

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY CHOBANIAN & AVEDISIAN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**

**GRADUATE MEDICAL SCIENCES THESIS & DISSERTATION**

**REQUIREMENTS/FORMATTING CHECKLIST FOR SUBMISSION**

Need help? Contact:

GMSRegistrar@bu.edu

**PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

At this point of your writing process, you will have come across a series of templates, resources, tutorials, and guideline documents. The purpose of these documents is to point out common mistakes, help students do one last once-over before submission, and highlight important guidelines prior to submission. We strongly suggest following the Word template for theses and dissertations.

**GENERAL FORMATTING**

This document provides basic formatting to assist you in navigating the changes within the document. **Thesis and Dissertation Templates** and additional resources can be found on:

Masters Program Research Thesis and Capstone Information

[PhD Program Research and Dissertation Information](https://www.bumc.bu.edu/gms/academics/research-thesis-dissertation/)

Instructions are consistent with menus and options available on a Mac. We recommend students use Word Document as formatting styles will change if the document is converted from a Google Doc to a Word Document. The Office suite is available for download to all BU students on: [BU Tech Web Microsoft Office for Students](https://www.bu.edu/tech/services/cccs/desktop/distribution/microsoft/studentoffice/)

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| **Overall** | |
|  | File must be a letter size (8.5” x 11”). A4 or any other size will not be accepted. A4-size paper is taller and narrower. International students are encouraged to check that their file is not set for A4 as desktops or laptops from outside of the U.S. may have a different format as default. |
|  | If you have inserted section breaks anywhere in the document instead of simple page breaks, make sure that the file after the section break is still set to letter size. Section breaks allow you to change formatting from one section to the next (e.g., portrait view to landscape view, and back again to portrait). If starting a chapter at the top of a new page, insert a page break, not a section break.  To see your page and sections breaks, line spacing, and other useful formatting aspects of your document, turning on the “Non-printing Characters” feature can be useful. To turn on this feature, click the “¶” button in the Home ribbon of your Word document. |
| **Margins** | |
|  | Margins are set at 1.5 inches for the top and left. Margins are set at 1 inch for the bottom and right |
|  | If the text does not precisely end at one inch on the bottom and right, that is ok. You may choose to justify the right margin (i.e., make all lines end at one inch). Do not set the margins overly wide. |
|  | Follow the ruler at the top of each page. There are small triangles (your indents) on the ruler set at the left and right margins. The indents can move into the lighter area of the ruler, but should never be set in the darker area of the ruler outside the margins. |
| **Spellcheck Your Entire Document before Format Review:** To see instructions on the newest version of “Word Spellcheck Commands”, view the PDF Tutorial. | |
|  | Thesis should not be in review format mode when performing spell check. Go to the “Review” tab and change the view from “All Markup” to “No Markup”. When reopening your file, it will open again in Markup view, and you will have to change it to No Markup view. **Never save your file as a PDF or print it out in Markup view**. Editing marks will appear in the PDF or on the printout. |
|  | The default in Spellcheck is set to ignore words in all uppercase letters and words with numbers, such as acronyms. Because most of the words on the title page are in all uppercase letters, Spellcheck will ignore them unless you turn that option off. To turn the option off:  ∙ Choose “Tools” in the menu at the top of your screen  ∙ Select “Spelling and Grammar”  ∙ In the window that appears, click on “Options”  ∙ Check that the settings that say “Ignore Words in Uppercase” and “Ignore Words with Numbers” are off to assure that all titles and headings are spell checked  ∙ Click on “Recheck Document”  ∙If you have run Spellcheck before, the system will ask you if you really want to run it again, and that every word you told it to ignore previously will be checked again. Click “Yes.” |
|  | **Please note:** Spellcheck will ignore words that are spelled correctly, but used in the wrong context (e.g., hart felt). It is important to look over what you’ve typed and not rely heavily on Spellcheck. |

**PREPAGES:** Starting here, we suggest you follow the template side by side

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| **Title Page** | |
|  | All Greek and Latin symbols and other special characters in titles are reproduced by ProQuest. |
|  | Title page, copyright and approval (Roman numeral) page numbers are counted but not visible. |
|  | Check for any misspellings, even in your name. |
|  | The title and your name must all be uppercase letters, bold and centered. Bold Titles all in Caps. |
|  | Previous degree(s) (BA/BS/MA/MS) awarded must be included and accurate, including the year in which each degree was awarded and the school but NOT the major discipline. |
|  | Check that the correct GMS degree is noted at bottom of page:  Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of “Doctor of Philosophy / Master of Science” |
|  | The graduation year is included. The year should be the last line on the bottom of the page. Your year of graduation is NOT when you defend or submit the thesis/dissertation. Official graduation occurs on August 25th, mid-January, and the third Sunday of May each year. |
| **Copyright page** | |
|  | Name written here must match exactly with your name on the title page |
|  | Year must be up to date. If you’re submitting in October–December for January graduation, make the copyright year for the upcoming year (i.e., 2024, not 2023). Your manuscript will not be sent to ProQuest until after January graduation, once your official graduation status has been verified. |
| **Approval Page** | |
|  | Revise misspellings (First Reader, Forth Reader). Include periods between Ph.D. and M.D. degrees. |
|  | DocuSign is required for PhD students and electronic signatures for Master students. No one can sign an initial for a reader who is absent. |

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| **From this point on, all of the text will be double spaced (exceptions noted below).** | |
| **Dedication or Acknowledgements Page** (optional) | |
|  | This page must be double spaced with identical format to the rest of the document. |
|  | This/these page(s) are the first to be numbered (starting with page iv). |
|  | Roman numeral page numbers must be bottom center of the Preliminary pages  □ Set your Footer to .75”.  □ Double click on the bottom of the page footer box to make sure that an extra blank line has not been included underneath the page number. The footer box must be set at single spacing, not double spacing, or 1.15 spacing with 10pt After.  □ Click on “Format” at top of screen, and select “Paragraph” to see if the footer is single spaced, with no extra spacing before or after a line.  If the page number still appears higher on the page than .75”, click on the text box around the page number to make sure it, too, is single spaced, with no 10pt spacing after. |
|  | The page numbers must be the same typeface (i.e., font) and size as the rest of the document. |
| **Abstract** | |
|  | Title and Name on this page should be exactly the same as on the title and copyright pages. |
|  | Check that BOSTON UNIVERSITY ARAM V. CHOBANIAN & EDWARD AVEDISIAN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, 202x is correct and the year is accurate |
|  | If you are in the MD /PhD program, please make sure to use the language provided in the Research Guide for Writers of Theses and Dissertations. |
|  | Title & student’s name should all be in all uppercase and bold |
| **List of Tables/List of Figures** | |
|  | List of Tables precedes the List of Figures. This must be included if you have even one table or one figure, respectively. |
|  | Do not include the List of Tables at the end of the Table of Contents. Start it on a new page. The List of Figures must also start at the top of a new page, separate from the List of Tables. |
|  | Each table or figure must have a corresponding page entry, usually set on, or close to, the right margin. Insert one single spaced line between each entry to separate it from the previous entry. |
| **Abbreviations** | |
|  | The List of Abbreviations is in alphabetical order *by the abbreviation*, not by the explanation Abbreviations starting with a number are included at the top of the list, before abbreviations starting with the letter “A”. |
|  | The List of Abbreviations can be single or double spaced. |

**MAIN TEXT**

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| **Specific Formatting** | |
|  | All textual material must be double-spaced and font size must be 12 points. |
|  | Footnotes and long quotations may be single-spaced. |
|  | Titles or major headings may be in all upper case letters, bold, italics, or underlined, but cannot be  larger than 12 point. Be consistent in using standard fonts such as Arial, Times, Palatino, or  Bookman. Do not use Times New Roman 10pt. It prints at a smaller size than other typefaces. |
|  | Typeface and point sizes must be used consistently throughout the work for both text and page numbers. Footnotes or tables may be in smaller type than the main text, but not smaller than 10 point. All print must be dark, unbroken, and legible, including material copied from other sources. |
|  | Headings/subheadings should never start at the bottom of a page with no accompanying text. Move the new section to the top of the next page.  **Major title should be bold in ALL CAPS. See dissertation template** |
| **Page Numbering** | |
|  | The first page of the introduction starts with the number 1. |
|  | To change from Roman numerals to Arabic numerals a section break (not a page break) must be inserted at the end of the abbreviations page. To delink this section from the previous section:  ∙Open the Header, and click on the tab for “Header and Footer.”  ∙Click off the boxes that say “Different First Page” and/or “Link to Previous.”  ∙ Put cursor in Footer box and repeat previous instruction.  ∙Insert page numbers to the main thesis body and indicate numbering starts at 1.  Delinking sections allows you to put the page number at the top of the page without affecting the placement of the Roman numerals on the previous pages. |
|  | Every page must be assigned a number, even if the prepages (i, ii, and iii) aren’t visible. |
|  | Page numbers are included on each figure or table page.  Changing pages from portrait view to landscape view/page numbers rotate along with **margins TO THE RIGHT**:   * EXAMPLE ONLY: if the page number is located on the bottom of the page, it will rotate to the middle of the left page. * Top and bottom margins remain the same. * Left margin changes from 1.5” to one inch. * Right margin changes from one inch to 1.5 |
| **Table and Figures** | |
|  | Legend Format: Each table and figure must have a clear title, descriptive legend and citation if it’s not your own work. Legends for MS theses may be single spaced. |
|  | Legend Placement (MS Theses) Legends for Tables go first top. Legends for figures bottom follow. |
|  | Readability: Make sure tables and figures are readable, are within the defined margins and that the page number is positioned correctly. Page numbers must be positioned correctly. |
|  | Figures and Tables may be in color. Avoid using dark or black backgrounds as these do not reproduce well. Avoid placing black text against dark backgrounds. Try to avoid making text so small that it is unreadable and requires you to enlarge the file to 200% or original or greater. |

**Format Consistency Checkup**

Formatting of sections and/or chapters should be consistent throughout the document. Typeface and size must remain consistent.

| **Appendices** | |
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|  | Appendices always precede the bibliography/references unless specifically requested by committee. |
|  | **Videos:** Videos can be included as supplementary files to your thesis / dissertation submission. ProQuest does have specifications on the format in which videos can be submitted, which you can find here [Preparing Videos for Submission](https://support.proquest.com/s/article/Preparing-Your-Manuscript-for-Submission?language=en_US) |

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| **Bibliography or References** | |
|  | References can be single spaced with one extra line of space between each citation. |
|  | Use a uniform citation style. If you copy citations from several sources and paste them into the section, some may have the year of publication at the beginning, and others at the end. Some may include first names of authors, and others the first initial, etc. Make them all the same style. |
|  | Make sure citations are complete, with no missing information (volume and pages of journal articles, publishers of books, place of publication, etc.). Cite technical reports as technical reports. If you downloaded an unpublished report from the internet, include the URL. ∙ Delete any duplicated citations. |
|  | Journal titles: If the journal article citation you copied from another source has the journal title abbreviated, you must either replace the abbreviation with the corresponding full title, or include a “List of Abbreviated Journal Titles” at the front of the bibliography. |
|  | Check the library catalog for correct journal titles. Also, the top page of Medline/PubMed has a link over to the right called “Journals in NCBI Databases.” Click on that link, and in the window, if you enter a standard Medline abbreviation, you will be rewarded with the correct full title, or suggestions for what the full title may be. Do not guess at what you believe is the full title. |

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| **C.V. title:** *VITA or CURRICULUM VITAE,* ***NOT*** *VITAE or CURRICULUM VITA:* | |
|  | Vita and Curriculum Vitae are acceptable titles. Check that you use the same title in the table of  Contents. Try to limit this section to three pages if possible. |
|  | Check that your name, contact information and educational information is included. Do NOT include your Social Security number, home address, or date of birth, as you may expose yourself to identity theft if you do. |
|  | Your name must match the name on the title, copyright, and abstract pages exactly. |