

PREPARATION OF A GRADUATE THESIS (Ph.D. or M.S.)

**School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
(SGPS)**



2011

A. General Organization of a Thesis

The following describes the required organization and sections of a graduate thesis:

1. Title

A clear and informative title is important in bringing a thesis to the attention of the readers. The Title should be as short as is consistent with clarity, usually less than two typed lines. The Title should not include formulas, abbreviations or symbols (except well accepted abbreviations such as "DNA" or "ATPase", or symbols indicating isotopic labels such as ^{32}P).

2. Report of Final Examination

The title page must be followed by an original copy of the Report of Final Examination approving the thesis.

3. Table of Contents

A Table of Contents, listing all sections and subsections of the text and their starting page number should be included. A List of Abbreviations and a List of Tables and Figures should immediately follow the Table of Contents.

4. List of Abbreviations

A List of Abbreviations should immediately follow the Table of Contents. Abbreviations and symbols may be used according to the standards in the field. Consult literature sources for standard abbreviations, such as International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC)-International Union of Biochemistry (IUB) documents. A list of the abbreviations used in the thesis should be compiled and placed after the Table of Contents.

5. List of Tables and Figures

A List of Tables and Figures should immediately follow the List of Abbreviations.

6. Abstract

An Abstract for filing is required. This Abstract should include only the most essential points of the work.

7. Acknowledgements

The Acknowledgements in a thesis may include those who provided scientific advice, technical assistance, collaboration, inspiration or moral encouragement in the course of the research. Grants, fellowships, and other financial support should be acknowledged.

8. Introduction

An Introduction should state the purpose and significance of the investigation, its relation to other work, and the specific aims pursued. The Introduction should include a comprehensive review of the literature with all appropriate references.

9. Chapters

Two options are available for format of the chapter.

- a. The chapters match the manuscripts submitted for publication. It will contain all the components of a peer-reviewed article (Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion), except the reference list, which is placed after the final discussion/summary section. Illustrations and figures are incorporated into the chapters as described below. A Master's Thesis may contain a single chapter.
- b. If the student's research product does not easily correlate to individual chapters that reflect separate publications, the chapters may reflect the organizational structure that is most conducive to presentation of the student's research. However, each chapter will contain Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion sections. Illustrations and figures are incorporated into the chapters as described below. References are placed after the Discussion section.

10. Discussion/Summary

The overall discussion/summary section ties the chapters together into a coherent theme. This section is not included in the Master's thesis containing a single chapter.

11. Reference List

The reference list for all sections follows the Discussion/Summary section. A common citation style must be used throughout the entire thesis (as described below in Section E). The reference list should be in alphabetical order.

12. Optional Appendices

Optional appendices (details of new methodologies, data not permitted in the paper as dictated by the journal, etc.) can be added as needed.

B. Text Format

The thesis should be typed, with one inch margins, and double spacing throughout, including references.

C. Tables and Illustrations

Tables and illustrations can be placed at the end of each chapter or placed accordingly relative to text. They should be numbered consecutively for each chapter.

D. Abbreviations

Abbreviations and symbols may be used according to the standards in the field. Consult literature sources for standard abbreviations, such as International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC)-International Union of Biochemistry (IUB) documents. A list of the abbreviations used in the thesis should be compiled and placed after the Table of Contents.

E. Reference Style

The reference style used by the Journal of Cell Biology is recommended. This provides some continuity to the thesis. The authors are listed in the body of the thesis in parenthesis. If more than one author, indicate the first author, followed by et. al.

To cite an article from a periodical:

Fraker, P.J., M.E. Gershwin, R.A. Good, and A. Prasa. 1986. Interrelationships between zinc and immune function. *Federation Proc.* 45:1474-1479.

To cite a chapter from a book:

Rosenberg, L.E. Vitamin-responsive inherited metabolic disorders. Harris, H.; Hirschhorn, K., eds. Advances in Human Genetics, vol. 6. New York: Plenum Press; 1976: 1-74.

To cite an entire book:

Carlson, B.M. The Regeneration of Minced Muscles. Basel: Karger; 1972.

F. Page Numbering

The Title page, Report of Final Examination, and Table of Contents should not be numbered. The List of Abbreviations, List of Tables and Figures, Abstract (for electronic publication) and Acknowledgements are numbered consecutively as i, ii, iii, iv and so on. Starting with the Introduction, all pages are numbered as 1, 2, 3, 4 and so forth, including pages that consist of tables or illustrations only, and References. The page number should appear at the bottom of the page.

Sample Listing of Page Order in the Thesis

Front Flyleaf (blank page)	
Title Page	
Copyright Page (optional)	No Numbers
Report of Final Examination	
Table of Contents	
List of Abbreviations	i
List of Tables & Figures	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Introduction	Start as page 1
Chapter 1, Title, followed by all sections, no reference list.	
Chapter 2, Title, followed by all sections, no reference list.	
Additional chapters as needed.	
Discussion/Summary section	
Reference List for all citations (using citation style described in Section E)	

Optional Appendices (details of new methodologies, data not permitted in the paper as dictated by the journal, etc.) can be added.

G. Submission of the Thesis

Rosalind Franklin University students are required to submit their Masters and Doctoral Theses for publication electronically. There is no requirement for bound copies by the University, the Department, or by your advisor.

You will need to meet your obligations for examination by the Thesis Committee before you proceed. Your Thesis must be in PDF format. Fees for the Masters and Doctoral Thesis are \$45 and \$55, respectively. Options are available to copyright your thesis, and to order bound copies as you desire. There are additional fees for these services.

When you are ready to submit, proceed to: <http://dissertations.umi.com/rosalindfranklin>. If you experience difficulties, contact the publisher at 1-877-408-5027 or by using the "Contact Us" hyperlink on the UMI website.

Notification is received in the SGPS Dean's Office concerning your submission. It will require final confirmation from this office. Once complete, your final published thesis will be made available on-line to the University Librarian for reference at RFUMS.

H. Additional Sources of Information

For students who wish to learn more about scientific writing in general and thesis preparation in particular, the following books are recommended:

1. Miller, J.I.; Taylor, B.J. The Thesis Writer's Handbook. West Linn, Oregon: Alcove Publishing Co.; 1987.
2. Day, R.A. How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper. Philadelphia: ISI Press; 1979.
3. Turabian, K.L. A Manual for Writers. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 1987.
4. Woodford, F.P. Scientific Writing for Graduate Students. Bethesda, Maryland: Council of Biology Editors, Inc.; 1989.