

MASTER'S THESIS GUIDE

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Washington University

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

As of August 2009 the Graduate School office and the Olin Library will begin accepting electronic copies only of all dissertations and theses. December 2008 and May 2009 graduates will continue to submit paper copies as in past years. If you are planning to submit your dissertation or thesis for an August 2009 degree, please consult your department, program or the Graduate School for updated submission information as it becomes available.

TERMINOLOGY USED IN THIS GUIDE

The Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, whose offices are located at 157 Umrath Hall, is referred to throughout this guide as the **Graduate School**.

The **Thesis Examination Committee** is composed of three tenured or tenure-track members of the Washington University faculty, including the faculty member who directed the thesis. Exceptions must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Dean Smith requests that you seek such approval by emailing Associate Dean Nancy Pope at n.p.pope@wustl.edu. University College students should consult Associate Dean Steven Ehrlich with regard to their committee members before seeking Dean Pope's approval.

The Thesis Examination Committee is usually comprised of the same three faculty that are listed on the Title, Scope, and Procedure form as the "Research Advisory Committee." *Please note: The Thesis Approval Form must also be signed by the chair of the department or program in addition to the committee members.*

The **thesis examination** is sometimes called the thesis defense, the oral defense, or the oral examination. This guide will always use the term thesis examination.

PRELIMINARY PAPERWORK

There are two forms that need to be filed with the Graduate School well before the completion of your thesis and the scheduling of your thesis examination:

1. The **Title, Scope, and Procedure** form (titled “Notice of Title, Scope, and Procedure of Thesis”) is to be filed with the Graduate School no later than one semester before your thesis examination. Forms are available from the Graduate School and from your department or program office.

Your project's "scope" defines its limits—what you intend to cover and what you intend not to cover. Your "procedure" describes the manner in which you intend to conduct your research. By defining the scope and procedure of your thesis, you provide an initial outline or model for yourself as you research your topic. The form also serves as a contract between you and your Research Advisory Committee.

It is understood that your thesis' scope, procedure, and even its title may change in the course of your research. You are not required to file an amended form with the Graduate School, although getting your committee's written approval of the changes may be advisable.

2. Candidates for a degree must file an **Intent to Graduate** form for the semester in which they intend to graduate. You may complete this form after logging onto WebSTAC and clicking on “Intent to Graduate” from the menu. If you are unable to access this form, please contact the Office of Student Records, whose contact information is included below. They will provide the form and can tell you the deadline for filing. Please note that, if you do not finish by the time you had originally stated in your first Intent to Graduate form, you must file a subsequent form for the semester in which you will complete your work.

You should make a note of the diploma pick-up and mailing dates on this form. It also includes your mailing address, which may change between the time you fill the form out and when you finish your work; therefore, you should contact the Office of Student Records any time you change addresses after filing this form.

The **Office of Student Records** is located in the lower level of the Women's Building.

Phone: (314) 935-5959

Fax: (314) 935-4268

E-mail: student_records@aismail.wustl.edu

GUIDELINES FOR THE FORMAT OF THE THESIS

1. **Style.** You should consult with your committee chair and other Research Advisory Committee members to determine the preferred textual arrangement and style, including the presentation of footnotes/endnotes and the manner in which references are to be cited.
2. **Margins.** When typing the original manuscript, stay well within these margin guides: left, 1.5 inches (this margin is extra-wide because of the binding process); right, 1 inch; top, 1 inch; bottom, 1 inch.
3. **Pagination.** Page numbers should appear centered at the bottom of the page. Margins, listed above, should be outside the page number. The number should be separated from the text by approximately .5 inch.

Every sheet of paper in the manuscript should be numbered except for two: the title page is not numbered (but is counted as the first page; see below), and the optional copyright page is neither numbered nor counted. Letter suffixes (e.g., 10a) may not be used.

Lower case Roman numerals are used for the preliminary pages, including the title page and acknowledgments page. Since the title page is counted but not numbered, "ii" is the first number used and appears on the page after the title and copyright pages.

Arabic numerals are used for all other manuscript pages. Begin with page number 1; pages with Arabic numerals should NOT continue numerically (e.g. from xii to 13).

4. All textual material should be **double-spaced**.
5. **Font** should be 10-point or larger.
6. Long **quotations** should be indented and single-spaced unless your discipline prefers them to be indented and double-spaced.
7. **Footnotes/endnotes** should be single-spaced. Leave a blank line between notes.

The following items appear in the thesis in the order given:

8. The thesis should include a **title page** that conforms precisely to the sample and instructions in Appendix A.
9. Your thesis is protected by copyright laws with or without your giving notice of that fact. However, if you wish to include a **copyright page**, it should appear as an unnumbered page immediately following the title page. The copyright page should have the following information, centered and double-spaced:

copyright by

[full name of author]

[year of degree awarded]

10. An **Acknowledgments** page may be included. In the final copy, it should be placed between the title page (or copyright page, if there is one) and the table of contents. The dedication, if there is one, may close the acknowledgments or occupy the next page.

Note: If your graduate study or thesis research has been supported financially, you must acknowledge that support.

11. The thesis should include a **Table of Contents** if the thesis has subdivisions. It should include items 10 – 15, as needed.
12. If the thesis contains tables, figures, illustrations, etc., a **List of Tables (Figures, Illustrations, etc.)** should be included, immediately following the Table of Contents. [Note that such pictorial material may be laid out either vertically, like the text of the thesis, or horizontally, with its bottom edge the outside edge of the page.]
13. The thesis may begin with an epigraph (a quotation from someone else's work); if there is an epigraph, it should appear on page 1 of the thesis, with the thesis text beginning on page 2. If the epigraph pertains only to the first chapter, it should appear between the chapter title and the chapter text.
14. The thesis should include a **Bibliography or References or Works Cited** section. Although this section is usually placed at the conclusion of the entire thesis, in some cases it may be appropriate to list sources at the end of each chapter. The Table of Contents should clearly indicate where references are located.
15. **Enclosures**, such as paper items that are larger than the standard page but may be folded or non-paper items such as compact disks or computer diskettes, may be bound with your thesis; they will appear in a sleeve inside the back cover.

PRESENTATION OF COMPLETED THESIS TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

After the thesis examination takes place, all of the following are to be brought to the Graduate School by the deadline indicated in the academic calendar. The academic calendar can be found at <http://artsci.wustl.edu/GSAS/Calendars/eventsdeadlines.html>. Please plan to submit your thesis before the deadline as you may need to make corrections to your format.

1. **Three copies of the completed thesis.** Copies should be in their finished form, on loose, single-sided, 8.5" by 11" sheets of 20-pound weight white paper. (Most printer and copier paper qualifies.) Paper may be a heavier weight, but it may not be lighter. Print should be letter quality. All pages should face forward. Copies should not be bound, stapled, clipped, or hole-punched. To avoid delays in publication, please make certain that the copies you submit include all pages of your thesis. There should be no duplicate or omitted pages or page numbers.

Each thesis copy should be placed in a separate manila envelope, which should then be fastened but not glued. An extra copy of the title page should be taped to each envelope.

The Graduate School sends all copies of your thesis to Olin Library. The library, after processing and binding these copies, sends two of them to your home department. Your department keeps one of these copies and is responsible for sending your bound copy of your thesis to you. In order for you to receive it promptly, your department must have your current mailing address. Processing theses take time. Your copy will be sent to you 3-6 months after your graduation date. Olin Library retains the third copy, which is usually shelved some time after the copies are bound, on account of its needing to be catalogued.

2. **One additional copy of the thesis title page.**
3. **Two loose sheets containing short title information.** Include ONLY a) a short title of 35 letters or less (including spaces), b) your last name, c) the degree being issued, and d) the year of its award—all arranged and punctuated as in the following example, which is based on the sample title page in Appendix A:

Neolithic Orchard Irrigation, Farmer, A.M., 2000

This information lets the binder know what to put on the spine of the bound copies. The short title is not used for any other purpose.

4. The Master's Thesis Approval form (the original, not a photocopy) signed by members of the Thesis Examination Committee. Check with your department as to whether you need to carry this form to the Graduate School yourself or whether your department will be responsible for submitting it.

*Please review the special **IMPORTANT NOTICE** located on page one of this document.*

APPENDIX A: TITLE PAGE INSTRUCTIONS AND SAMPLE

1. Give the correct name of the department or program in which you have been a student (e.g., Anthropology, Art History and Archaeology, Asian and Near Eastern Languages and Literatures, etc.). The formal, complete name of your department or program appears in the Graduate School *Bulletin*. Students earning their degrees through University College should include the name “University College” on the second line with the name of the program noted on the third line. Similarly, the MFA in Writing is granted by the Writing Program within the Department of English. In this case, the “Department of English” should be included on the second line, and “The Writing Program” noted on the third line.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

University College

Liberal Arts

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Department of English

Writing Program

2. Use your full name.
3. Master’s candidates in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences may earn any of several master’s degrees. Use the correct name of your degree in the paragraph between your name and the month and year of your degree. For example, Master of Arts, Master of Fine Arts in Writing, Master of Liberal Arts, etc.
4. Use the month and year in which your degree is to be awarded. Do not put a comma between the month and the year.

Please note that **degrees are only conferred in December, May, and August**; use one of these three on your title page. Also note that, if you complete your degree requirements in May but will be awarded your degree in August, your title page should say August, not May.

5. Center everything on the page. Everything not discussed above is required to appear just as shown in the sample on the facing page.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Department of Agriculture

NEOLITHIC IRRIGATION PRACTICES

IN ORCHARDS OF CULTIVATED TREES

by

John Appleseed Farmer

A thesis presented to the
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
of Washington University in
partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts

December 2000

Saint Louis, Missouri

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on thesis guidelines, please refer to this library web page:

<http://library.wustl.edu/services/thesisguidelines.html>

If there are other questions not addressed by the web page or by this thesis guide, please e-mail Emily Strembicki at estrembicki@wustl.edu.