contents**                             | viii                       |
| List of Tables (required if you have any)       | ix                         |
| List of Figures (required if you have any)      | x                          |
| List of Illustrations or Schemes (req'd if any) | xi                         |
| List of Abbreviations (in alphabetical order)   | xii                        |
| Glossary (if applicable)                        | xiii                       |
| <b><u>First page of text</u></b>                | <b>1</b>                   |

\*\* Required

Each section of the preliminary pages, starting with the Acknowledgments, can be more than one page in length if necessary. If you do not include one section, do not skip over that page number. Simply continue the pagination to the next section. The Table of Contents must include the page number for each major heading. Committees often require subheadings to be included as well. The List of Tables, Figures etc. must include the page number on which each respective table, figure, etc. falls. If you include a List of Abbreviations, it must be arranged alphabetically, not by order of appearance of the abbreviation in the text.

Following the preliminary pages is the text of the dissertation or thesis, which begins with **Arabic numeral 1**. Following the conclusion of the dissertation are, in the following order:

- Appendices (if applicable)
- Bibliography (required)
- Vita (required, the last numbered page(s))

**Numbering of Tables and Figures:** can be done either sequentially (e.g., 1, 2, 3) or by chapter or appendix (e.g., 3.1, 3.2, 3.3; A.1, A.2). Do **not** repeatedly use the same numbers with each new chapter (i.e., each chapter should **not** begin anew with figure 1 or table 1).

**Appendices:** should precede the bibliography. Rare exceptions are allowed at the discretion of your major advisor. If you are using copied materials from another source, make sure the print is clear, dark, and legible. Also be sure to check that you have permission if you are reproducing

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**Bibliography:** You may single-space your citations, but leave one line of space between each. If you are using an article-style format for your work, where each chapter has its own separate bibliographic section, then you must also include a cumulative bibliography at the end of the work, arranged alphabetically by the last name of the primary author. If you use abbreviated journal or conference titles in your references, then you must add a list of all those abbreviations, in alphabetical order, with the corresponding complete titles. The List of Abbreviated Journal Titles should be placed at the start of your bibliography. Some journal abbreviations are the accepted title of the periodical, (e.g. EMBO J is simply EMBO Journal, not European Molecular Biology Organization Journal). Below is an example of how your List may appear, along with some commonly-used journal abbreviations and their corresponding full titles:

List of Abbreviated Journal Titles

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| BMJ                       | BMJ: British Medical Journal  |
| EMBO J.                   | EMBO Journal  |
| FASEB J.                  | FASEB Journal   |
| FEBS Lett.                | FEBS Letters  |
| IEEE J. Oceanic Eng.      | IEEE Journal of Oceanic Engineering   |
| JAMA                      | JAMA: the Journal of the American Medical Association                           |
| Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci. USA | Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America |

Many electronic indexes now include a function that can provide you with the complete title of a journal if you enter its abbreviation. In Medline/PubMed it’s referred to as “Journals in NCBI Databases” and is located on the right side of the top page. Consult the database relative to your field or ask a reference librarian for assistance in determining the complete titles. Writing down what you believe to be the complete title without verification is an unwise method.

**Vita:** This is a short description of your professional life up to the point of being awarded your degree. Your vita may be written in either résumé or narrative format. You must include such basic information as your full name, your year of birth (NOT your birthday), and a contact address (e.g., your department) where you can be reached for at least the next 1–2 years. A vita may also include (but is not limited to) your previous education, degrees, awards or honors, professional positions held, and publications. Please try to limit your vita to no more than three or four pages. Both doctoral and master’s degree candidates must include a vita in their work, except for master’s candidates in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GRS), for whom the vita is optional.

**Multiple Volume Works:** Since theses and dissertations are now being submitted electronically, there is no longer any requirement for splitting lengthy manuscripts into two or more volumes.

**Charts, Graphs, Tables:** Since theses and dissertations will not be microfilmed, there is no longer any restriction on the use of color in your manuscript. Please use common sense in creating your illustrations, etc. Black text printed on a dark blue or similar, dark surfaces may not be legible. The color yellow or other pastels are often so light they may be difficult to distinguish against a white background. Make sure each figure, table, etc. is large enough to be readable. Squeezing multiple illustrations onto a page to reduce page count is pointless if they cannot be read. More than one page can be used for a specific figure, table, etc. if it will not fit legibly on one page.

**Photographs:** Students will utilize modern methods of reproduction, such as computer scanning, for submission, but please ensure that the quality of the picture is not diminished. A figure or table is useless if it is so blurry as to be unreadable. Scan your images at no less than 300 dpi, and preferably at higher resolution, such as 600 dpi or higher, if possible.

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U.S. government publications produced by officials as part of their duties are not copyrightable by statute, but publications written by non-government officials with federal funding may be copyrighted. State governments decide whether or not to copyright their publications, so it is always wise to check with the appropriate agency. Journals also occasionally print their copyright policy in each issue, so you should check the journal from which you copied the material. Transforming or adapting the material in some way (e.g., adding your own labels to a



map or plan) allows you to reproduce it without requesting permission. Your citation would then read “after Smith” rather than “from Smith.” If you have questions regarding the “fair use” of copyrighted material, you should consult the following University site:

<http://www.bu.edu/tech/security/incidents/copyright/resources/>

This site is also useful: <http://fairuse.stanford.edu/>

or this ProQuest guide:

[http://www.proquest.com/assets/downloads/products/UMI\\_CopyrightGuide.pdf](http://www.proquest.com/assets/downloads/products/UMI_CopyrightGuide.pdf)

ProQuest also maintains extensive records of publishers’ copyright policies. They encourage you to call their Publishing Unit at 800-521-0600, ext. 77020 as it may spare you time and energy. You may also want to consult the following work:

THE COPYRIGHT BOOK: A PRACTICAL GUIDE, by William S. Strong. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge: MIT Press, c1999.

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Waltham, MA 02453  
(781) 893-3050  
<http://www.wellsbindery.com/>

## **FEES FOR PROCESSING THESES AND DISSERTATIONS**

|                        |          |   |
|------------------------|----------|---|
| Master's Thesis:       | \$25.00  | payable to Boston University (money order only) |
| Doctoral Dissertation: | \$115.00 | payable to Boston University (money order only) |

### Optional Fees:

|                                   |         |                                   |
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| Additional copies of dissertation |         | payable to ProQuest (credit card) |

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Further questions: Please contact Brendan McDermott (brendan@bu.edu), Thesis/Dissertation Coordinator, Room 306 in Mugar Memorial Library, Tel. (617) 353-9387.

If you are having computer or word processing difficulties, the staff of the IT Help Center on the first floor of Mugar Memorial Library may be able to assist you. You can also phone them at (617) 353-4357, or check their website at <http://www.bu.edu/tech/desktop/support/help-center/>

## **SOURCES AVAILABLE FOR WRITERS OF DISSERTATIONS**

Students who are planning to use LaTeX to write their thesis or dissertation may wish to use the following template thoughtfully provided by Professor Janusz Konrad of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department:

<http://collaborate.bu.edu/ece/ThesisTechReports>

These online library research guides may also be of use to all prospective authors:

<http://www.bu.edu/library/guides/>  
<http://www.bu.edu/library/guides/guidetoresearch.html>

Book titles are available at Mugar Library unless otherwise indicated. Consult the library catalog to see if there are additional copies in other campus libraries.

CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE. 16th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Law Reference Z253 .C4 2010

<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.ezproxy.bu.edu/home.html>

A MANUAL FOR WRITERS OF TERM PAPERS, THESES, AND DISSERTATIONS, by Kate L. Turabian. 7th ed. / revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and University of Chicago Press editorial staff: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Mugar Reference X LB2369 .T8 2007

BEDFORD HANDBOOK, by Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers. [English Writing and Grammar] 8th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, c2010.  
Mugar Reference X PE1408 .H277 2010

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