
A Guide to the Writing of the Master's Thesis

OVERVIEW

The Master's thesis at Villanova University is written under the supervision of a full-time faculty member prepared to undertake the direction of the student's research in his/her major department. The student may initiate his/her research at a time approved by the department following each department's protocol.

Even though the thesis might be completed prior to the comprehensive examination, the Dean will not approve it until the student has successfully passed the Comprehensive Examination (and the Language Examination if required).

When the thesis is finished, the original and second copy (signed by the advisor and the departmental chairperson) must be brought in two separate boxes or manila file folders to the Graduate Studies Office.* Once the thesis has been signed by the advisor and chairperson and submitted to the Graduate Studies Office, it cannot be returned for further revisions. Upon submission, the student must present evidence of payment of the fee** for binding both copies of the thesis that will be placed in the University Library. For students expecting to complete degree requirements by the end of a given semester, both unbound copies must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Office no later than the date indicated for that semester in the Villanova University Catalog for the Office of Graduate Studies.

Because every thesis in the Library may be used in the Reserve Room, the student will want to present the results of his/her research in an acceptable form as described below.*** It is also his/her responsibility to respect the law governing "fair use" of copyrighted materials and to secure permissions whenever necessary. Copyright laws are on file in the Reference Department in Falvey Library.

Every student who submits a Master's thesis must meet the following requirements. (Doctoral dissertations must adhere to the same general regulations subject to departmental standards).

* In most cases, the student and/or the student's department (program) wish additional copies to be signed. Check with your departmental office for its policy in this regard.

** Student cost for thesis binding is \$10 per copy and is payable at Falvey Memorial Library, Periodicals Department. (Cost is subject to change. Check for current cost.)

*** These guidelines are rather general and in most cases will be augmented by the stylistic guidelines of the discipline in which the student is working.

GENERAL STYLE GUIDELINES

(Check with your program office for specific guidelines applicable in your discipline.)

PAPER

All copies of the thesis must be on white bond paper, 8½ by 11 inches, and at least twenty-pound weight. Under no circumstances is so-called erasable bond paper acceptable.

MARGIN

A left-hand margin of 1½ inches must be allowed for binding. Each of the other margins should be 1 inch. Do not punch holes in the spine.

TYPING

The thesis must be typed in black ink on one side of the paper. The text must be double-spaced, except for footnotes and bibliographical items, which are single-spaced. In some cases, quotations may also be single-spaced, as recommended by certain manuals of style in the student's discipline (e.g., American Psychological Association, American Chemical Society, etc.).

PAGINATION

Each page of the thesis is assigned a number, although a number should not appear on the title page. The Title Page is assigned the Roman numeral i, but is not shown. Subsequent "front pages" that precede the body of the text (e.g., preface, table of contents, dedication, etc.) are also numbered in consecutive Roman numerals (ii, iii, iv...) located at the bottom center of each page. The body of the text begins with the first Arabic numeral unless the stylistic convention of the student's discipline stipulates otherwise.

Beginning with the first page of the main body of the text, consecutive Arabic numbers should be used at the bottom center of each page (unless the formal guidelines in the student's discipline stipulate otherwise).

ILLUSTRATION

If illustrations (graphs, charts, tables, photographs, etc.) are used, they must appear in both required copies. In the original copy, the illustrations should be printed, photocopied, mounted or drawn in black india ink; however since the required copies must be bound, photocopied reproductions are sometimes preferable to originals. The decision to use an original or reproduction of an illustration should be based on the permanency of the copy. All photographs

must be positive copies and permanently secured to the page with rubber cement or dry-mounting tissue. Do not use plastic covers over illustrations.

FORMAT

Each copy of the thesis must include, normally in this order:

- title page
 - approval page
 - table of contents
- } Numbered with consecutive *Roman* numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.)
-
- text
 - reference material
- } Numbered with consecutive *Arabic* numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.)

The title page and approval page must be typewritten (except for signatures). No exceptions will be permitted.

A sample of the **title page, approval page** and the **thesis submitted** form appears at the end of this brochure.

The table of contents is a consecutive listing of the names and page-numbers of the chapters and other major divisions as they appear in the body of the thesis.

The reference material contains a bibliography or a list of references arranged alphabetically and any other pertinent sections, such as appendices.

The student's advisor or Program Director should be consulted about applicable departmental standards, including the recommended manual of style.

(SAMPLE OF TITLE PAGE)

FULL TITLE OF THE THESIS

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of
the Department of _____
Villanova University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of *Arts* or *Science*
in

by
Student's Full Name
Month, Year (of completed thesis)

Under the Direction of
Supervisor's Full Name

This is a model for your Thesis Submitted form. Note, two signed originals are required.)

Type the date submitted here.

THESIS SUBMITTED

John Henry Doe

Department of Psychology

An Empirical Study on The Importance of Getting All the Paperwork for My MS Psychology Thesis Completed Correctly

Advisor: Fred Faculty, Ph.D. _____
Signature Date

Chairperson: Douglas M. Klieger, Ph.D. _____
Signature Date

Dean: Gerald M. Long, Ph.D. _____
Signature Date

A copy of the thesis is available for research purposes at Falvey Memorial Library.

Student Signature Date

Checklist of Major Steps for Writer of Thesis

- ❖ Ask advisor about recommended style-sheet in your discipline and about any formal departmental standards.
- ❖ Follow carefully the requirements indicated in this guideline (except where your program's requirements indicate otherwise).
- ❖ Binding fee must be paid at the Falvey Memorial Library-Periodicals Department before submitting completed copies to the Graduate Studies Office (201 Vasey).
- ❖ Obtain signatures of advisor and chairperson on both copies submitted to the Graduate Studies Office.
- ❖ Submit both signed copies of the thesis along with one copy of the THESIS SUBMITTED form to the Office of Graduate Studies before the applicable deadline indicated in the Graduate Studies Catalog.