Graduate Education
Thesis & Dissertation Writing Workshop

Fall 2019
Maribeth Price, Dean of Graduate Education

Part II: Finishing your thesis or dissertation
The Office of Graduate Education
C 2201

• Maribeth Price
  • Dean of Graduate Education

• Rachel Howard
  • Admissions, applications, assistantships

• Stephen Detlefs
  • Student progress, POS processing, degree audits, thesis/dissertation processing

We ask your patience:
The campus is completing a major move to a new student information system (Banner). We will do what it takes to help you, but processes and answers may be slower than usual.
Steps

You’re getting close!

- Define a topic area and establish committee
- Review the literature
- Develop and refine research question
- Develop and refine methods
- Collect and analyze data
- Write up the results
- Get approval of document from advisor
- Get approval from committee
- Defend
- Final edits

Process is not as linear as it appears!
Manuscript preparation
Two style options

- Traditional Thesis/Dissertation
- Compilation of Journal Articles
The required components of an M.S. thesis or Ph.D. dissertation include the following. ALL components MUST be available for committee review prior to the defense.

- Title Page,
- Abstract,
- Acknowledgements,
- Table of Contents,
- List of Tables,
- List of Figures,
- Introduction
- Theory and/or Literature Search
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusions
- Bibliography,
- Appendices,
- Vita.

Chapter titles and organization are flexible to accommodate differences in disciplines, but these components should be present and recognizable.
Journal Articles Style

- Title Page,
- Abstract,
- Acknowledgements,
- Table of Contents,
- List* of Tables,
- List* of Figures,
- **Introduction** to the full body of work represented by the articles
- **One or more journal articles**, 
- **Conclusions** including a summary of conclusions from the articles and implications from the work as a whole
- Bibliography for references not in the articles,
- Appendices (include documentation for permission to reproduce published/copyrighted articles),
- Vita.

* - Note that the lists of tables & figures refers to tables and figures in the Introduction and the Conclusions.
Previously published material

• What if I publish a paper before it is included in my thesis/dissertation?
  • Publishers usually assert copyright ownership of papers they publish.
  • Most readily give permission for the paper to be reprinted in a thesis/dissertation, but it takes time.
  • Documentation of permission must be included in the first appendix of your thesis/dissertation

• Applies to accepted or published papers, not submitted ones
Graduate Office

- Updated annually
- Use the current version!
  - Do not copy from old thesis/dissertation
  - Do not use an online source
- LaTeX template available
- Includes templates for title page
# Thesis/Dissertation Format Checklist

## Summary of formatting requirements

## Thesis/Dissertation Format Checklist

### Global formatting requirements

**Page layout**
- Pages are standard letter size (8.5 by 11 inches) in portrait orientation
- All pages are one-sided
- The body text is double-spaced
- Paragraphs are indented

**Margins**
- 1.5-inch margin on the left, including the title page
- 1-inch margins on the top, bottom, and right
- Landscape and double-size pages have the same margins as portrait pages

**Fonts**
- Body text font is in 12-pt. Times New Roman or similar serif font
- The same body text font is consistently used throughout
- Figure/table captions are distinctive from the body text but at least 10 pt.
- No text is smaller than 10 pt.
- Headings clearly indicate the hierarchy

**Page numbers**
- Numbers appear in the upper right corner, ¾” from the top and right side.
- The title page and copyright page are not numbered
- The front matter (starts with Abstract) is numbered using lower-case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii…)
- The rest (starting with Chapter 1) is continuously numbered with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3…)

### Figures and tables

**Table/figure layout**
- Centered on portrait pages with caption immediately above (tables) or below (figures)
- When the caption is not on the same page, the page is numbered and an asterisk appears in the caption
- Figures and tables are labeled using Roman numerals (Figure 1, Table 1)
- The page number of a figure or table is shown at the top of the figure or table
The Title Page

- Must be in the exact format shown in the CURRENT year’s thesis writing instructions.
  - Do NOT copy a title page from someone who previously graduated
  - Do NOT copy a title page from an online source
  - Triple-check names, titles, departments

- There is only ONE master title page with original signatures of your committee.
  - Subsequent copies of your thesis will contain a copy of the original signed title page.
The Metaphysics and Mythology of Coffee
by
Joseph Highly Caffeinated
A thesis submitted to the Graduate Division in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Chemical Engineering
South Dakota School of Mines and Technology
Rapid City, South Dakota
Date Defended: April 1, 2017
Approved by:
Major Professor – Kofi R. Bean, Ph.D., Department of Chemistry and Applied Biological Sciences
Graduate Division Representative – Kaldi T. Goarherd, Ph.D., Department of Humanities
Committee Member – Skin E. Latte, Ph.D., Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
Head of the Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering – Dee Caff, Ph.D.
Dean of Graduate Education – Maribeth H. Price, Ph.D.
Revised August 2018
PhD title page

Ph.D. Title page: same format as M.S.

Use of 10 pt. font is ok to fit additional committee members, if needed.

See the writing manual for more examples of committee names.
Who owns a thesis/dissertation?

- The ownership rights to theses and dissertations created by students is governed by SD BOR Policy 4:34 and the SD Mines policy IX-2.
- Students with questions regarding intellectual property, patents, and inventions are advised to review these policies and contact the SD Mines Office of Research Affairs with questions.
Copyright

- Students are encouraged to place a copyright notice in every thesis or dissertation.
- The student must, as a condition of a degree award, grant royalty-free permission to the School to reproduce, use, and publicly distribute copies of the thesis or dissertation.
Printing

• All revisions, edits, and proofreading are done electronically.¹

• **ONE** final copy on archival paper is printed by you. The library makes the rest.²

• The **ONE** copy is printed after **ALL** revisions and proofreading are done.

• The **TITLE PAGE** is printed earlier, for your committee to sign to indicate acceptance of the document.

¹ Unless you have a committee member who prefers paper.
² For items larger than 11x17”, like maps, you must provide enough copies.
• Devereaux Library has very specific archival paper requirements

• The SD Mines bookstore sells the right kind
  • Buy paper from the bookstore early, in case they run out.

• If purchasing paper elsewhere, consult with the Library FIRST for detailed requirements
Copying and Binding

- Contact the Devereaux Library to set up an appointment to discuss costs.
- Budget $200-$300+ depending on:
  - document length
  - number of color pages
  - number of copies
- The Library retains:
  - Original unbound manuscript
  - 1 bound copy
  - 1 cd copy (in PDF format)
- Additional copies may be required for:
  - Department
  - Major Professor
  - Industrial partners or funding agencies
- The Library will sign a form indicating that you have ordered and paid for the necessary copies.
Timelines
Process overview
General steps to completion

• Schedule target defense date with committee
• Major professor approves document
• Committee approves document
• Schedule defense with Grad Office
• Defend
• Revise document as committee requires
• Committee signs title page to approve revisions
• Submit to Grad Office for abstract review and proofreading check
• Make final corrections
• Print on archival paper and submit to Library
The defense process
In detail. Just take it a step at a time.

The forms listed in this document may be found at: http://www.sdtm.edu/Academics/Graduate-Education/Grad-Ed-Forms/

Thesis/Dissertation Completion Instructions

Getting ready to defend

1. Advance preparation:
   - Review the Graduate Education Deadlines chart well in advance. Allow 8-10 weeks to complete the defense process once the thesis/dissertation (TD) is written.
   - Pay particular attention to the last day possible to defend. Check early on with your committee members about their availability, not only for your defense, but also for post-defense corrections. This is particularly important during the summer.
   - Contact the Deaverance Library for coordinates for printing and binding (library@sdmt.edu). The appropriate archival paper is available at the Minot bookstore. If purchasing from elsewhere, contact the bookstore for paper specifications.

2. Submit your TD to your major professor for review:
   - He or she will verify when the TD is ready to go to your committee.
   - At this time, also discuss whether the TD will require certification from Research Affairs as a restricted TD, so that you can arrange for the approval needed on the Defense Approval and Scheduling form with time to spare.

3. When your major professor approves the document:
   - Submit your document to Committee for review. In order to schedule your defense, each committee member will need to sign the Defense Approval and Scheduling form to verify that the document is defensible.
   - Submit your document to D2L for format check. Log into D2L and find the document titled “Thesis/Dissertation.” Submit a Word (preferred) or PDF document to the “Thesis/Dissertation Format Check Submission” folder. Include a copy of the unsigned title page, using the current approved Thesis/Dissertation Title Page template. The Grad Office will do a preliminary formatting check and email you about any issues with the title page or document.
   - Note. This process is for Grad Office review only; we do not forward the document to your major professor or committee for review.

4. When your committee approves the document:
   - Schedule your defense using the Defense Approval and Scheduling Form, which must be signed by your entire committee. Submit the signed form to the Grad Office at least 5 days before your defense. Email the abstract to the Grad Ed Office to be used in your defense notice. The Grad Office will send a notice to the SD Minot campus community.
   - Ask your committee if they have any questions or notes from these reviews, which you can start working on prior to the defense. If so, complete the revisions and provide a new draft to the committee a day or two prior to the defense.

5. Defend:
   - Your committee will give you a list of corrections to be made to your document. Students should anticipate that this time will be needed to complete these corrections before the final document is approved for production.

Continued on next page. Final defense steps

You will get this document by email; it is also on the Forms site.
Tips on Committee Scheduling

• Contact your committee during the semester **prior** to your planned date of graduation to check their availability.

• Set a target date weeks ahead of time, even if your document is not done yet

• Be mindful of holidays and term start/end dates

• Don’t overload your committee with members

• Allow 1-2 extra weeks for obtaining post-defense signatures by surface mail if your committee includes off-campus members

• **Deadlines are minimums!** Allow extra time.
1/3 of students who plan to graduate do not finish in the anticipated semester. Plan in advance, and anticipate potential changes to your timeline.

### Table 1. Recommended Timeline for Graduating Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task (All students; thesis/dissertation students only)</th>
<th>Target date for completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete admission to candidacy (PhD students only)</td>
<td>After completion of most coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes defending dissertation research proposal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Submit application to graduate</strong></td>
<td>Midterm of semester prior to degree completion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Review Program of Study and submit revised POS if needed; register for final semester courses</strong></td>
<td>Midterm of semester prior to degree completion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Give thesis/dissertation to major professor for review and permission to give to the committee (allow two weeks)</strong></td>
<td>8-10 weeks prior to end of finals week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Give thesis/dissertation to committee for review and to Grad Office for pre-format check (allow two weeks)</strong></td>
<td>6-8 weeks prior to end of finals week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schedule defense (requires committee signatures; submit signed form at least five business days before defense)</strong></td>
<td>5 weeks prior to end of finals week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Defend</strong></td>
<td>4 weeks prior to end of finals week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Get approvals

• “Final” draft should be as good as you can make it
  • It MUST be complete. No missing chapters, abstracts, references, etc.
  • Review Grad Office formatting requirements
  • Proofread and edit; get help if you need it

• Major professor must approve it before you send to the committee/Grad Office

• Committee must approve it as defensible before you can formally schedule the defense with the Grad Office
  • Check preferred review format for each member (paper, Word, PDF)
Grad Office pre-format check

- This review is a courtesy to find formatting errors you might have missed.
- It is NOT instructions on how to format—those are already provided to you.
- Check your own document carefully using the checklist provided BEFORE submitting.

The Truffle Challenge

Like making truffles, formatting theses and dissertations require care and attention to detail. Dr. Price will give a chocolate truffle to every student with NO errors on the format check.
Form is due to the Grad Office at least 5 business days prior to defense.

Restricted section—check with major professor whether it applies to you.
Defense Approval and Scheduling Form

Dear Student: Select a date/time when your committee members can attend and reserve the room for your defense.

- Your department/program secretary is a great resource for available room information.
- Your defense may not be scheduled during the period of final examinations at the end of the semester (see academic calendar at the front of the current catalog).
- This form must be completed and received in the Office of Graduate Education (C 2201) NO LESS THAN FIVE WORKING DAYS before the scheduled time of the defense.

Print Student Name________________________________________ Student ID________________________

Program________________________________________ [ ] MS thesis defense [ ] PhD dissertation defense

Time__________________ [ ] am [ ] pm on ________________

Day of week __________ Month __________ Day __________ Year __________

Room ____________________________ Building ____________________________

Thesis/Dissertation Title (print clearly):__________________________________________________________

Do any of the following pertain to this thesis/dissertation: (1) it contains patentable content; (2) it is subject to export control under ITAR or EAR; or (3) it is covered under an existing proprietary or non-disclosure agreement? If you are unsure, please discuss with your major professor before answering. [ ] Yes [ ] No

If you answered Yes, the Office of Research Affairs (OH 102) must complete the Restricted Thesis/Dissertation Declaration below. A restricted defense is not announced the campus community, and the thesis/dissertation documents will be held in the library until the specified release date.

Restricted Thesis/Dissertation Declaration (to be completed by the Office of Research Affairs)
This [ ] is [ ] is not a restricted thesis/dissertation. Release date if restricted: __________________________

Signature of designated official __________________________ (Print Name) __________________________ Date ________
Committee must have time to review the document and declare it defensible before you can schedule.

Committee approvals:
I have reviewed this thesis/dissertation and verified that it appears to be an acceptable manuscript in terms of technical quality and proper expression and usage in American Standard English. (You are encouraged to provide written comments to the student immediately following your review, so that the student may work on revisions prior to the defense.)

Major Professor Signature ___________________________ (Print Name) ___________________________ Date

Graduate Representative Signature ___________________________ (Print Name) ___________________________ Date

Committee Member Signature ___________________________ (Print Name) ___________________________ Date

Committee Member Signature ___________________________ (Print Name) ___________________________ Date

Committee Member Signature ___________________________ (Print Name) ___________________________ Date

Committee Member Signature ___________________________ (Print Name) ___________________________ Date

Committee Member Signature ___________________________ (Print Name) ___________________________ Date

Committee Member Signature ___________________________ (Print Name) ___________________________ Date

committee signatures should match program of study
**Restricted thesis/dissertation**

- Consult with major professor if you are unsure whether this applies to your thesis/dissertation.
- If it does, you will need to schedule an appointment with the Office of Research Affairs to certify that it is restricted.
- **Allow time**—discuss with major professor when giving the document to him/her to review.

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Do any of the following pertain to this thesis/dissertation: (1) it contains patentable content; (2) it is subject to export control under ITAF or EAR; or (3) it is covered under an existing proprietary or non-disclosure agreement? If you are unsure, please discuss with your major professor before answering.  

[ ] Yes  [ ] No

If you answered **Yes**, the Office of Research Affairs (OH 102) must complete the Restricted Thesis/Dissertation Declaration below. A restricted defense is not announced the campus community, and the thesis/dissertation documents will be held in the library until the specified release date.

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Restricted Thesis/Dissertation Declaration (to be completed by the Office of Research Affairs)

This [ ] is [ ] is not a restricted thesis/dissertation.  

Release date if restricted: __________________________

Signature of designated official  

(Print Name)  

Date
Defend

• The defense is the final exam of your degree
• Typically a 30-60 minute presentation, open to the public,
• Followed by an oral examination by your committee in private
• A defense report is sent to the Grad Office by your committee, to indicate whether you passed the defense.
### Defense report results

**Part I.** The undersigned have conducted the defense examination for the above-named candidate for the degree specified and have judged that the candidate [ ] has [ ] has not demonstrated competence in the discipline.

Checking “has not” requires that the candidate must repeat the oral examination in addition to any revisions indicated in Part II.

**Part II.** In addition, the undersigned have reviewed the thesis or dissertation and determined that (select one)

[ ] the work requires minor or no revisions.

*Minor revisions include intermittent grammar/spelling/style changes, formatting changes to text, tables, or figures, short additions to or clarification of existing sections, and other corrections that do not fundamentally alter the structure, content, or interpretation of the work. The committee believes that the corrections could reasonably be completed within 1-2 weeks of full-time effort.*

[ ] the work requires major revisions.

*Major revisions affect the structure or organization of the work but do not fundamentally alter the data collected, the interpretation of the results, or the conclusions of the work. They may include addressing frequent or severe issues with grammar or style, adding/eliminating sections, significantly re-writing or expanding sections, creating multiple new tables/figures, or re-creating existing tables/figures. The committee believes that the revisions could reasonably be completed within 3-4 weeks of full-time effort.*

[ ] the work requires substantial revisions and all or part of the defense must be repeated.

*Substantial revisions fundamentally alter the organization, structure, data, methods, interpretation, or conclusions of the work, or involve extensive revisions expected to take more than 4 weeks of full-time effort. They include adding new chapters or long sections, collecting additional data, reanalyzing data, reinterpreting results, or rewriting more than ~20% of the work. The committee has the latitude to determine the length and format of the re-defense appropriate to the type and scope of the revisions.*

• Revisions are nearly always required, and often take days to weeks to complete
Post-defense steps

• Complete revisions set by your committee

• Obtain committee signatures on the title page to indicate acceptance of the document

• Submit committee-approved copy to Grad Office for abstract review and proofreading check

• Make final corrections and print one copy; bring to Grad Office for Dean’s signature

• Complete Graduate Student Checkout Sheet

Plan to remain on campus, if possible, until all steps are complete and the Checkout Sheet is turned in.
Final review by the Grad Office

• Abstract review
  • Full review for style, readability, grammar, etc.

• Proofreading check
  • 2-3 randomly selected pages will be proofread
  • Document will be returned for corrections if more than 4-6 errors are found in the check
  • Correct the entire document and resubmit
  • If the check is failed a second time (different random pages), you will be asked to engage a proofreader at your expense
Thesis/dissertation approval

- Committee signatures on the title page, printed on archival paper, indicates approval and acceptance of the final copy.
- You cannot proceed to the final Grad Office review without all committee signatures.
- The Dean signs AFTER the proofreading check and final edits have been made.
Checkout

• Certifies that
• Your project is complete
• Your library copy has been submitted
• You have met your responsibilities for proper disposal of hazardous materials
• You have returned your keys OR signed a volunteer form
Do you understand the difference between **deadlines** and **due dates**?

**Graduate Education Deadlines**

Office of Graduate Education – South Dakota School of Mines and Technology

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**Graduate Education Deadlines**
for thesis MS and PhD students

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Official Graduate Office Deadlines for the 2019-2020 Academic Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps (with recommended completion dates) and Deadlines (must be completed on time)</th>
<th>Fall 2019</th>
<th>Spring 2020</th>
<th>Summer 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earn your Admission to Candidacy for PhD</td>
<td></td>
<td>One year before defense date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply for graduation</td>
<td>9/5/2019</td>
<td>1/22/2020</td>
<td>1/22/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit thesis/dissertation to committee for review and to Grad Office (via D2L) for preliminary format check (The major professor must review it first and give student permission to submit it to the committee and the Grad Office.)</td>
<td>11/5/2019</td>
<td>3/27/2020</td>
<td>6/19/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Last day to submit defense scheduling form</strong></td>
<td>11/19/2019</td>
<td>4/9/2020</td>
<td>7/2/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Last day to hold defense</strong></td>
<td>11/26/2019</td>
<td>4/17/2020</td>
<td>7/10/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit electronic thesis/dissertation (including signed title page on archival paper) to D2L for Dean’s review</td>
<td>12/6/2019</td>
<td>4/29/2020</td>
<td>7/22/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit thesis/dissertation, printed on archival paper and with signed title page, to Graduate Office for the Dean’s signature</td>
<td>12/13/2019</td>
<td>5/6/2020</td>
<td>7/29/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Last day to submit Checkout Sheet for Graduate Students</strong></td>
<td>12/18/2019</td>
<td>5/8/2020</td>
<td>7/31/2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New for 2019-2020
Do not rely on advice from prior graduates

• Defenses may not be held between the defense deadline and the end of finals week

• If you miss the defense deadline, you will NOT be eligible to graduate that semester. No exceptions.

• All revisions and final checkout must be completed by the last day of finals or you must register for the following semester.
Avoid the trap

• Typically 1/3 of students who apply to graduate do not finish in the same semester.
  • Writing not finished in time
  • More substantial revisions than anticipated

• **Allow 8-10 weeks from final draft to completion.**
  • Fall: give to major prof by mid-October
  • Spring: give the major prof by spring break

• Committees will NOT permit the defense to go forward unless the document is complete and the work sound
Be smart…and realistic

• If you do not complete the requirements, you must register for at least 2 credits the next semester. This costs you **MONEY**.
  • **Set realistic deadlines** and submit the thesis or dissertation ________ (when?)
  • A first draft is rarely ready for the committee. Plan extra time if your major professor has not already reviewed substantial portions of your work.
  • The committee is **NOT** obligated to perform high-speed reviews because you are pushing the deadlines.
  • The committee should **NEVER** agree to review or hold a defense with a partial document!!

*Hope is not a strategy*
Finishing in the summer

• Not recommended because
  • Faculty are not on contract and may be unwilling
  • Faculty are often busy or traveling
  • Getting reviews and signatures is extra challenging
  • Summer deadlines come quickly!
    • Last day to defend comes in early July
    • Last day to submit final copy is mid-July

• A petition is required to defend in summer
  • Helps you avoid unnecessary expense
  • Helps ensure your success
  • Submit by April 9, 2020, the spring defense scheduling date
Smile, you earned it!

Commencement
Commencement policy
Graduation and commencement are different things

• Graduation
  • Student completes all requirements by the deadline
  • Degree is awarded in the semester of completion
  • Student must remain registered until graduation

• Commencement participation
  • Student walks and is listed in the program
  • May occur in a different semester than graduation
  • MS summer grads may petition to walk in May or may walk in December
  • PhD students MUST complete all requirements by the deadline to walk and be hooded
To participate in commencement

MS students only

• You must pass your defense (minor or major revisions) by the deadline to participate in commencement
  • A petition is no longer required
• Summer graduates may walk in spring IF they have an approved summer defense petition

Your family and friends should not purchase airline tickets to attend graduation until you are SURE that you will be done. If they already bought tickets, make sure you GET DONE.
PhD hooding ceremony

• Hooding is performed by major professor and the Graduate Dean

• Hooding practice at the Civic Center the day before commencement