

***GUIDELINES  
FOR  
the  
Specialist  
Thesis/Project***



**THE DIVISION OF  
GRADUATE STUDIES  
Jackson State University**

Telephone: (601) 979-2455  
Email: [graduate@jsums.edu](mailto:graduate@jsums.edu)

Effective Spring 2008  
Supersedes all Previous Versions

**PREFACE**

Students in Specialist in Education (Ed.S) programs must demonstrate evidence of a high degree of scholarship, competence in scholarly exposition and ability to select, organize and apply knowledge through a thesis/project. This guide, as developed and enhanced by the Graduate Faculty of Jackson State University, provides examples of best practices concerning format standards that must be met before it receives final approval by the Division of Graduate Studies. These guidelines describe in detail the university-wide minimum standards for format, offers advice on how to meet those requirements and follows recommendations of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS).

It is anticipated that these guidelines will likely contribute to program quality, improve student morale, limit attrition, and decrease the time it takes to fulfill the requirements for master-level degrees.

This Guide supersedes all previous versions. This manual is effective with the Spring, 2008 Semester.

**Graduate Web Resources**

**Homepage**

<http://www.jsums.edu/~gadmappl>

**CyberOrientation**

<http://www.jsums.edu/~gadmappl/Orient.html>

**Dates and Deadlines**

<http://www.jsums.edu/~gadmappl/Dates.html>

**Graduate Catalog**

<http://www.jsums.edu/~gadmappl/Catalog/Gradcatalog.html>

**CyberAdvising**

<http://www.jsums.edu/~gadmappl/Resource.html>

## CONTENTS

### LIST OF REQUIRED STYLE MANUALS

#### INTRODUCTION

Chapter

1. CALENDAR
2. TIPS FOR WRITING
3. TECHNICAL DETAILS
  - Type Fonts and Print Quality
  - Line Spacing
  - Margins
  - Pagination
  - Corrections
  - Preliminary Material
  - Text
  - Tables, Figures and Plates
  - Bibliography
  - Appendix
  - Vita
4. ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY
  - Student's Responsibility
  - Advisor and Thesis Committee's Responsibility
  - Departmental Chair/Program Director's Responsibility
  - Use of Copyright Materials
  - Plagiarism
5. ORAL DEFENSE
  - Scheduling the Defense
  - Basic Process for the Defense

### LIST OF STYLE MANUALS

#### **Guidance and Counseling**

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA Style Manual).

#### **Elementary Education**

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA Style Manual).

#### **Education Administration**

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA Style Manual).

#### **Secondary Education**

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA Style Manual).

#### **Special Education**

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA Style Manual).

## INTRODUCTION

The Division of Graduate Studies has administrative supervision of all graduate work at the University. The Division of Graduate Studies is composed of the departments which offer graduate instruction leading to masters', educational specialist, and doctoral degrees. The faculty of the Division of Graduate Studies consists of those faculty members in the departments who are qualified to teach and conduct research on the graduate level. Members of the graduate faculty engage in scholarly pursuits in terms of research, writing, publishing, and participating in professional organizations.

Degrees higher than the baccalaureate are granted at Jackson State University because of special attainments achieved by degree candidates. Prospective students should understand clearly that a graduate degree is not awarded upon the basis of a collection of course credits, or the passing of certain prescribed examinations, or the submission of a thesis or dissertation. In other words, the student cannot expect to receive a higher degree because of successfully completing the individual parts of the degree program. Course schedules, examinations, and other requirements explained in the Graduate Catalog are to be regarded as minimal; and any student may be required to satisfy whatever additional requirements academic advisers deem appropriate.

To receive a higher degree from Jackson State University, the student must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the graduate faculty of the department, school, or college of the student and to the faculty of the University that the student has attained through intelligence, scholarship, industry, and personal qualities the high level of professional and academic competence which the faculty of each department expects of a person holding the degree being sought. The determination of fitness to qualify for the degree rests solely upon the estimate which the faculty makes of the student's right to the degree.

Specialist candidates can submit a thesis/project based on independent and original research and defend it in a formal, public forum. Policies and standards for establishing a thesis/project committee and for preparation and submission are outlined in this

publication and are supplemented by documents from the Division of Graduate Studies and the College of Education and Human Development.

The Division of Graduate Studies has developed two forms to be processed by doctoral degree candidates completing dissertations. These forms may be obtained online at

<http://www.jsums.edu/~gadmappl>.

The forms properly executed provide general directions for successful completion of this requirement. Each form must be completed under the direction of the student's advisor.

**Committee Approval Form** documents the constitution of a student's thesis committee and approval of the student's research proposal by the student's committee.

**Committee Report of Defense Results** is completed upon the successful defense of the thesis before the student's committee. This form must be submitted prior to final clearance for graduation.

## CHAPTER 1 CALENDAR

The Office of the Division of Graduate Studies issues a calendar each year which indicates the last day for satisfying all graduation requirements and submitting the final clearance form to the Graduate Office for students planning to graduate in May, and for those planning to graduate in August.

Prior to this final deadline, the final corrected and approved copy or copies of all projects are to be submitted to the Division of Graduate Studies. The Division of Graduate Studies encourages students to submit their manuscripts well before this deadline.

Students, therefore, must complete all work on the project at least ONE MONTH or more prior to the last day for final clearance in order to allow time for the scheduling of the oral defense of the thesis/project. It is strongly recommended that approval of the project be obtained from each member of the student's committee at least two months prior to the deadline for the final clearance.

It is the student's responsibility to ascertain the dates of these deadlines for the May or August graduation in the calendar year in which he/she plans to graduate.

## CHAPTER 2 TYPING AND WORD PROCESSING

The format guidelines given comply with publication requirements of University Microfilms International. Close attention to the specifications below will result in a final draft that professional in appearance.

### Type Fonts and Print Quality

The master copy of the graduate degree document must be typed on one side of the page only. Standard ten or twelve pitch (pica or elite) type size and standard type fonts are preferred. Script type fonts may not be used. Italics may be used as specified by the style manual in use. Once selected, the type or printer font and size must be consistent throughout the document. Other special fonts may be used according to directions in the style manual.

If a computer printer is used, a letter-quality or laser printer must be used. Again, the print-quality and style must be consistent throughout the document. The recommended font is Times Roman, size 12.

Ribbons and cartridges should be changed as often as necessary to produce a sharp, black image. The Committee will make the final decision on the legibility of type used in graduate degree documents.

No boldface should be used within the thesis or project unless the student is following the style requirements of a major journal within the student's discipline.

## Line Spacing

Standard double spacing is required for the document text. For word processors, six lines are equivalent to one inch. Most style manuals require single spacing to be used within long quotations, long tables, footnotes, multiples captions, and bibliographic entries (for exceptions, see manual recommended by your department).

Double spacing should be used between footnotes and bibliographic entries.

## Margins

The left-hand margin must be one and one-half inches wide to allow for binding; all other margins must be one inch wide. Adherence to these margins will leave a 6 x 9 inch area on each sheet of the text or illustrative material, including page numbers. On continuation pages, this places the page number on line 7 with text beginning on line 9.

The right margins should not be justified.

Typing may extend no more than one single space below the bottom marginal line, and only then to complete a footnote or the last line of a chapter, subdivision, or figure caption.

The only exceptions to the margin requirements are: the first page of each chapter or major section of the document, where typing begins two inches down from the top rather than one inch, and tables and figures may be smaller and centered .

With the exceptions noted above, all tables and figures, including their titles, must conform to the margin requirements. Tables and figures may be photographically reduced to meet margin requirements.

It is not permissible to leave a single line of a paragraph or other subdivision at either the bottom or the top of a page. The last word on a page cannot be hyphenated.

Photocopies should be made only from the original copy and must be made with care to ensure that margins on all copies are accurate and consistent.

## Pagination

Every page of the graduate degree document must have a page number except the title page, copyright page, approval page, and abstract pages. If a frontispiece (usually an illustration or quotation relevant to the subject) is included before the title page, it is assigned the first small roman numeral i, but not numbered.

Small roman numerals (ii, iii, iv, etc.) are used for the preliminary pages: dedication, acknowledgments, table of contents, and the lists of tables. The title page is assigned the first small roman numeral (i, or ii if frontispiece is used), but that number does not actually appear on the title page.

Arabic number are used for the remainder of the document, including the text and the reference material. The pages are numbered consecutively beginning with 1 and continuing through to the end of the document. No other numbering scheme is acceptable; the

standard scheme may not be disrupted with insertions numbered 10a, 10b, 10c, etc.

All page numbers must be placed one inch (line 7) from the top and even with the right margin. On pages with a major heading, such as "APPENDIX" or "BIBLIOGRAPHY" and those beginning a chapter or major section, the page number is placed in the center bottom position (1 inch or 7 lines up from bottom, line 60); numbers of preliminary pages also are placed at the center bottom in small roman numerals.

#### Corrections

Strikeovers, interlineations, crossing-out of letters, and liquid correction fluid are not acceptable means of correction. The retyping or reprinting of the pages is the only acceptable form of correction. Both the original and all copies of the project must be completely free of visible corrections. If possible, produce the document on a word processor/computer so that corrections may be made quickly and easily. A word processor/computer also reduces the danger of making new typographical errors in a revised version.

This section of the document is adapted from "Thesis/Dissertations Elements and Style," from the Manual for Thesis and Thesis © 1992 by the Tennessee Conference of Division of Graduate Studiess. The text of this document may be reproduced in any form provided acknowledgment of adaptations is given to the Tennessee Conference of Graduate Schools Guide to the Preparation of Thesis and Dissertations.

The following table lists all the potential parts of a thesis/project and the order in which they occur. (see next page).

## Preliminary Material

### Title Page

This page is assigned Roman number "i," although the number does not appear on the page. The date used is the month and year of commencement. The student's name must appear as he/she is registered at the institution. The wording and format must be exactly as shown.

### Approval Sheet

Each copy of the thesis/project submitted to the school must have an approval sheet using the exact wording and format shown on the sample page. This sheet must be on the same brand and weight of cotton paper and be in the same base type face as the remainder of the thesis. The name used on the approval sheets and title page must be that under which the student is registered at the institution. Although the original approval sheets may be copies, the committee signatures must be original. Black ink is required for the original signatures. The number of signature lines must equal the number of committee members. The major and degree to be awarded must be exactly those to which the student was admitted officially by the Division of Graduate Studies. The approval sheets are not numbered, nor are they counted in the numbering sequence.

### Copyright Page

This page is included only if the manuscript is being formally copyrighted, through University Microfilms. Forms are obtained in the Division of Graduate Studies.

### Dedication Page

Table. Arrangement of Items in the Thesis.

Item	Comment	Page Assignment
<b>Preliminary Material</b>		
Title Page	Required	Counted as page i, but not numbered
Approval Page	Required	Counted as page ii, but not numbered
Copyright Page/Blank Page		No page number
Dedication Page	Optional	No page number
Table of Contents	Required	iii
List of Tables	If needed	Small Roman numeral
List of Figures	If needed	Small Roman numeral
List of Plates	If needed	Small Roman numeral
List of Symbols or Abbreviations	If needed	Small Roman numeral
Acknowledgements	Required	Small Roman numeral
Abstract	Required	Counted, but not numbered
<b>Text</b>		Starts with page 1
<b>Supplementary Material</b>		
<b>Bibliography</b> or Works Cited	Required	
<b>Appendix or Appendices</b>	If needed	Follows pagination
Vita	Required	Counted, but not numbered

If the student wishes to dedicate the manuscript, the dedication statement is included at this point.

#### Table of Contents

The Table of Contents may vary in style and amount of information included. Chapter or Section titles, the Bibliography or List of References, the Appendix(es), if any, and the Vita must be included. Page numbers given for the Bibliography and Appendix should be those assigned to the separation sheet preceding each of those items. Although it is not necessary to include all levels of headings, inclusion must be consistent. If a particular level is included at any point, all headings of that level must be included.

List of Tables/List of Figures/List of Plates

If there are five or more tables or figures, a List of Tables and/or Figures must be included. There must be separate lists for tables, figures and plates. Any tables or figures appearing in the appendix are also included in the appropriate list. Each title must be different from the other titles.

List of Symbols/List of Abbreviations/Nomenclature

The title of this material should reflect its content and may be included to define specialized terms or symbols. This information may also be placed in an appendix.

## Acknowledgments

This page is to thank those who have helped in the process of obtaining the graduate degree. Permissions to quote copyrighted material are listed here, as well as acknowledgments for grants and special funding.

## Abstract

The abstract of the masters' thesis should be a concise review of the work containing a brief summary of the problem and the results of the research. The following information is typically contained in the abstract:

- (1) a short statement concerning the area of investigation
- (2) a brief discussion of methods and procedures used in gathering the data
- (3) a condensed summary of the findings and conclusions reached in the study

## Text

Refer to the style manual required by your department for items not discussed in this section. This includes the format for references.

## Divisions

The manuscript must be divided into a logical scheme that is followed consistently throughout the work. Chapters are the most common major division, but sections and parts are also permissible.

Each chapter or section must be numbered consecutively and begin on a new page. A division entitled INTRODUCTION may be the first numbered chapter or section, or may precede the first numbered chapter or

section. Chapter or section titles are primary divisions of the entire manuscript and are not part of the subdivision scheme.

## Subdivisions

Any logical system of subdivision within chapters or sections is permissible, but the scheme must be consistent throughout the manuscript. Most style manuals will give a scheme of subdivisions. The appearance of the heading must vary for each level of subdivision unless a numbering system is used to indicate level. The subdivisions within a chapter or section do not begin on a new page unless the preceding page is filled. If there is not room for the complete heading and at least two lines of text at the bottom of a page, the new subdivision should begin on the next page. First and second level subdivision are always preceded by extra space to indicate to the reader a major shift in subject. Any levels of subdivision below the first two are not required to have extra space above but must be treated consistently.

## Tables, Figures and Plates Titles

Since tables and figures are separate entities, they must be numbered independently. Each table or figure must have a unique title descriptive of its contents. This title appears at the top of the table and at the bottom of the figure. Figures containing parts must be given a general title, after which the figure may be broken down into "A" and "B" parts. For multiple-part figures, the title may be integrated, with titles for each part as part of the general figure title, or composite, with no reference to the

individual parts. No two figures may have exactly the same title. The formatting of the titles must be consistent for all tables and figures.

#### Numbering of tables and figures

Tables and figures may be numbered in one of several ways. Three of the most common numbering schemes are (1) to number consecutively throughout the manuscript, including the appendix, using either Roman or Arabic numerals; (2) to number consecutively within chapters or sections, with a prefix designating the chapter/section (e.g., 3-1, 3-2 ... 4-1, 4-2). Appendix tables or figures would use a prefix of A for Appendix or a prefix designating the specific appendix (e.g., A-1, A-2 or A-1, B-1, B-2); or (3) to establish a consecutive numbering system for the body of the manuscript and a different one for the appendix (e.g., 1, 2, 3 for text and A-1, A-2, A-3 for appendix). The style of numbering must be consistent.

#### Placement within the body of the manuscript

Each table or figure must immediately follow the page on which it is first mentioned (except as noted in the next paragraph) and all tables and figures must be referred to by number, not by expressions such as "the following table/figure." When more than one table or figure is introduced on a page of text, each follows in the order mentioned. It is recommended that tables and figures be assigned pages separate from the text to avoid problems in shifting during last-minute revisions. In degree of importance, tables and figures are secondary to the text so that the text dictates where the tables or figures are

placed. All pages must be filled with text and in no case should a page be left significantly short because of the mention of a table or figure.

It is strongly suggested that if tables and figures are integrated with text, they be placed so that they appear either at the top or bottom of a page. A mention on the upper half of a page of text would mean that the bottom half of the page would be reserved for the table or figure, and a mention in the bottom half of the page would place the table or figure at the top of the next page. There should always be a balance of no less than one-half page of text and no more than one-half page of table or figure. If multiple tables or figures are mentioned together on a page, they may be placed on pages together, provided there is approximately 1/2 inch between each.

#### Bibliography/List of References

A thesis must include a list of materials used in the preparation of the manuscript. This may consist only of references cited in the text (List of References) or it may include works consulted as well (Bibliography). The list is preceded by a numbered page with the title -- Bibliography of List of References -- centered vertically and horizontally. The purpose of listing the citations is threefold: (1) to serve as an acknowledgment of sources, (2) to give readers sufficient information to locate the volume, and (3) in the case of personal interviews or correspondence, to save readers the trouble of attempting to locate material that is not available.

The format for the citations should be that used in the field of study specified by the appropriate style manual.

## Appendix

An appendix (appendixes or appendices), if included, is preceded by a numbered page with the designation centered vertically and horizontally between the margins. Original data and supplementary materials are usually placed in the appendix.

## Vita

The vita is written in narrative form or outline form and contains appropriate personal, academic and professional information about the author. Since copies of the manuscript will be available to the public, private information should not be included. It is the last item in the manuscript and appears with no preceding separation page and no page number.

As the final section of the thesis, the writer must prepare a biographical sketch of himself or herself in paragraph form, or in outline form. The vita should contain, but is not limited to, the following items:

1. Full name, date of birth, and parents of the candidate, if desired;
2. High school and colleges attended with dates and dates of degrees;
3. Honors and major interests;
4. Military and work experience;
5. Career and objectives;
6. Permanent address.

## 4. ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY

### Student's Responsibility

It is the student's responsibility to learn the policies, rules and regulations of both the Division of Graduate Studies and the major department relative to the thesis writing process.

The student is also responsible for:

1. Choosing a thesis chairperson following the policies and guidelines of the major department.
2. Choosing the members of the thesis committee in conjunction with the chairperson following the policies and guidelines of the major department.
3. Meeting with the chairperson and setting a schedule of appointments to discuss the student's progress and delineating a realistic time frame for completion of the thesis in a timely manner.
4. Keeping the scheduled appointments.
5. Turning in all thesis materials to the chairperson typed and in the proper formats.
6. Knowing and meeting all deadlines relative to the thesis process and graduation.
7. Filing all forms in a timely manner.

### Advisor and Thesis Committee's Responsibility

It is the chairperson's and committee members' responsibility to know the policies, rules and regulations of both the Division of Graduate Studies and the major department relative to the thesis writing process

The chairperson is also responsible for:

1. Ensuring that the student is aware of the rules, regulations and policies of the Division of Graduate Studies and the department.
2. Assisting the student in the formation of the thesis committee.
3. Meeting with the student and setting a schedule of appointments to discuss the student's progress.
4. Keeping the scheduled appointments with the student.
5. Reading and critiquing the student's work in a timely manner.
6. Ensuring that the student's work is properly documented and not plagiarized.
7. Scheduling the prospectus hearing, if required, and the final defense of the thesis.
8. Notifying the thesis committee members and the Department Chair of the place, time and date of the prospectus hearing, if required.
9. Notifying the Graduate Dean, the College Dean, the School or Department Chair and the thesis committee members of the place, time and date of the final defense.

The thesis committee members are responsible for:

1. Attending the prospectus hearing and the final defense.
2. Reading the student's work throughout the writing process.
3. Providing written feedback for correcting and/or improving the thesis.

#### Departmental Chair/Program Director's Responsibility

The Department chair/Program Director is responsible for knowing and enforcing

the policies, rules and regulations of both the Division of Graduate Studies and the department/program.

The chair/director is also responsible for:

1. Ensuring that the graduate faculty of the department/program know and adhere to the policies, rules and regulations of the Division of Graduate Studies.
2. Keeping the faculty abreast of rule, policy, procedure changes from the Division of Graduate Studies.
3. Serving as a liaison between the student and the thesis advisor, if necessary.
4. Ensuring that the thesis advisor and all committee members are qualified to serve in that capacity.

#### Use of Copyright Materials

The Copyright Law of 1976 (Public Law 94-553 as amended) protects literary, musical, dramatic, pantomimic, choreographic, pictorial, graphic, sculptural, cinematic, audiovisual and recorded works, and semiconductor chip products, computer programs and databases. Copyright extends for the life of the creator plus fifty years. Masters' thesis are the property of the writers and may be protected by copyright if the students wish.

Use of copyright material by other authors within a thesis is limited. Permission must be secured from the holder of the copyright to quote a substantial amount of material from another work. A "substantial amount" means more than 250 words of poetry, 2500 words from an article, or one chart, diagram, etc. from a periodical or book. The original creator must be

acknowledged in proper bibliographical form in the text and in the bibliography.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined in the 1990 edition of Form and Style by Campbell, Ballou and Slade as follows:

Plagiarism (the use of another person's ideas or wording without giving appropriate credit) results from inaccurate or incomplete attribution of material to its source. Ideas and the expression of ideas are considered to belong to the individual who first puts them forward. Therefore, when you incorporate in your paper either ideas or phrasing from another writer, whether you quote directly or indirectly, you need to indicate your source accurately and completely. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism can bring serious consequences, not only academic, in the form of failure or expulsion, but legal, in the form of lawsuits. People take plagiarism seriously because it violates the ethics of the academic community.

If any draft of a paper is found to be in violation, the student must correct the deficiencies related to plagiarism by the next draft, within one calendar year. If the corrected draft is found unacceptable, the grade for the thesis course will revert to "F". A student found guilty of plagiarism will be in danger of a later revocation of the degree, no matter how long a time may pass between the writing and the discovery of plagiarism.

The advisor must share with the student the responsibility for sending to the Graduate Dean's Office a legally

defensible product. To this end, thesis advisors are urged to stay within their areas of greatest expertise, in order to improve their chances of recognizing improper use of borrowing. Faculty members who are negligent in this matter are in danger of losing their graduate faculty status.

After a documented case of plagiarism, the chair of the thesis committee shall present a report to the Dean of the Division of Graduate Studies. The report will be completed within a three week period of time and it shall include a statement of the findings and the basis for those findings, and if necessary, make recommendations for any corrective action that should be taken.

## **5. ORAL DEFENSE**

### Scheduling the Defense

The chairperson of the thesis committee for the candidate for a masters' degree, in concurrence with other members of the committee, shall adhere to the following process. The chairperson will notify the members of the thesis committee, the Department Chair, the Dean of the School, the Dean of the Division of Graduate Studies and other appropriate persons of the place, date and time of the defense.

### Basic Process for the Defense

The basic process for an oral defense of a thesis is summarized below.

1. The candidate presents his or her argument, summarizing the main points of the study. The chairperson then allows other members of the committee to direct questions to the candidate concerning the research.
2. Following the candidate's presentation and the fielding of

questions, the candidate is excused from the room so that the Chairperson and members of the committee may discuss and subsequently vote on the candidate's success or failure.

3. The candidate is escorted into the room to receive the results of the committee's vote.
4. If successful, the candidate will secure the signatures of the members of the committee on the approval sheet, with any other necessary signatures.

### **Committee Report of Defense Results**

The "Committee Report of Defense Results" is completed upon the successful defense of the thesis before the student's committee. This form must be submitted prior to final clearance for graduation.

## **6. SUBMISSION**

### First Submission

One unbound copy of the thesis must be presented to the appropriate office.

The manuscript will be reviewed to determine format and compliance with appropriate guidelines from the department's adopted style manual. The student will be notified if any revisions are necessary, in a timely manner.

If revisions of the manuscript are necessary, the student must incorporate the changes and resubmit to the appropriate office

### Final Submission

Submission of a dissertation to the appropriate office should not be interpreted as approval. Approval comes only after the document is read and the

format reviewed for consistency with the thesis guidelines. The final copy of the thesis must be acceptable to all members of the committee as witnessed by the signatures on the approval page.

Final corrected copies of the thesis must be accepted by the appropriate office no later than one year after the oral defense, or within the ten year limit, whichever occurs first. Failure to meet this deadline will result in the degree not being awarded.

### Binding of the thesis/project

Students will submit three (3) unbound copies of the dissertation, on white, (at least) 20 pound, 25% rag, acid-free bond paper, to the appropriate office. Photocopies should be made only from the original. The appropriate office will be responsible for binding these copies. One bound copies will be deposited in the University Library, one bound copy will be sent to the Department and one bound copy will be returned to the student. Students may request additional copies of the dissertation to be bound at their own expense.

### Graduation Clearance

Graduation clearance is to be completed and one week prior to Commencement.