

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

A Guide to the Preparation of Theses

Office of Graduate Studies

**KEEP IN MIND THAT THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL APPLIES TO PREPARATION OF A TRADITIONAL THESIS. MUCH OF THIS IS NOT APPLICABLE TO A MALS PROJECT SINCE THEY ARE BY NATURE VERY INDIVIDUAL.**

(Originally prepared in 1994 and amended in 2002. )

## INTRODUCTION

This document provides a general guide to the preparation of theses in the graduate programs at the University of Southern Indiana.

Although a thesis advisor has likely guided a degree candidate's research and the early drafts of his or her thesis, the final version of the thesis, which will be submitted for the official approval of a thesis committee, must follow the instructions presented below. **Keep in mind that for those who are doing a Capstone Project much of the following may not apply.** These instructions outline the minimal requirements for the thesis format as established by the Office of Graduate Studies at U.S.I. Individual academic units of the University may have various additional requirements. Therefore, writers should first learn what special requirements the thesis committee requires and should prepare the thesis in accordance with the thesis committee's instructions and the guidelines in this document.

## CHRONOLOGY

A master's thesis must be approved by at least three faculty members, usually the members of a student's thesis committee. (In the case of the MALS project two of three signatures are necessary, but this this should be a rare occurrence and only after consultation with the MALS director). Deliver to the Readers' Services Librarian at the David L. Rice Library the original , prepared according to the guidelines which follow, and a cover sheet signed by the approving faculty members. The original will be bound and placed in the David L. Rice Library. A fee for binding will be charged at that time. Additional copies are required for the members of the thesis committee and the degree candidate's academic unit. **A Thesis Routing Form** must be filled out and signed by committee members when project is completed. It can be picked up at the Graduate Studies Office. This form is not to be confused with the signed Cover Sheet that is bound with the completed project.

## THESIS FORMAT

### General Information

Theses must be typewritten or word-processed with a letter-quality printer. The material should be double-spaced. A fresh black ribbon, cartridge or toner should be used on white watermarked, 100 percent rag bond paper. ("Corrasable" bond paper is not acceptable.) The unbound original must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies before the degree can be awarded. Either pica (12 point) or elite (10 point) type is acceptable. Neither script nor italic typeface is acceptable. Errors should be corrected on the typewriter or word-processor, not by hand.

For copying, either electrostatic photocopy methods such as Xerox or the multilith process may be used, if the copies produced are of good quality. Mimeographed theses are not acceptable. If photographs are part of the work, the original copy must contain the best possible positive prints, permanently affixed to the page. Good-quality screened photocopies are acceptable on all thesis copies but the original.

Any questions about format style should be discussed with the candidate's graduate advisor.

### Margins

To facilitate successful binding, margins must be at least one and one-half inches on the left and one inch on the other three sides. Ordinarily, the text and any other materials will appear on the right-hand page only. If, however, the thesis committee agrees that it is necessary to include facing material on the left-hand page as well, leave 1-1/2 inches on the right-hand side of the facing page. These margin requirements apply to all materials included in the thesis.

### Front Pages

The introductory pages of the thesis must include the title page, the acceptance page (containing signatures of thesis committee members), and the abstract. In addition, it is strongly recommended that a table of contents be provided. Other introductory material may be required by the thesis committee, and it may be appropriate to include lists of tables, figures, appendixes, or abbreviations. In order to recognize persons or agencies to whom the author feels grateful for academic, technical, financial, or personal assistance in the preparation of the thesis, he or she may also wish to include a dedication, a preface, or a set of acknowledgements. Introductory pages should appear in the following order:

Title page (mandatory - See Appendix A for example)

Acceptance page (mandatory - See Appendix B for example)

Dedication (optional)

Acknowledgments (recommended)

Abstract (mandatory - See Appendix C for details)

Preface (optional)

For many MALS Projects a “Reflection” Section, as well as including approved Proposal, may be appropriate for inclusion.

Table of Contents (strongly recommended)

List of tables, figures, appendixes, or abbreviations (recommended if appropriate)

### Manuscript Style

Page numbers must be clear and consecutive throughout. The appropriate manuscript style to use in writing the thesis will be determined by the academic discipline awarding the graduate degree. *The academic advisor and thesis committee will provide specific guidelines regarding style, organization of material, footnoting, references, location of page numbers, etc. The writer must check with these sources before composing the final draft of his or her thesis.*

Appendix A

Sample Title Page

TITLE CENTERED, ALL IN CAPITAL LETTERS:  
THE IMPORTANCE OF KEY WORDS IN THE SUCCESSFUL INDEX

Author's Name

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
of the degree  
Master of (Arts or Science)  
in the Department (or School) of  
University of Southern Indiana

Month, Year  
Appendix B

Sample Acceptance Page

Accepted by the Graduate Faculty, University of Southern Indiana, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of (Arts or Sciences).

(Chairperson's signature)

---

Thesis Committee Chairperson's  
name and University title typed

(Second reader's signature)

---

Name and title typed

(Third reader's signature)

---

Name and title typed

(Additional readers' names and titles should also  
be included)

### Appendix C

#### The Abstract

Unless the thesis committee specifies otherwise, the Abstract should consist of a double-spaced statement of the thesis problem, a brief exposition of the research undertaken and a condensed summary of the findings. The maximum length of the Abstract is 350 words.

The heading for the Abstract should consist of the following single-spaced information: candidate's name, the degree, name of degree-granting university, month and year degree is obtained, the title of the thesis and the name of the major professor. (SEE EXAMPLE BELOW.)

#### Example of Abstract Heading:

Doe, Jane B. M.A., University of Southern Indiana, May, 1955.  
A review of weather patterns in Southern Indiana between 1948 and 1988. Major Professor: Mary Smith.