THESIS GUIDELINES
MASTER OF SCIENCE COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE PROGRAM
(MSCDM)

This guideline is adapted from

THESIS GUIDELINES MSCVR PROGRAM
Written by:

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Director MSCVR Program

The MSCDM Program expresses its gratitude for the generous permission of Dr. Shallow-Hoffman for the use of the MSCVR Guidelines and her assistance in developing this document.
# THESIS GUIDELINES MSCDM PROGRAM

## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Use This Manual</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binding fees for copies of the completed thesis</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources for the Thesis or Dissertation Writer</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules and Advice for Preparing Thesis and Dissertation Manuscripts</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reprographic Processes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrections</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type: Size, Fonts, Style</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margins</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page Numbers</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spacing</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Technology</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OIT Help Desk</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parts of the Thesis or Dissertation</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Pages</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title Page</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copyright Page</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature Page</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgment Page</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract Page</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables and Figures</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference Materials</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Paper Outside the United States</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Print Media</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographs and Other Forms of Illustration</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ways of Presenting Photographs</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mounting Illustrations and Images</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title Page</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copyright Page</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature Page</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication Page</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgment Page</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract Page</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables • List of Figures</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text (Chapter Headings, Tables and Figures) • Notes</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of a thesis or dissertation is to contribute knowledge to your field of study through the pursuit of research and scholarship. The process includes defining a topic, assembling a committee, executing the research, writing and submitting a manuscript, and defending your findings. This is a complex process requiring sustained work. You will take justifiable pride in this project since it not only satisfies a degree requirement but also positions you within your discipline and advances your field of study, especially when your thesis or dissertation is circulated to other scholars and readers.

The MSCDM program encourages and upholds the University’s standards of accuracy and soundness of research, as well as the requirements of the individual graduate programs regarding the Master’s Thesis. In addition, the MSCDM program provides assistance in the preservation and circulation of your manuscript through the University Library System and through the services of University Microfilms International (UMI).

You will be required to submit three copies of your thesis to the MSCDM Program through your advisor. One copy will be available to the public as a circulating copy, shelved in the NSU Health Professions Division’s Library. One copy will be an archival copy housed in the College of Dental Medicine Dean’s Office. One copy provided to your thesis advisor / mentor. You may wish to order copies for yourself, thesis committee members, and family. An electronic copy of all theses is held on the UMI electronic platform. After the thesis has been defended and signed, students are required to upload their thesis into UMI system. Students also have the option to copyright their thesis within the UMI system. See guidelines to students at: https://www.etdadmin.com/main/home?siteId=37. Do not upload signed versions of your thesis. Directions will guide you to prepare a pdf format for your thesis.

How to Use This Manual

This manual is designed to aid you in the process of submitting your thesis to the MSCDM program. The guidelines provide you with a numbered list of the basic rules for proper preparation and form of the manuscript. You can use this list as both a starting point and a quick reference as you prepare your thesis. The manual also contains further explanations of form and style as well as a wide range of suggestions and advice that should clarify the rules and explain possible options in areas where decisions about form and layout are at your discretion. It is important that you read this entire section of the student manual before you begin preparing your thesis so that you understand the format and the purposes behind the rules.

Once you are familiar with the specific regulations, you must consult a current and appropriate style manual recommended by the MSCDM program. Papers should be prepared following the: Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication. This information can be found at the web site: www.icmje.org. The Academy of Optometry Journal follows these standards set by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.

In addition, the final Thesis format should include the following elements:

1. An Appendix for the raw data.
2. A complete literature review that is incorporated into the introduction and used for the interpretation of the findings in the discussion.

Regulations from the MSCDM program take precedence over rules found in style manuals (when they differ from one another) because issues of clarity and legibility are extremely important for purposes of archival permanence. For example, although you may prefer a particular font, your selection may not be acceptable because it does not reproduce clearly. Specific rules for the form and style of your thesis are numbered and boldfaced. Additional information and suggestions are included following the rules for each aspect of the manuscript preparation. Sample pages are provided in the Samples section.

In addition to this guideline, the MSCDM program offers several other avenues of assistance to the thesis. You are strongly encouraged to make use of these resources throughout the process of writing your thesis, since they exist to assist you in the satisfactory completion of your thesis. In particular, your advisor and the director of the program are knowledgeable and familiar with many of the issues you will encounter. The Office of Information Technologies also offers excellent assistance with technological aspects of formatting and organizing your thesis. It is our experience that students encounter fewer obstacles when they consult with these individuals along the way rather than at the end of their project.

**Binding fees for copies of the completed thesis**

A minimum of three bound copies of the thesis (one for the College, library and advisor) is required as part of the student’s financial responsibility. Theses are bound by Dobbs & Brodeur Bookbinders, Inc. in Hialeah. Contact Anthony Lloret (cell phone: 786-318-6684; office phone: 305-885-5215.) Hard-bound copies per book cost: $35 for a 2 week delivery time; $45 for a 1 week delivery time and $50 for a 3 day delivery time plus $10 for shipping per address. The prices may change without notice, please contact Mr Lloret for the current prices and information.

After the thesis has been defended and signed, students are required to upload their thesis into UMI system. Students also have the option to copyright their thesis within the UMI system. See guidelines to students at: [http://dissertations.umi.com/hpdnova/](http://dissertations.umi.com/hpdnova/). Do not upload signed versions of your thesis. Directions will guide you to prepare a pdf format for your thesis.

**Resources for the Thesis - MSCDM Program**

**Executive Director:**
Richard H. Singer, D.M.D., M.S.
College of Dental Medicine, Room 7339
telephone: (954) 262 - 1610
email: rsinger@nova.edu

web page: [http://dental.nova.edu/dentistry/index.html](http://dental.nova.edu/dentistry/index.html)

**Administrative Assistant:**
Ms. Patty Stack
College of Dental Medicine, Room 7347
telephone: (954) 262 - 1724
email: pstack@nova.edu

**Office of Information Technologies (O.I.T.):**
Help Desk: [http://www.nova.edu/help/](http://www.nova.edu/help/)
University Book Store:
Your store manager is Nick Fagnoni

Nova Southeastern University Bookstore
University Park Plaza
3562 S University Drive
Davie, Florida 33328

Store telephone: (800)509-2665

Store Hours
Monday
8:30 AM - 6:15 PM
Tuesday
8:30 AM - 6:15 PM
Wednesday
8:30 AM - 6:15 PM
Thursday
8:30 AM - 6:15 PM
Friday
8:30 AM - 6:15 PM
Saturday
10:00 AM - 1:30 PM
Sunday
CLOSED

(purchasing materials: paper, software supplies, etc.)
telephone: ( 800) 541-2665 or (800) 554-6682
e-mail: http://nsubooks.bncollege.com

RULES AND ADVICE FOR PREPARING THESIS MANUSCRIPTS

Mechanics

This section explains some of the preliminary information you will need in order to produce your thesis manuscript.

Reprographic Processes

1. Print on one side of the page only.
2. Maintain clear, dense letters with high-quality contrast.
3. Begin each new chapter on a new page. Continue the text to the bottom of the page unless you are at the end of a chapter.
4. Do not leave widow lines or headings. A widow is defined as less than two lines of text in a paragraph at the beginning or end of a page. Include at least two lines of the end or beginning of a paragraph at the top or bottom of the page.
5. Do not split references in your bibliography; always complete an entry on a single page.
6. Do not split captions in the lists of tables and figures. Complete each on the same page. Multi-line captions must be single spaced and not run into the page number. The thesis must be produced with a word processor or computer. If a computer is used, the printing must be on a laser printer or a printer of similar quality (i.e., a printer with a resolution of 300 dots per inch or greater). A dot matrix printer is not acceptable.

High-quality xerographic or computer-generated copies are acceptable, provided the print is sharp, uniformly dense, and permanently fused to the page.

If you are using a word processor or computer to produce your manuscript, print the original out on standard printer paper and then photocopy it onto the archival quality paper. Before you print out the entire manuscript, it is a good idea to print out a single page and copy it onto the paper you are using, double-checking for accurate margins and good quality of print.

**Corrections**

7. Corrections must be made by reprinting the entire page.
8. Corrections made with correction fluids or tapes are not acceptable.
9. Strikeovers and penciled corrections are not allowed.

**Type: Size, Fonts, Style**

10. For consistency, the same 12-point font is to be used for the following:

- Preliminary pages
- Text (main body of the thesis/dissertation)
- Table and figure captions
- Chapter titles
- Cover sheets
- References
- Page numbers
- Appendix titles
- References

The font must be easy to read: specifically, choose a font that has true descenders. The required font for the MSCDM is Times New Roman, 12 point.

11. The pitch may be either proportional or an established measurement of 10 to 12 characters per inch.

12. Do not vary fonts in the main text of the thesis.
13. Use standard numerals (1, 2, 3) in text and pagination.
14. Do not use script, italic or other typefaces for numerals (except in equations).

Tables and figures proper, appendices and equations may be reproduced in different size and style fonts than those of the main text of the thesis. For further information, see Tables and Figures section.
Different fonts may be used for poetry, dialogue, and other special circumstances. Boldface may be used for headings, chapter titles, subheadings, title and signature pages, within footnotes and bibliographic entries, and in tables or figures and their legends.

Italics may be used sparingly only for special emphasis, foreign words, technical or key terms, mathematical expressions, or book and journal titles.

Special symbols may be drawn neatly and uniformly with a template or lettering device and black ink.

**Margins**

15. The margins for each page (including preliminaries, text, appendices, reference materials, tables and charts) must be no narrower than the following, measuring from the edge of the paper to type:
   - left 1 1/2 inches
   - right 1 inch
   - top 1 inch
   - bottom 1 inch

16. The left edge margin must be larger to accommodate the binding process.
17. All typing must fall within the remaining 6”x 9” typing area (except page numbers).
18. Margins must be uniform throughout the thesis. Margins are particularly important because they affect the ability to bind your thesis properly in a permanent manner. Before you print and copy the manuscript, double-check the margins: printer paper is not always exactly the same size as the archival paper, even if the paper is listed as the same size. It is a good idea to print out one page of your manuscript on low-quality copy paper, then photocopy it onto the archival quality paper and measure the margins for accuracy.

**Page Numbers**

19. Page numbers must be centered 1/2" from the edge of the paper on the bottom of each page.
20. Every sheet must be counted for purposes of numbering pages. Every page must have a page number printed on it, except the title page, copyright page, signature page, dedication page, and epigraph page.
21. All pages must be paginated consecutively.

**Spacing**

22. The text of the thesis must be double-spaced. This includes the Acknowledgments and Abstract pages.
23. No large spaces or gaps are allowed in the text.
24. Single spacing is required for footnotes, captions and identification text related to tables, figures, graphs, or other illustrative materials. Single spacing is also required for bibliographic entries, and for all block quotations.
25. A double space must be used to separate footnote and reference citations.
26. Single spacing is permitted within—but not between—items in lists, multi-line captions, and within appendices, if done in a consistent manner throughout the manuscript. The general rule for
spacing is to choose a consistent format and stick with it throughout the entire manuscript. Irregular or single spacing also may be used for poetry and scripts at the option of the department and the student.

If there are large gaps in the text, the manuscript will be returned to you for reformatting. Be sure that spacing is consistent above and below headings. If you use extra spacing before each paragraph, be sure the spacing is used consistently.

**Using Technology**

All theses are produced on computers, and a variety of software packages are used. It is important to consider the content and length of the thesis when choosing a software package. Also consider the printers that will be available for the final printing of the thesis.

Computer printouts and all computer-generated figures and graphs must meet the same standards as the rest of thesis; i.e., must fit within the specified margins, be copied on the same paper as the rest of the thesis or dissertation, and have consecutive numbering.

A little forethought will greatly reduce the time and effort needed to format a thesis or dissertation. The first step is to learn how to use the power of your word processor. Most popular programs come with extensive documentation and toll free telephone help lines. Check with the program director or your advisor about computer resources before you begin your thesis. The Office of Information Technologies (OIT) offers classes on computing designed to assist people with various levels of computer literacy.

**The Office of Information Technologies**

The Office of Information Technologies Online Computing Help Desk provides online assistance to all Nova Southeastern University students, faculty, and staff. The Help Desk is here to help you solve your Academic Computing problems.

Hours of Operation are:
- Monday - Friday: 7:00 am - 4:00 am EST/EDT
- Saturday & Sunday: 9:00 am - 11:00 pm EST/EDT

Hours may vary during holidays

Call: (954) 262-HELP (4357)
Toll Free: (800) 541-NOVA (6682) x24357
Email: help@nsu.nova.edu

This section addresses the MSCDM program requirements for the arrangement of the thesis and some particulars about format. Your manuscript will consist of three parts:

**I. Preliminary Pages**

**II. Text**

**III. Reference materials**

Specifications for each of these pages are explained in the following sections. Samples are presented in the Appendix at the end of this tutorial.
PAGE

MASTER of Science required & optional information
Title Page - required
Copyright Page- optional
Signature Page- required
Dedication Page - optional
Epigraph (Frontispiece) Page - optional
Acknowledgments Page - optional
Abstract Page - required
Preface Page - optional
Table of Contents - required
List of Figures - when appropriate
List of Tables - when appropriate
List of Symbols or Abbreviations – when appropriate
Appendices including raw data - required
References - required

I. Preliminary Pages

27. You must have a Title Page, Signature Page, and a Table of Contents and Abstract.
28. A List of Tables, List of Figures, and/or List of Symbols or Abbreviations are required when appropriate.
29. The preliminaries must be arranged in the order listed above.
30. The pages must be numbered in lower-case Roman numerals beginning with the Acknowledgments Page (see Samples section). The Title Page is considered page i, but it must not be numbered.

Title Page (required)

Please refer to the Sample Title Page before proceeding. We highly recommend that you check your title page with your advisor before you have copies made. Use the same thesis quality paper and type style you plan to use for the final copy of the manuscript.

31. The Title Page is considered page i, but it must not be numbered. Each line of the Title Page must be centered. The title, your name, and the degree are all to be typed in capital letters.

32. The title must include key words to make it easier for investigators to locate it using library information retrieval systems. Check with the reference librarians or your advisor if you need help in determining what the key words in your area might be.

33. Word substitutes must be used for items such as formulas and symbols. If you have any questions about the use or presentation of scientific terms, please check with your committee chair.

34. Use your full legal name as it appears on your academic records in the graduate program at the time of graduation. If you have changed your name in any way, apply to have your name officially
changed at the graduate office before you submit your manuscript. Contact Ms Jeanne DeCaro for assistance, djeanne@nova.edu.

35. Be sure to correctly designate the degree you will be receiving.  
For example: MASTER OF SCIENCE (not master’s)

36. The date listed on the Title Page must be the actual month and year of degree conferral, not the date of the defense or the date you submitted your manuscript. Degrees are formally conferred, by vote of the Board of Trustees, in February, May, and September. Never use a comma between the month and year (September 2008 is correct).

37. Your official graduate program name must be listed below the date. If you have any questions about the correct title of your program, consult your graduate program director.

Copyright Page

38. A copyright is optional for a master’s thesis. The year listed must be the year in which copyright is secured, which is also the year of degree completion.

39. The copyright page is the second page of the manuscript and is counted as page ii, but it is never numbered. The official copyright notice is horizontally centered on this page, single- or double-spaced. The format of the notice is as follows:

© Copyright by Jane Ann Brown 2008  
All Rights Reserved

For information about copyright registration, please see the UMI information provided in the Introduction section of this document.

40. Signature Page (required)

The Signature Page follows the Copyright Page and is counted as page iii, but do not type a number on it. (If no copyright is used, this will be page ii.) See the Samples section for a specimen of a Signature Page.

41. The Signature Page must be signed in blue ink, not felt tipped pen or other non-waterproof inks as they smudge and fade on archival paper.

42. Make three high quality copies and obtain your committee members’ blue ink signatures on all of them. The MSCDM program requires three originals of the signature page on archival paper with signatures in ink. You will also want one additional Signature Page for your own files.

43. The title and student name must be centered on the page. The title must match exactly the title on the Title Page and must be in capital letters. The name of the student must match exactly the name on the Title Page. Both names must match the name on your official records in the MSCDM program.
44. The Signature Page must read, “Approved as to style and content by:” and then provide enough signature lines for all members of your committee, indicating “Chair” or “Member” following each name. A sample of a traditional Signature Page is provided in the Samples section.

45. Do not use professorial titles. Do not include administrative titles. Do not use “Ph.D.” or “Dr.” on the Signature Page.

46. Each committee member must sign above her or his typed name.

47. If corrections are required on this page, a new Signature Page must be produced. No correction fluid or cut-and-paste is allowed because it will appear as a blot on the microfilm. This page is a mandatory part of your thesis or dissertation. Your committee members’ signatures indicate their approval of the thesis and that no further changes are required. Please note that the format of the page may vary if you have more than three committee members.

If you have any questions about accuracy, it is highly recommended that you have the director of the program check your blank Signature Page before making copies for signing. Make at least three high-quality copies and obtain your committee members’ black ink signatures on all copies.

Although there is no correct order for the names, the committee chair’s signature is traditionally first or most prominent on the page. Again, please be sure to have the committee members sign in blue ink and on the correct line on the page. Students are advised to double-check the spelling of committee members’ names before having them sign the Signature Page.

**Acknowledgment Page (optional)**

On the Acknowledgment Page, the author expresses her or his professional and personal indebtedness, including any permission to use previously copyrighted material. The text is limited to thanks for or recognition of special assistance.

The Acknowledgment Page follows the Signature Page and is numbered in lower case Roman numerals accordingly. This is the first page on which a page number should appear. For consistency, the page should begin with the title ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

Acknowledgments are written in a dignified and professional manner. When writing the acknowledgments, be sure that your use of “person” is consistent. If you begin with “the author,” use third person throughout. If you begin with the first person (I, me, my), use first person throughout.

**Abstract Page (required)**

48. The abstract must not exceed 350 words. The words in the heading do not count in the 350-word limit. The abstract is a brief summary of the contents of the thesis or dissertation. The abstract will be published without editing or revision, so take care in preparing it. Symbols and foreign characters or phrases must be printed clearly and accurately to avoid misinterpretation. Mathematical formulas, diagrams, and other illustrative materials are not recommended for the printed abstracts. You are encouraged to incorporate key words that would allow for library searches.
The title ABSTRACT is centered. The heading of the abstract is as follows; double spaced, centered, and in capital letters (with the exception of the last line):

ABSTRACT
TITLE OF THESIS
DEGREE DATE
NAME OF STUDENT, B.A., COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
M.A., COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY (when appropriate)
D.M.D. COLLEGE/ UNIVERSITY

Directed by: Professor (Fill in Full Name here, Department, College/University)

Please note that there is no comma between College and University. The last line of the heading must include the name of the chair (or co-chairs) of your committee. The text of your abstract begins on the fourth line below the heading and is double-spaced. It is unsigned: no approval form accompanies this abstract.

Table of Contents (required)

49. The basic rule is, as with the rest of your manuscript, to strive for consistency. Double space between new levels of subheading. It may be titled “Table of Contents” or “Contents.”

50. For the Table of Contents, do not mix organizational schemes: if you begin with decimal headings, use decimal headings throughout. If you list subordinate headings for one chapter, list them for all the chapters where they appear. Samples of the three most common organizational schemes are provided in the Samples section.

51. Do not list the Title Page, Copyright Page, Dedication, Signature Page, or Table of Contents pages in the Table of Contents.

52. The page numbers for the following pages should all be in lower case Roman numerals: the Acknowledgments, Abstract, List of Tables, List of Figures, Glossary, and Preface.

53. List all chapter divisions. If you list subdivisions, indicate subordinate headings by indentation.

54. When used, the Introduction is the first page of the body of the text and is numbered as page 1. It is listed in the Table of Contents one double space below the word Chapter and aligned with the title of Chapter 1.

55. Be sure that the headings in the text match in punctuation, word for word, letter for letter, the headings listed in the Table of Contents, List of Figures, and List of Tables. Capitalization must match exactly.

56. Each chapter must have a title in the text and the Table of Contents. The title of a chapter or Appendix is always listed in all capital letters. Do not underline.
57. Chapters must be numbered using either Roman (I, II, III) or Arabic (1, 2, 3) numerals. Do not spell out numbers (ONE, TWO is not acceptable). The numbering system and form must be consistent in both the Table of Contents and the text.

58. Do not use underlining in the Table of Contents except for titles of books.

59. Use dot leaders (...) to connect headings to page numbers. Be sure to use page numbers accurately. If titles cover more than one line, text must not run into the page number. Dot leaders should follow the end of the title.

60. All Appendices must have a title. Do not designate an Appendix “A” unless there is an Appendix “B”. List Appendix titles, with page numbers. See sample in Samples section of this manual.

61. When using a display page at the beginning of the Appendices, indicate its page number and use dot leaders in the Table of Contents. Fundamentally, a Table of Contents is a topic outline of the manuscript. Remember that it is the only index to the content of the manuscript; therefore, it must accurately reflect the organization within the text. Since a manuscript is longer than a paper or article, you will need to carefully consider the organization of its parts. Major divisions are chapters. Often, it is necessary to subdivide chapters. Organizational schemes help you arrange numerous parts into a unified, cogent whole. Whether you use a traditional outline, a system of headings indicated by location and underscoring, or a decimal numbering of headings, your ideas will develop in a logical way from general to specific. A reader will be able to tell at a glance which ideas are of parallel importance because the heading will appear in parallel form.

Your Table of Contents will follow the organizational scheme used in your text. While you are not required to list headings subordinate to the chapter level, you should remember that your Table of Contents is the only index to the thesis or dissertation.

Samples of the three most common organizational schemes are provided in the Samples section. Only three levels of subdivisions are given in these examples, but each of these schemes may be expanded. Whenever possible, you should avoid splintering your manuscript into minute fragments. Often, a heading can be incorporated into the flow of the text. Always check with the Office of Degree Requirements if you have any questions about the subdivision of your thesis or dissertation as it appears in the text and the Table of Contents.

II. Text

62. The body of the manuscript must follow a consistent format throughout.

63. Chapters must follow a consistent format and match the subdivisions, numbering sequence and format presented in the Table of Contents. The style or format must not change at any point in the text.

64. Subheadings must match the scheme presented in the Table of Contents and must not change or combine styles or formats at any point in the text.
Figures and Tables

A table is a columnar arrangement of information, often numbers, organized to save space and convey relationships at a glance. A figure is a graphic illustration such as a chart, graph, diagram, map, photograph, or plate.

65. Follow the style for tables and figures that is standard for your discipline. The format and styles must remain consistent throughout your thesis or dissertation.

66. Tables and figures may be placed in one of four places consistently throughout the manuscript: within the text, at the end of each chapter, at the end of the main text, or in an appendix.

67. Within a table or figure, you can use a different font from the rest of your manuscript as long as it is large enough to be clear when the image is photocopied or reproduced.

68. Margins for Tables and Figures must be the same as for the rest of the manuscript. All text and images must fit within the 6" x 9" area.

69. Tables and figures may be reduced in size, but titles, figure numbers, captions, and page numbers must be the same size as the text of the manuscript for readability. Do not reduce standard type more than 25 percent.

70. Tables and figures must be numbered in a consistent manner, using Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3). The numbering of tables must be consistent with what is listed in your List of Tables or List of Figures. They must either be numbered sequentially throughout the document (1, 2, 3), or within chapters and appendices (1.1, 1.2, A.1, A.2). If you use the within chapter numbering option, use this option throughout the thesis. You must use a consistent numbering sequence for both tables and figures.

71. All table captions must be placed in a consistent location. While figure captions do not need to be placed in the same location as table captions, all figure captions must be placed in a consistent location (relative to each other).

72. Oversized materials such as maps may be included as pocket material. Pocket materials must be submitted in a manila clasp envelope labeled with:

Author’s name

Date of thesis

Title of thesis/dissertation

Degree conferring department

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To my patient and loving husband.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (example)

I would like to thank my advisor, Jane P. Wong, for her many years of thoughtful, patient guidance and support. Thanks are also due to Frances Keegan. Together their friendship and selfless contribution to my professional development have been invaluable and will forever be appreciated. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the members of my committee, Thomas H. Pickles and Charles M. Waldau, for their helpful comments and suggestions on all stages of this project.

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v

ABSTRACT
TITLE OF DISSERTATION
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIST OF FIGURES</th>
<th>vii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Chapter

1. **INTRODUCTION**

   1.1 Overview and Public Health Significance ........................................ 1
   1.2 Objectives .......................................................................................... 3
   1.3 Implications ....................................................................................... 3
   1.4 Dissertation Design ........................................................................... 4
   1.5 Study 1 - Periodontal Disease And Cardiovascular Disease ............. 4
   1.6 Study 2 – Screening for Cardiovascular Disease in the Dental Care Setting .............................................................................. 13
   1.7 Study 3 – Dental Patient Acceptance Cardiovascular Disease Screening ................................................................................... 22

2. **STUDY 1:**

   THE ASSOCIATION OF PERIODONTAL DISEASE AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE RISK: RESULTS FROM THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY HEALTH STUDY / STUDY OF LATINOS .......................................................... 30

   2.1 Background ....................................................................................... 30
   2.2 Methods ............................................................................................ 32
   2.3 Results ............................................................................................. 37
   2.4 Discussion ........................................................................................ 48

3. **STUDY 2:**

   DENTISTS’ WILLINGNESS TO SCREEN FOR CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE IN THE DENTAL CARE SETTING: RESULTS FROM A NATIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE SURVEY ........................................................................ 54

   3.1 Background ....................................................................................... 54
   3.2 Methods ............................................................................................ 56
   3.3 Results ............................................................................................. 60
   3.4 Discussion ........................................................................................ 65
STUDY 3:
PATIENT ACCEPTANCE OF SCREENING FOR CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE IN THE DENTAL CARE SETTING: RESULTS FROM A UNIVERSITY-SPONSORED DENTAL CLINIC ................................................................. 72
4.1 Background .......................................................................................... 72
4.2 Methods .................................................................................................. 74
4.3 Results ................................................................................................... 77
4.4 Discussion ............................................................................................. 83

CONCLUSIONS ....................................................................................... 87
REFERENCES .............................................................................................. 98
APPENDICES ............................................................................................. 111
  Appendix A - Raw Data ........................................................................ 112
  Appendix B - Heat Map ........................................................................ 119
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1.1</td>
<td>Power calculation used for multiple logistic regression analyses</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.1</td>
<td>Model 4: Estimated least square mean Framingham 10-year General CVD Risk Score</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.2</td>
<td>Estimated least square mean Framingham 10-year General CVD Risk Score (CVD risk) among those with moderate or severe PD from Model 4 by Hispanic/Latino background groups, stratified by age and sex</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.1</td>
<td>Crude associations of independent categorical variables with participants’ acceptance of CVD screening in the dental care setting</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1. Hazard Ratios Detected with Approximately 90% Power, by Event Rate and Low-to-High Risk Group ratio .......................................................... 12

Table 1.2. Bivariate power estimate summary by specific aim based upon $\alpha = 0.05$, and fixed sample size ................................................................. 21

Table 2.1: Estimated population characteristics by cardiovascular disease risk groups (low, moderate, high) in the Hispanic Community Health Study/Study of Latinos (HCHS/SOL) ................................................................. 38

Table 2.2: Framingham 10-Year General CVD Risk Score for women regressed upon periodontal disease severity and exposures in the Hispanic Community Health Study/Study of Latinos ........................................ 41

Table 2.3: Framingham 10-Year General CVD Risk Score for men regressed upon periodontal disease severity and exposures in the Hispanic Community Health Study/Study of Latinos ........................................ 42

Table 2.4: Heterogeneity in Framingham 10-Year General CVD Risk Score (FGRS) predicted by Hispanic/Latino background, stratified by sex and age, and FGRS differences by sex, stratified by age among individuals with moderate or severe periodontal disease ........................................ 45

Table 2.5: Framingham 10-Year General CVD Risk Score differences among individuals with moderate or severe periodontal disease by Hispanic/Latino background, stratified by sex and age .......................... 48

Table 3.1: Dentists attitudes toward screening for cardiovascular disease in the dental care setting, crude associations by dentists’ characteristics .......... 61

Table 3.2: Multivariable analysis of dentists’ willingness to provide screening for cardiovascular disease in the dental care setting ........................................ 64

Table 3.3: Multivariable analysis of dentists’ agreement that their role includes screening for cardiovascular disease ........................................ 66

Table 4.1: Participant demographic and dental visit characteristics and crude associations with heart disease screening in the dental care setting ......................................................................................... 78
REFERENCE MANUALS


Council of Biology Editors, Scientific Style and Format: the CBE Manual for Authors. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 199


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Guide for writing research papers:

http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/MLA/index.shtml

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- AMA 11 Reference Style Guide - University of Southern California
- Documentation Guidelines for citing sources and avoiding plagiarism: Duke University.
- NSU Guide to Plagiarism & Copyright
- Writing Lab - Purdue University OWL

Grammar

- American Heritage Book of English Usage
- The Bedford Handbook (interactive grammar exercises)
- Common Errors in English: Washington State University
- Practice Exercises and Answers (Purdue University OWL)
- The Elements of Style - Strunk and White

Statistics

- Broward-by-the-Numbers: Statistical Reports from Broward County's Office of Urban Planning and Redevelopment
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- FEDSTATS: Gateway to Statistics from over 100 U.S. Federal Agencies
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  - Census of Population and Housing Data (1790-present)
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