The Dominican University of California
Master’s Thesis and Capstone Project
Style Guide

Dominican University of California
San Rafael, CA
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# Introduction

The Dominican University of California *Master’s Thesis and Capstone Project Guidelines* (hereafter referred to as the Guidelines) were developed for use by graduate students and thesis readers when preparing or reviewing a manuscript to ensure that it complies with the Dominican University of California requirements and that it meets a level of professional work.

It is crucial for students to read and understand the information presented in these guidelines and to contact the Library immediately when clarification is needed. Work not meeting the guidelines will not be accepted.

## Use of Style Guides

In addition to the Guidelines, a style guide appropriate to your discipline should be selected (e.g. APA, MLA, or Chicago Manual of Style). If the Guidelines conflict with a discipline’s style guide, the Guideline take precedent; be sure to consult with the Scholarly Communications Librarian.

## Timelines

It is important to remember that the submission of the manuscript to the Library occurs after all of your thesis advisors have approved the thesis. Your department may require that you submit your manuscript to the Library in order to graduate, be sure to check with your department.

Time is critical during the "thesis season." A student must allow enough time for:

1. Preparation of the draft,
2. Consideration by manuscript advisors by deadline dates set in the department,
3. Review by the Library,
4. Inevitable corrections and resubmission

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that all readers are available to review the manuscript such that it can be submitted in final form to the Library by the posted deadline. Theses will not be posted until the Library receives a fully signed copy of the candidate’s Signature Page.

## Copyright

During the drafting of your manuscript, it’s recommended that, early in the process, you meet with the Scholarly Communications Librarian for issues concerning copyright. Begin the process of acquiring copyright permissions as early as possible. If, upon submittal, the Library determines that the manuscript does not meet the requirements described in this document, the manuscript will not be accepted, and corrections will need to be made before you graduate.
Formatting Your Manuscript

**IMPORTANT!** The Guidelines take precedence over other style guides or department handbooks and example theses provided to you by your instructor. If there seems to be a serious conflict, check with the Library and have your manuscript advisors do the same.

Manuscript front matter, margin, pagination, and document structure requirements are specified throughout this guide, and must be observed as stated, no matter what other guidelines dictate. Remaining format issues are governed by standard publication manuals and/or standards of publication in your discipline.

**Master’s Theses, Capstone Projects, and Culminating Projects**

Because a manuscript or project is usually an objective, unbiased investigation based upon the author’s scholarly work, it should be written in a formal scholarly manner appropriate to academic publications. It is important to be consistent in matters of style, usage, and punctuation. Consistency with the style, punctuation, headings, the use of capitalization, and the placement of figures and tables and their corresponding captions should be observed. The presentation of data should be clear and clutter-free, utilizing a legible font and size.

**Creative Works**

Some manuscripts from the Master of Arts in Humanities and the MFA in Creative Writing are creative works may require minor deviation from the Guidelines in order for creative expression.

Observe the Guidelines as closely as possible and use the formatting tools in your word processing applications for creative styling. Meet with the Scholarly Communications Librarian if you need help with creative formatting.

**Word Processing Applications**

**Microsoft Word**

MS Word is a robust application that will allow you do all the formatting needed for your manuscript. The Library has student computers (PC desktops and Apple Macbooks) with MS Word available for you to use. Additionally the Library has created an ever growing suite of tutorials that specifically address formatting requirements.

**Google Docs**

Available to all students via their University Gmail account, Google Docs is an excellent word processing tool, especially if working on group projects. As good as Google Docs is, it is a simpler word processing application that cannot handle the formatting requirements for your thesis.
If you opt to use Google Docs to write the bulk of your manuscript, you will at some point need to download it as a MS Word document and finish the formatting in Word. It’s recommended that you wait until you are finished with writing your manuscript.

**Apple Pages**

Also an excellent word processing application, but the Library does not support Pages and cannot advise you regarding the formatting of your manuscript using Pages.

**Required Order of Manuscript Pages**

*Table 1 Required order of pages in your manuscript*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Page Number</th>
<th>Page Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title Page</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>Required Page number is not visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copyright Statement</td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iii</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>iv</td>
<td>Optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>vi</td>
<td>Required if any tables appear in your paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>vii</td>
<td>Required if any images appear in your paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Abbreviations</td>
<td>viii</td>
<td>Optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Body</td>
<td>Starts with page 1</td>
<td>The main content of your manuscript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>numbers continue</td>
<td>Well formatted citations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>numbers continue</td>
<td>Appendix titles appear in your Table of Contents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Formatting specific to the Introductory Pages**

**Title Page**

The title page has 3 sections: (1) The title, byline, and author name, (2) Fulfillment statement, (3) Location and graduation date.

- Double-spaced
- 12 point font
- Title is bold-faced
- **Title and byline and author** name appear at the top of the page and has 3 lines (1st line) Title (2nd line) by (3rd line) author name(s)
- **Fulfillment statement** is centered vertically and horizontally on the page
- **Location and Graduation Date** has 3 lines (1st line) Dominican University of California (2nd line) San Rafael, CA (3rd line) Your graduation month and year (e.g. May 2019)
**Figure 1 Required fulfillment statement to use on your title page**

| Use the following as your fulfillment statement. Replace the brackets with the appropriate wording: |
| A culminating [thesis or capstone project, project submitted to the faculty of Dominican University of California in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of [degree name] in [major] |

**Copyright Statement**

You automatically own the copyright to your work and no one may legally copy any part of it without your permission. You also may choose to use a Creative Commons copyright to give readers more flexibility with what they can do with your manuscript or sections of your manuscript. If you have questions about copyright options please contact The Scholarly Communications Librarian

- The copyright page appears as the second page of your manuscript and uses a lower-case Roman numeral three: "ii"
- The copyright statement is appears 1" from the bottom of the page and centered

**Figure 2 Copyright statement**

| Use the following as your copyright statement. Replace the brackets with the appropriate wording: Copyright © [author's name] [year of publication]. All rights reserved. |

If you would like to use a Creative Commons copyright for your manuscript please talk with the Scholarly Communications Librarian

**Abstract**

An abstract, no more than one page in length, must accompany each manuscript. The abstract states the purpose, design, and results of the research or a description of your project; it is written concisely, usually no more than 300 words, and will not exceed 1 page.

Creative projects will still have an abstract page but rather describing the purpose and design of a project you will have a description of your project.
Important! Biological Sciences and Clinical Laboratory Sciences Abstracts.
If you are a Biological Sciences or Clinical Laboratory Sciences student your Principle Investigator must review your abstract to be sure it is free of unreleased or proprietary data that should not be visible to the public.

Acknowledgements
An acknowledgments page includes a short paragraph acknowledging those people who helped and supported you through the manuscript process.

Table of Contents
• Your manuscript must include a Table of Contents listing all major headings that appear including the Abstract, Acknowledgements, List of Tables, List of Figures.
• Page numbers listed in the table of contents correspond with the material presented in your manuscript. If you are asked to make revisions within your manuscript, make sure to check that the page numbers listed in the Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures are still correct. Any headings, subheadings, or captions listed in the front matter must match exactly with those that appear within the manuscript.

List of Tables
• If you have any tables in your manuscript you must include a List of Tables after the Table of Contents
• The List of Tables appears on its own page
• The List of Tables includes each table (even if there is only one) listed sequentially as they appear in your paper
• Each item in the List includes the table number and a short description (usually the whole or a portion of the table caption) and the page number on which the table appears.

List of Figures
• If you have any images, charts, graphs, etc. in your manuscript you must include a List of Figures after the Table of Contents.
• The List of Figures appears on its own page.
• The List of Figures includes each figure (even if there is only one) listed sequentially as they appear in your paper.
• Each item in the List of Figures includes the figure number and a short description (usually the whole or a portion of the table caption) and the page number on which it appears.
Abbreviations

- If your paper includes constantly appearing abbreviations you may include a list of abbreviations. Abbreviations usually appear, but are not limited to, scientific papers.
- If you would like to include a full Glossary of Terms, place it in an appendix

General Formatting Requirements

Page Size

- The entire document is letter sized (8.5" x 11")
- Pages may be in landscape position for figures and tables that do not fit in portrait position

Margins

- 1-inch margin on all sides (top, bottom, right, and left)
- If you plan to print out and professionally bind your manuscript, you'll need to add a gutter of 0.5" to the left side of your paper. The gutter is in addition to the margins and is used to account for the space need for the binding. Word has a simple way to add a gutter in the Paragraph settings.

Type Style

- Choose a font that is clear and business-like; avoid unusual or difficult to read fonts. We recommend using standard fonts (e.g. Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial).
- Use 12 point font size.

Line Indentations

- Indent the first line of each paragraph 0.5"

Line Spacing

- Use double-spacing throughout your manuscript except where noted

Pagination

- Page numbers appear at the top right corner of each page
- Introductory page are numbered with lowercase Roman numerals (e.g., i, ii, iii, iv...)
- The body of your manuscript and supplementary pages are numbered with Arabic numerals (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4) and begin with page 1

Running Heads

- Do not use running heads in the final version of your manuscript
**Major Headings**

- Sections starting with a Major heading should begin on a new page. Do not start place a major heading in the middle of the page.
- Major section headings should be consistent throughout your manuscript.

**Subheadings**

- Subheadings within a chapter do not begin on a new page unless the preceding page is filled.
- Subheadings at the bottom of a page require at least two lines of text following the heading and at least two lines of text on the next page.
- Style for second-level subheadings should be consistent throughout your manuscript.

**Paragraphs**

- When dividing paragraphs across pages, at least two lines of text should appear at the bottom of the page and at least two lines of text on the next page.
- For quotations longer than 40 words in length (block quotes):
  - inset 0.5” from the left margin
  - double-spaced
  - The In-text citation follows the last punctuation mark of the paragraph

**Tables and Figures**

- No figures may appear on the title page or other introductory pages.
- Tables and figures must be referenced in your text.
- Tables and figures should follow as closely as possible after the first reference in the text.
- If they are placed on the next page, text on the page should continue to the bottom of the preceding page.
- If more clarity is provided by placing tables and figures at the end of chapters or at the end of the text, this style is also acceptable. In this case, they should appear in a section before your references.
- Diagrams, drawings, graphs, charts, maps, photographs, or any other type of illustrations should be referred to in the manuscript as a figure.
- All tables and figures must conform to the margin requirements. Images can be resized to meet the margin requirements.
- All tables and figures must be listed in a List of Tables or a List of Figures immediately after the Table of Contents (even if there is only one).
- Do not use images of tables in your work. If you have an image of a table, recreate the table in your word processor.
- For ADA compliance, place your images inline with the text and use Alt Text.
Captions and Numbering

- All tables and figures in your paper must include a proper caption located either above or below the table or figure; use the Caption Tool in MS Word. Be consistent in placement.
- Tables and figures should be numbered and ordered sequentially as they appear in your paper.
- Table and figures in appendices should be captioned and continue the numbering sequence used in the text.
- All tables and figures should be listed in a List of Tables and a List of Figures located after the Table of Contents.
- The Lists of Tables and Figures should include a Table/Figure number along with descriptive text (usually a portion of the caption).

Large Tables and Figures

- Large tables or figures can be placed on the page in landscape orientation.
- Landscape oriented tables and figures should face the right margin.
- The top margin should be the same as on a regular page.
- Page numbers for landscape tables or figures are placed on the 11" side of the page.

References or Bibliographies

- The References, Works Cited, or Bibliography heading is a major heading and the formatting should be the same as other major headings in the manuscript.
- Use most appropriate citation style for your discipline. Include hanging indents if that is indicated for your style.
- If you are using a citation tool, such as RefWorks, it is the author’s responsibility to make sure that citations are correct including fixing typos and capitalization when needed.

Appendices

- The title of an appendix title is a major heading and should be formatted the same as other major headings in the manuscript.
- An appendix should be introduced with a cover page bearing only the title of the appendix centered vertically and horizontally on the page.
- The content of the appendix begins on the second page with the standard margins.
- Page numbers used in the appendix must continue from the main document text.
- Table and figures in appendices should be captioned and continue the numbering sequence used in the text.
ADA Compliance

An ADA accessible manuscript allows those using screen readers and other assistive computer technologies to read your work, therefore increasing the size of your audience and potential citations for your paper.

5 simple things you can do to make your manuscript ADA compliant

1) **Add Heading Styles to your paper**

   Use the heading styles in MS Word to designate headings in your paper rather than using bold characters and larger font sizes. Heading styles are recognized by screen readers and help people navigate your document. Using Heading Styles will also make it easier for you to automatically generate a table of contents for your document.

   **Figure 4** The Styles menu, highlighted in green, is one of the main tools need for proper formatting of your manuscript

2) **Create Alt Text for all images, figures, tables and graphs**

   Alt Text stands for Alternative Text. It's text that sits behind an image that is computer readable. Screen readers can't read images and describe the contents to a reader but Alt Text can. Add a few words of Alt Text to all of your images, figures, charts, tables and graphs so that people using screen readers know the context of the image. To add Alt Text:

   1. Right click on an image in your document and choose **Format picture**
   2. Choose the **Layout & Properties** option
   3. Choose **Alt Text** on the dialog box that appears
   4. Enter a title and a description

3) **Add Captions for your images, figures, tables and graphs**

   Captions help screen readers navigate through a document. Additionally, captions help you automatically generate a table of figures for your paper. To add a caption:

   1. Go to the **References** tab in the MS Word ribbon
   2. Click on an image in your manuscript
   3. In the References menu choose **Insert Caption**
   4. Choose whether to label the item as a figure, table, or equation
   5. Choose whether to position the caption above or below the image (be consistent)
4) **Use the formatting tools in your word processor**

Avoid using the Enter and Tab keys for all of your formatting; In Microsoft Word use the formatting tools:

- Styles
- Page and Section Breaks
- Page Layout tools
- Picture and Table Tools menus
- Table of Contents and Insert Table of Figures
- Insert Footnotes
- Show the hidden formatting

5) **Check your paper for accessibility**

In MS Word you can check your document for accessibility issues. Word will check your images for alt text and other issues although, keep in mind, it's not checking everything (e.g. heading styles). To check accessibility in MS Word 2013

1. Click on the File tab
2. Click on *Check for Issues*
3. Choose *Check Accessibility*
Copyright and Use of Images

If you are using materials in your paper that were created by someone else, they may be under copyright; it is your responsibility to either obtain written permission to reuse the materials or document your case for Fair Use for each item.

If your manuscript utilizes a number of copyrighted materials, or if your manuscript contains a mixture of your own images and copyrighted images, it is recommended that you create a list, separate from your manuscript, which outlines the source of each image and whether or not permission is needed/included/pending or that includes your case for Fair Use.

Examples of copyrighted material may include any images that are not your own – tables, figures, graphs, photographs, maps – as well as extensive portions of text, such as the reproduction of journal articles.

Permission may need to be sought from the author, publisher, or repository (i.e., museum or archive) depending on who owns the copyright. It's recommended review and become familiar with the document, Keeping Your Thesis Legal (available through Dominican Scholar) and that you speak with the Scholarly Communications Librarian if you are unsure about the copyright of materials used in your manuscript.
Human Subjects Research

If your manuscript includes data obtained from human subjects (experiments, surveys, interviews, etc.), you must get approval from Dominican's Institutional Review Board. Information concerning the use of human subjects is available on the Review Board's webpage.

Human subjects research approval must be obtained from the University’s Institutional Review Board prior to the initiation of the research (i.e., before recruitment of subjects into the research and before any data is collected), regardless of whether you are doing your research in conjunction with another institution and human subjects research approval has been sought there. Failure to obtain the necessary approval and submit the appropriate documentation can result in the rejection of your manuscript and can cause delays in your graduation.

Once the approval has been obtained, you should attach a copy of the permission letter with the submission of your manuscript. While it is acceptable to include the IRB approval letter as an appendix in the manuscript if this is a format required by your department, we recommend omitting any personal contact information (e.g., your address, phone number, signatures), as your manuscript will be available to the public. If you need assistance in redacting personal information from the IRB, please contact the Library at dominican.scholar@dominican.edu.
Depositing Your Manuscript with Dominican Scholar

The Library utilizes a web platform called Dominican Scholar to collect and manage electronic theses. Once the student has uploaded their manuscript to Dominican Scholar, the Library will review the submission for formatting and copyright, assign and register a Digital Object Identifier (DOI), post it to Dominican Scholar, and enter it into the Library’s catalog.

All students required by their department to submit a manuscript or capstone project to the Library must do so electronically; paper copies will not be accepted. The copy submitted to the copy must be the same as the manuscript submitted to and accepted by the department.

1) Create an Account
   To deposit your manuscript you’ll first need to create an account with Dominican Scholar. If you created an account to present at the University’s Scholarly and Creative Works conference, use the same account for your thesis.

   1. Go to Dominican Scholar at https://scholar.domini
can.edu
   2. Choose the My Account tab near the top of the screen
   3. At the login page choose Don’t have an account? Sign up
   4. Fill out the form
   5. Check your email for a confirmation message

   Note: If you use your personal email when setting up an account you'll receive a monthly email letting you know how many times your documents have been downloaded. You can always update your email address later.

2) Deposit your Manuscript
   Once you have your account set up follow the steps to deposit your manuscript

   1. Go to Dominican Scholar and choose the Submit Research link in the left-side menu
   2. Choose you’re the appropriate link for your submission
   3. Login with the username and password that you created earlier
   4. Read and accept the Terms of Agreement and Fill out the subsequent form and upload your manuscript
   5. Click the Submit button, review your entry for errors, make any revisions if needed, otherwise you’re done.

3) After You’re Done
   After you deposit your manuscript, the Library will ensure that all the information has been entered correctly and that the manuscript has been formatted according to the guidelines. If everything is correct your manuscript will receive a DOI and then be posted.

   If errors are found within the manuscript itself the Library will notify you of corrections that need to be made. You'll be able to resubmit the updated version of your manuscript with no penalty.
Once your manuscript has been received the any requested corrections have been verified the Library will notify your manuscript advisor.

You should receive an email notifying you that your manuscript is available with a URL linking to your manuscript. Depending on when you submit your manuscript and the number of theses received this process could take several days.
Meet with a Librarian

When you are done, or close to being done with your writing, and before you deposit your manuscript, make an appointment with the Scholarly Communications Librarian to review your manuscript formatting.

Additionally, if you are planning on using any images that you did not create (i.e. if you use any images, charts, maps, illustrations, etc. that someone else created), then you may run into some copyright issues. Make an appointment with the Scholarly Communications Librarian to identify potential conflicts. Start copyright permission process as early as possible in case you are denied permission and need to find substitute images.
Resources

The Scholarly Communications Librarian

Michael Pujals, MLIS

Library 105
michael.pujals@dominican.edu
415-485-3254
To schedule an appointment use: http://libcal.dominican.edu/appointment/24265

Dominican Scholar
https://scholar.dominican.edu/

Library Website
https://www.dominican.edu/academics/resources/library

RefWorks
https://refworks.proquest.com/

Electronic Version of the Master’s Thesis & Capstone Project Guide

MS Word Formatting Tutorials
https://libguides.dominican.edu/word-formatting

Keeping Your Thesis Legal
https://scholar.dominican.edu/all-faculty/62/

Sample Manuscript
Appendix A: Thesis and Capstone Project Checklist
Thesis and Capstone Project Checklist

☐ I’ve reviewed the required Master’s Thesis and Capstone Guidelines

☐ I’ve reviewed *Keeping Your Thesis Legal*

☐ Requested and received copyright permissions for images that are not my own

☐ Checked my manuscript for ADA Compliance and accessibility

☐ Scheduled an appointment with the Scholarly Communications Librarian to for final review of formatting for my manuscript

☐ Obtained all needed signatures on my signature sheet

☐ **For Clinical Laboratory Science Students:** Obtained needed signatures for my MOU

☐ **For Biological Science Students:** Had my PI review my abstract for public viewing

☐ Created my Dominican Scholar Account

☐ Deposited my manuscript with Dominican Scholar
Appendix B: Intellectual Property for Biological Sciences, Clinical Laboratory Sciences, and BFA in Creative Writing
Introduction and Definitions

Several of Dominican's graduate programs work with outside agencies with Dominican's students writing their theses based on the intellectual property of those agencies. Dominican respects the intellectual property of those agencies and works with them so that those students can still publish their work on Dominican Scholar and not divulge intellectual property or data before it is released.

Definitions

**Embargo** - a period of time during which a document is not publicly accessible. Although the document may not be accessed, the document's metadata will be publicly visible. Embargo periods can last from 1 - 3 years.

**Thesis metadata** - Thesis metadata is information about the thesis. Thesis metadata includes:

- Thesis title
- Author name
- Graduation date
- Degree and program information
- Names of the student's thesis advisor, thesis readers, and department or program chair
- Abstract
- Author comments (optional)
- Additional files (optional)

Biological Sciences

**Thesis Embargoes**

The Biological Science students' theses are based on research done with a thesis advisor, who will eventually publish their work. Because theses may contain data that the advisor is not prepared to publish, Biological Science students are required to place, at minimum, a 1 year embargo on their theses when deposited in Dominican Scholar.

When the embargo period is ending, the University's Scholarly Communications Librarian will notify the thesis author(s) via email.

**Thesis Abstracts and Metadata**

Abstracts appearing in Dominican Scholar should be cleared by the student's thesis advisor to be sure that the abstract does not contain unpublished data. In lieu of an abstract, the student may instead include a line stating "Thesis abstract unavailable until thesis is removed from embargo."
When a thesis is removed from embargo, the thesis' abstract will be added to the visible thesis metadata by the University's Scholarly Communications Librarian.

**Clinical Laboratory Sciences**

The Clinical Lab Sciences (CLS) students write their theses based on work done at an outside agency. Because their projects may contain proprietary information from that agency, each student must return a completed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (see below) to the University's Scholarly Communications Librarian when they deposit their capstone project to Dominican Scholar.

A signed copy of the MOU should be distributed to each of the following:

- The student
- Agency representative
- The CLS Program Administrator
- The University's Scholarly Communications Librarian

The MOU gives the agency discretion on the accessibility level of the thesis:

- The thesis may be publicly accessible
- The embargo requires an embargo
- The thesis should never be accessible
- Even if the thesis is not accessible to the public, the thesis metadata will be visible.

**MFA in Creative Writing**

Creative works are afforded greater protection under copyright more than factual work and creative writing graduate students often enter writing programs with the express purpose to publish their work. Taking this into account, full-text theses from the Creative Writing MFA program deposited into Dominican Scholar will automatically be inaccessible to the public. Like a thesis under embargo, the thesis metadata will still be viewable.

Students who wish to have their thesis made publicly accessible upon deposit into Dominican Scholar can make the request to the University's Scholarly Communications Librarian. Students also have the option to have their thesis under embargo up to 3 years.
Agreement

I acknowledge that I have read and that I am familiar with the required *Master’s Thesis & Capstone Project Style Guide* and that I have formatted my thesis to the best of my ability to meet these requirements.

Print your Name  
Signature

Print your Name  
Signature

Print your Name  
Signature

Print your Name  
Signature

Print your Name  
Signature