



## **Procedure for Thesis Formats and Content**

**Officer(s) Responsible  
for Procedures:**

Vice-Provost (Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies)

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### **1. Thesis Format Options and the Thesis Proposal**

- The thesis format must enable a coherent account of a unified research, scholarship, and/or creative activity. All theses, regardless of format, must display a thorough knowledge and scholarly understanding of the subject.
- It is expected that supervisors are open to considering a variety of format options, including culturally relevant approaches, as they support the development of a student's innovative research, scholarship, and/or creative activity.
- Before undertaking their research, scholarship, and/or creative activity, each student, in consultation with their supervisory committee and Graduate Chair (or equivalent), should decide which format option is appropriate to present the work. This should include consideration of the following:
  - how the proposed format best accomplishes the scholarly goals of the thesis
  - how and if the proposed format can be achieved within the program duration
  - availability of appropriate examiners
  - how the work will be disseminated
  - any issues of long-term storage and public availability, and any other considerations relevant for the discipline and/or format
  - issues relating to shared authorship and/or intellectual property
- The proposed format option (monograph, integrated article, and diverse) shall not be rejected without due consideration of the proposed format in relation to the proposed content.
- The thesis proposal must describe the proposed format, focus, and scope. Normally, the thesis proposal is approved by the supervisory committee with the approval recorded by the program. For research, scholarship, and creative activities pertaining to Indigenous Peoples, it is imperative that the supervisory

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committee be informed of, and follow, Indigenous data, research, and community protocols.

### Format Options

The following are three formats that guide the presentation of the research, scholarship, and/or creative activity. Optional elements may be included at the discretion of the student and supervisory committee as appropriate.

#### 1.1 Monograph

- The monograph format organizes chapters around a central problem or focus.

#### 1.2 Integrated Article

- In the integrated-article format, the chapters address discrete but related problems or topics.
- The work must include connecting materials to provide logical bridges between the different chapters, thereby achieving an integration of information.
- Chapters may include content from, or entire, published articles, submitted articles, and unpublished work for which the student was the principal contributor. The number of chapters or papers to be included is not specified.
- Publication or acceptance for publication of research results before presentation of the thesis in no way supersedes the University's evaluation and judgment of the work during the thesis examination process. The criteria that determine whether an article is suitable for publication are not identical to the academic requirements for a thesis.

#### 1.3 Diverse Formats

- The monograph and/or integrated-article thesis are the traditional Euro-Western formats in many disciplines and therefore are not inclusive of all ways of knowing, being and doing, and all forms of research, scholarship, and/or creative activity. Diverse formats are encouraged to support the multitude of ways of knowing, being, and doing. A diverse format shall be approved by the supervisory committee in consultation with the student, the Graduate Chair (or equivalent), the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS), and the Offices of Indigenous Initiatives and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, as appropriate. It is recommended that diverse format artifacts include the following supplemental material: Titling, Title Page, Abstract and Keywords, Summary for Lay Audience, (maximum 350 words) CV, or resume, and as appropriate, authorship statement, and ethics approval.

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### 1.4 Format Requirements for Monograph and Integrated Article Thesis Artifacts

#### Front Matter:

- Title Page (provided by Scholarship@Western upon upload)
- Abstract and Keywords
- Summary for lay audience (maximum 350 words)
- Co-Authorship statement (where applicable)
- Epigraph (optional)
- Dedication (optional)
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables (where applicable)
- List of Figures and/or Illustrations (where applicable)
- List of Appendices (where applicable)
- List of Abbreviations, Symbols, Nomenclature (where applicable)
- Preface (optional)

#### The Body of the Thesis:

- Introductory chapter to the entire thesis
  - This must address the objectives of the work.
  - For an integrated-article or alternative-format thesis this may explain how the work forms a coherent thesis.
- Literature review and/or research methods
  - This may take the form of a stand-alone chapter or may be integrated into the introductory or middle chapters as appropriate for the discipline and the format of the thesis.
- Middle chapters
  - For an integrated-article thesis each article is presented without an abstract. Each chapter should contain connecting materials to provide logical bridges between the articles. A thesis consisting solely of published articles without connecting elements is not acceptable.
- Conclusion
  - For an integrated-article thesis this may relate the separate studies to each other and to a relevant discipline or field of study.

#### Bibliography:

- There may be a single bibliography for the entire thesis, or each chapter may have its own individual bibliography, depending on the norms of the discipline.

#### Appendices:

- Details of methodology, tabulated data, and other pertinent data not provided in detail in previous chapters (where applicable).
- Ethics Approval (where applicable).
- Copyright releases from publications (where applicable).

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Curriculum Vitae (optional)

- Appendices: As appropriate (see thesis guide)

### 2. Length

- Programs may have regulations that limit length. Students should contact their program for these regulations.

### 3. Copyrighted Material and Permissions

- The student must ensure that the work does not contain a substantial amount of copyrighted material that is not their own and ensure this material complies with the Copyright Act.
- For extensive quotation/images/diagrams, students should reach out to [copyright@uwo.ca](mailto:copyright@uwo.ca).
- If the student wishes the work to include text that they have already published as a journal article or book chapter, they may need to obtain permission from the publisher and include this permission in the appendices (contact [copyright@uwo.ca](mailto:copyright@uwo.ca)). Seeking advice is of utmost importance.
- Any chapters that have been published, accepted for publication, or submitted for publication must carry the following footnote: A version of this chapter has been published/accepted for publication/submitted for publication (Cite the reference).

### 4. Contents

#### 4.1 Titling

- An effective title makes the thesis accessible to other scholars. The title must provide an accurate description of the thesis content. Thus, if possible, the title should include key words that link the thesis to literature on its topic. Use word substitutes for formulas, symbols, superscripts, subscripts, Greek letters, and so on.

#### 4.2 Title Page

- A title page is generated and attached to the front of a thesis after it is uploaded to [Scholarship@Western](mailto:Scholarship@Western). It contains the copyright notice and information to identify the thesis.

### 4.3 Abstracts and Keywords

- The abstract provides a succinct summary of the work. The abstract must be no longer than 350 words for a doctoral thesis and 150 words for a master's thesis.
- The abstract must give enough information about the thesis to allow a potential reader to decide whether or not to consult the complete work. The student must ensure that the abstract refers to all the elements that would make the thesis worth consulting. The abstract should include important place names and proper nouns because these can be significant key words for electronic retrieval. It should not include graphs, charts, illustrations, or tables. The expected content of an abstract varies among disciplines, but all abstracts can be expected to include the following:
  - a statement of the research problem or question
  - an indication of the research method(s) used or theoretical orientation taken
  - findings or major discoveries made
  - conclusions and significance.
- The abstract should have the same line spacing as the text of the body of the thesis.
  - At the end of the Abstract should appear a list of keywords. The student , as the person most familiar with the research and its significance, selects the terms that help other scholars get access to their work, for example, via Google and Google Scholar. As an example, the following keywords could be used for a thesis studying fuzzy relational modeling: fuzzy relational modeling, fuzzy simulation, fuzzy c-Means, Centre of Gravity, Centre of Area, Weighted Average of Cluster Centres, Polyline algorithm.

### 4.4 Summary for Lay Audience

- The summary for lay audience is a brief (maximum 350 words) and accessible summary of a research project that is used to explain complex ideas, technical writing, and scientific terms to people who do not have prior knowledge of the subject. While the abstract is designed with subject peers in mind, the Summary for Lay Audience is an opportunity to translate the importance, impact, and content of the work to a broader audience.

### 4.5 The Co-Authorship Statement (where applicable)

- In the case of co-authored papers (chapters), the student must include a **statement of co-authorship** for each paper included in the thesis, describing the nature and extent of contributions by the student and by others. This must include a detailed description of the work (in conducting the research and preparing the manuscript) for which the student was solely responsible. An estimate of the percentage of the work conducted solely by the student must be

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included. The goal is to make clear to the examiners the student's contribution to the work. The publication status of each paper must be indicated (i.e., not submitted for publication, submitted (where and when), published (with full citation)).

- Although SGPS allows co-authorship of chapter materials, the student must be the principal contributor to the work and to the manuscript. Authorship conventions vary by discipline, and so the order of authors cannot be taken as an indicator of the significance of an author's contribution to the work.
- At the time of approving the preliminary submission of the thesis, the supervisor(s) will be asked to confirm the accuracy of the statement of co-authorship.
- For further guidelines on authorship, see MAPP 7.0.

### 4.6 Acknowledgement (where applicable)

- The acknowledgments recognize help received from the supervisor(s), staff, co-authors and co-researchers, fellow students, technicians, relevant communities, and/or others throughout the thesis process.

### 4.7 Table of Contents

- The table of contents provides a listing of the main elements in the thesis.

### 4.8 Ethics Approval

- If the thesis has involved the use of animal or human subjects, the student must provide evidence of the necessary ethics approval from the appropriate committee, such as a copy of the Office of Research Ethics approval form in an appendix.
- For more information on research involving humans consult Western Research Human Research Ethics website (<https://www.uwo.ca/research/ethics/human/index.html>). For information on the use of animals consult the Western Research Animal Ethics website (<https://www.uwo.ca/research/ethics/animal/index.html>)

### 4.9 Appendices (where applicable)

- The purpose of an appendix is to include supporting material within the thesis that is not an essential part of the text itself. For example, in a thesis that involves a survey, letters of information to subjects, questionnaires, or other research instruments may appear in an appendix. In a thesis that analyzes a rare or inaccessible text, that text may be included in an appendix. An appendix also may include raw data on which analysis has been performed. Contact information and signatures are not permitted in the Appendices.

### 4.10 Curriculum Vitae

- The vita should be a brief document and include only public information: name, post-secondary education and degrees, awards, related work experience, and relevant publications. It is not intended to be a job resumé. The Vita is the last page(s) of the thesis.

## 5. Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD)

### 5.1 Digital File Formats

- Students must present their work in an acceptable file format type. These acceptable types are:
  - Portable Document Format (.pdf)
  - Word Document (.doc)
  - Rich Text Format (.rtf)
- Note: students are encouraged to use the Portable Document Format (.pdf) as all documents received through the Scholarship@Western Electronic Thesis and Dissertation repository are automatically converted to .pdf. Using the .pdf format allows the student to verify the appearance and organization of the document as it will be presented to the examiners.

### 5.2 Supplementary Content on EDT

- Students who would like to include supplementary multimedia to accompany their work may do so in the Supplementary Content section of the submission process. These files may have any file format. Students should be aware that the content should be in a universally accessible format – this is required in order to ensure that examiners will be able to access the content.

## 6. Style

### 6.1 Style for headings, subheadings, references, figures, tables, spelling, punctuation, and bibliographic citations

- The form and location of notes and the presentation of references/bibliographies must be consistent throughout the thesis and conforms to a style appropriate to the research, scholarship, and/or creative activity.

### 6.2 Typescript and point size

- The style of font, font size, footnote/reference method, pagination, margins, and any other aspects of production are to be consistent throughout the

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thesis. For the text, type smaller than 12 point must not be used, but a smaller point size, not less than 9, is acceptable for footnotes, graphs, formulas, and appendices.

### 6.3 Line spacing

- All textual material (including the abstract, acknowledgments, and other preliminary material) must have 1.5 - 2 spaces between lines. The only exceptions to this requirement are references, bibliographies, and indented long quotations, which may be single-spaced.

### 6.4 Margins

- The student must observe the following specifications for margins on all copies. Leave a margin of at least 38 mm (1.5 inches) from the left-hand edge of the paper. Leave a margin of at least 25 mm (1 inch) from the top, bottom, and right edges. These margins apply equally to all illustrative material: diagrams, maps, photographs, charts, tables etc. (except as noted in section Diverse Formats).

### 6.5 Illustrative material

- Illustrative material must appear in the text, not at the end of chapters. All illustrative material, from ink drawings to printed maps, charts and graphs to photographs must be readable. Annotate appropriately coloured charts, figures, graphs or maps. When photographs are incorporated into the thesis, they should be high-contrast colour or black-and-white prints. Explanations or captions of figures and tables may appear beneath the figures and tables to which they refer or they may face them.

### 6.6 Page Numbering

- Except for the title page (provided by Scholarship@Western after upload), each page in the work must be numbered. The following system is to be used:
  - The pages of preliminary material (acknowledgment, table of contents, etc.) must be numbered with small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii) placed in the centre of the page, not less than 12.5 mm (.5 inch) from the bottom edge.
  - The body of the thesis, starting with the first page of the Introduction or Chapter One as page 1, must be numbered with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3) placed in the upper right-hand corner, not less than 12.5 mm (.5 inch) from each edge to avoid being cut off during the binding of paper copies.
  - For page numbering of illustrative material see Illustrative Material section.