

Master's Thesis/Project Guidelines

(revised 8/24/09)

The following guidelines must be followed exactly. Questions on these formatting guidelines may be directed to:

**The Office of Graduate Studies
180 Tremont Street, 12th Floor
GradStudies@emerson.edu
617-824-8612**

Master's theses or projects that do not conform to the following **format and order requirements** will be returned for corrections and will not be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies. **If you miss the thesis or project deadline for failure to meet these guidelines, you will be required to register and pay for an additional semester of Continuing Student Status credit in order to graduate.** Feel free to contact the Office of Graduate Studies well before your submission deadline if you have any questions about these format requirements.

Submission/binding procedure:

You must submit **two copies** of your thesis or project to the Office of Graduate Studies, 180 Tremont Street, 12th Floor by 5 p.m. on the due date (please see the Academic Calendar for the due date). The College will pay to bind both copies. One copy will be sent to the College Library Archives and the second copy will be sent to your department. The Office of Graduate Studies will not accept more than two copies of your thesis or project.

Do not use a previous thesis or project from your department or the library as a guide, as submission guidelines have changed. Use only these Master's Thesis/Project Guidelines distributed by the Office of Graduate Studies.

Please read the following information thoroughly before proceeding with your thesis or project. Questions should be addressed to the Office of Graduate Studies.

AT A GLANCE

Before you begin your thesis or project, make sure you understand the following requirements:

- Format
 - Style
 - Font type/size
 - Spacing/Justification and Margins
 - Page numbering
 - Paper quality and printing
- Page Order
 - Notes on Title, Approval, and Abstract pages
- Submission to the Office of Graduate Studies
- Format for Title, Approval, and Abstract pages - Please see the appended pages for a correct example of the title, approval, and abstract page formats.

FORMAT

Style:

- The thesis or project *must* follow either the MLA, APA, or Chicago style manuals, latest edition.
- The **style** and **techniques** of the presentation of your thesis or project, including documentation, should correspond to the standard practices in your scholarly field. You should resolve all questions of style and techniques with your advisor before preparing the final copy. **Please note, the formatting requirements (e.g. page numbering, justification, spacing) set forth in this document supercede industry standards unless otherwise noted. Only work in appendices may be different (such as talent release forms or play scripts), and these still must conform to margin and page numbering requirements.**

Font Type/Size:

- Acceptable fonts and type sizes are: **Courier 12 pt, Times New Roman 12 pt, and New York 11 pt.** Note: Type and size requirements apply to everything in the within the traditional body of work, including titles, headings, and all elements of title, approval, and abstract pages. Appendices, illustrations, charts, and tables are excepted.
- Please limit use of bolding and italicizing. Do not bold or italicize large sections of your document. Use bold face or italics only where they are necessary (see your style manual for appropriate usage).
- Large plates, charts, etc., must be reduced to fit within margin requirements (see next section), and any notations or writing on them must be legible and *no smaller than 10 point type size.*

Spacing/Justification and Margins:

Spacing/Justification -

- Your thesis or project must be double-spaced, except for poetry, which may be single-spaced. Screenplays done for the MFA in Creative Writing thesis must conform to the industry standard for screenplays.
- The body of the work must be left-justified. Again, screenplays done for the MFA in Creative Writing thesis may use the justification which conforms to the industry standard for screenplays.

Margins-

- Margins are very strict due to binding requirements and will be measured.
 - Left margin must be no less than 1.5 inches. Hint: measure your margin with a ruler – if necessary, set the margin to slightly higher than 1.5 to ensure you meet the requirement.
 - Right, top, and bottom margins must be no less than 1 inch.
- **All pages in the thesis/project must conform to these margin requirements. This includes title pages, approval pages, abstracts, and appendices.**
- All information, including titles, footnotes, and illustrations must conform to the above margins. Large plates, charts, etc., must be reduced if needed to conform to these margin requirements.

Page Numbering:

- Page numbers must appear in the upper right corner of the paper. **Only** page numbers are permitted outside the margin requirement (no running heads, titles, etc.). The page number *must* be typed (not handwritten).
- Each page in the thesis or project is assigned a number in a continuous series, including title page, approval page, abstract page, table of contents, and appendices. However, page numbers must not appear until the actual body of work begins. For example, if you have a title page (1), approval page (2), dedication page (3), abstract page (4), and a table of contents page (5), your body of work would begin at page 6, and this will be the first page number to physically appear in your thesis/project.

Paper Quality and Printing:

- The thesis or project *must* be typed and printed on paper that is:
 - White
 - Acid-free or acid-buffered
 - At minimum 20 lb. Bond (100% rag content is also acceptable)
 - 8 ½ x 11 inches
- The following brands of paper are typical; others may meet the above requirements:
 - Howard Perma Life
 - University Products Perma Dur
 - Xerox Image Elite or Achival Bond
 - Hammermill Bond (no recycled content)
 - Strathmore Bond (no recycled content)
 - Crane's Thesis Paper (100% rag)
- Do not use a three hole punch on the typed pages.
- Pages should be left unbound
- Print only on one side of the paper – no double-sided printing will be accepted.

Note: We suggest you take these paper quality guidelines to the store/printer with you to ensure you purchase the correct paper. For your convenience, Emerson Print and Copy located at 80 Boylston Street stocks Strathmore Bond (no recycled content).

PAGE ORDER

A written Master's thesis or project must be submitted in the order listed in the checklist below. You must also follow the formats for your title page, approval page, and abstract page found at the end of this packet. Please carefully look at those formats when creating your pages.

Page Order Checklist:

Follow this page order when submitting your thesis or project:

- **Title Page**
- **Abbreviated title page** (if necessary for binding – do not count as a page; see Title Page section for more information)

- **Approval page**
- **Dedication** (optional)
- **Acknowledgements** (optional)
- **Abstract**
- **Table of Contents** (if appropriate)
- **List of Tables** (if appropriate)
- **List of Figures** (if appropriate)
- **Body of Work** (visible page numbering begins here)
- **Bibliography or References** (as appropriate to your field)
- **Appendix** (if appropriate)

The following provides specific notes concerning the front matter of your thesis/project.

Title Page:

The title of your thesis or project, your last name, and the year will appear on the spine of the bound copies. The binding company has set a 75 character limit (including spaces) for what appears on the spine (the total characters in your last name, title, and year). If your information exceeds this limit, please prepare a separate title page with an abbreviated title and include it with each copy of your thesis or project. This abbreviated title will appear on the spine. **DO NOT** count the abbreviated title page as a page in your thesis/project. Only the full-length title page should be counted.

Approval Page:

- This page serves as the formal approval of your thesis or project which will be signed by your Committee, Graduate Program Director, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.
- Use the same paper on which the body of your thesis/project is printed and follow the same margin and font requirements.
- Type all information except the signatures.
- Prepare at least two copies of the approval pages (one for each copy of the thesis/project). You may prepare **one** extra page if you plan to bind an extra copy of your thesis/project for your own personal use.
- The approval pages are designed for the signatures of one chairperson and two committee members. If you have only one committee member, omit the third signature line.
Communication Sciences and Disorders Students: Your department requires projects to only have a Chair, and no additional committee members. You should prepare an approval page accordingly.
- An original, signed approval page must be submitted with each copy of your thesis or project to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Xerox copies of the approval page will not be accepted. **It is your responsibility to obtain the appropriate signatures prior to submitting your thesis or project to the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Office cannot accept incomplete theses or projects.**

Abstract:

All Master's theses and projects require an abstract. An abstract captures the purpose and value of your Master's thesis or Master's project in a few meaningful sentences. The purpose of an abstract is to give the reader a concise and accurate synopsis of significant elements in the manuscript, so that the reader will be able to determine whether it is advisable to read the complete thesis. Once submitted, your abstract will be entered in a computerized index in the Emerson Library and become a public document. **For this reason, no footnotes, references, or unexplained abbreviations should be used in the abstract.**

Format for the text of the abstract (see sample abstract page at end of this packet for format of whole page):

- Single-space
- Left-justified (indent first line of paragraphs 5 spaces)
- No more than 150 words

SUBMISSION TO The Office of Graduate Studies

Two copies of your thesis or project **including approval pages with necessary signatures** must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies **no later than 5 p.m. on the day designated in the current academic calendar published by the Registrar's Office**. Only in *very rare* cases will late submissions be accepted. Any special arrangements must be made with the Office of Graduate Studies prior to the deadline.

Each copy of your thesis or project should be submitted in its own envelope. Please write your full name, email address, and phone number on the outside. Do not bind your thesis or project.

If you are submitting videos, cassettes, or other supporting materials with your project, please label both copies clearly with your name, project title, department, and month/year of graduation. Include one copy with each copy of the written portion of your thesis/project; if you cannot fit it in the envelope, please place each in a separate envelope with your name, email, and phone number on the outside.

The Dean of Graduate Studies has **final** approval on all Master's theses and projects. **If you do not follow the formatting guidelines precisely, your thesis or project will not be accepted and will be returned to you immediately.**

TITLE PAGE TEMPLATE

EMERSON COLLEGE
GRADUATE STUDIES

Title of Work

A Master's Thesis or Project (*please use appropriate term*)

submitted by

Student's Full Name

to the Graduate Faculty of Emerson College

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of

Master of Arts (*or Master of Fine Arts if appropriate*)

in

Program (*do not use department name*)

Emerson College
Boston, Massachusetts
Month Year

*(use month and year degree is awarded; fall grads – December, spring grads – May,
summer grads – August)*

APPROVAL PAGE TEMPLATE

Title

Student's full name

Approved as to style and content by:

Fill in Chair's Name, Chairperson of Committee Date

Fill in Member's Name, Member Date

Fill in GPD Name, Date
Graduate Program Director
Department of Fill in Appropriate Dept.

Richard Zauft, Dean of Date
Graduate Studies

ABSTRACT TEMPLATE

Abstract

Title

By

Student's Full Name

Emerson College

Month Year

(use month and year degree is awarded; fall grads – December, spring grads – May, summer grads – August)

Chair: Fill in Chair's Name

Fill in abstract text. Text should be left justified and single spaced. Do not center or double space this text. Abstract should be no more than 150 words and should succinctly describe your thesis or project.