

UAP Writing Style Guide

Urban Affairs and Planning Program

*Students in the Urban Affairs and Planning Program at Virginia Tech's National Capital Region write several kinds of papers. The Urban Affairs and Planning Program at Virginia Tech's Alexandria Center maintains a number of general rules for student papers. For all practicums and major papers, students are expected to follow the **UAP Style Guide**. Faculty in certain courses may also require that students use the style guide for their written products. Please incorporate the style guide into all of your work for the program, whether it be at the first manuscript stage, in final editing, or in every sort of outside communication, including brochures, press releases, and transmittal letters. Consistent, appropriate style is a requirement rather than an after-thought of program publications.*

MANUSCRIPTS

- **Major Papers, Practicum Reports.** These high-profile manuscripts that are intended to elevate professional practice and/or advance understanding of key planning areas and are to be made available broadly through the Internet, special publications, and other outlets. Examples are posted on the web at uap.ncr.vt.edu (this is not preceded by www).
- **“Professional-Style” Reports for Certain Classes.** These are major products of selected courses designed in part to develop professional writing and report composition skills. Examples are posted on the web at uap.ncr.vt.edu (this is not preceded by www).

Organizational Style of Reports. The reports above must include a professional-style cover with the title, name of the student, and date. For Professional Reports only, the cover may include the name of the client (but never the class or instructor unless otherwise noted) and the student's “fictionalized” affiliation such as with a consulting firm name of the student's invention.

Next would be a table of contents including the text contents followed by tables and figures contents, then appendices, if any.

An executive summary comes next would reviews the purpose of the report, method(s) used, key findings and interpretations, and conclusions or recommendations as the situation warrants. In general, executive summaries are never less than a full page of text (the middle part of which could include bullets or key graphics to convey important points efficiently) and average about one page for every ten of text.

After the executive summary is an introduction or overview providing the foundation for the work leading to the report. In general, it is about 10 to 20% of the report exclusive of back matter.

The main body of the report includes methods, analysis, and interpretation, as warranted, and runs about 60% to 70% of the report exclusive of back matter. The conclusions, summary, and/or interpretations, as the case warrants, comprise the balance of the report.

- **Memoranda.** These are short, accessible data analyses that reveal new demographic, market, economic, fiscal, and social trends occurring in cities, suburbs, and metro areas. These often include GIS maps and other graphics. Memoranda templates are available through MS Word. Memoranda include one or relatively few paragraphs presenting the problem or issue, followed by several more paragraphs and graphics examining the problem or issue, and a set of summary paragraphs. Often, bullets are used to summarize main points. Examples are posted on the web at uap.ncr.vt.edu (this is not preceded by www).
- **Essays, Reflections, Short Papers.** These are short – 2,000 to 4,000 word, syntheses of information, essays, or other forms of focused discussions. Examples are posted on the web at uap.ncr.vt.edu (this is not preceded by www).

Manuscripts should be prepared in standard typescript such as arial and new times roman in 11- or 12-point type. Other fonts are acceptable when necessary to convey a particular visual theme.

Manuscripts should be single-spaced.

Paragraphs, placed flush left, should be separated by a single line space in manuscript.

Always use the serial comma: meaning, include a comma prior to the final “and” before the last item in a series.

Back matter should be presented in the following sequence:

*appendices
notes
references*

Widows or orphans (single lines of text at the top or bottom of the page) are discouraged.

Pagination in a footer is required beginning in roman from the executive summary on.

Provide “breathing room” between text and graphics allowing the graphics to become a focal point and not squeezed within the text.

Table must not have dangling letters as column or row headings.

Notes

Notes (see below) should be numbered consecutively within the manuscript, using superscript arabic numerals. In general, the program employs endnotes rather than footnotes for most products, although footnotes would be used commonly for memoranda, essays, reflections or short papers. Author-date citations in the manuscript text are preferred for literature reviews. *Please double-check notes to ensure that names and dates are accurate and that they conform to the citations in the references list.*

References

References (see below) should be included in an alphabetical list following the manuscript text and preceding any notes. The manuscript must include complete and accurate citation of all materials referenced in the manuscript that are not of the writer's authorship. *Please double-check accuracy and agreement with text.*

Figures

Tables should employ MS Excel or MS Word.

Charts should always be prepared in MS Excel.

Maps should be clearly and simply explained. Map legends should clearly present the title, scale, compass, source and type of data, and geography. Frequently, maps will employ a blue-red color scheme where blues indicate qualitatively positive values and reds negatives.

Tables and figures should be integrated into the text.

Formatting and Titling Tables and Figures

All tables and charts should be clearly and simply titled, labeled, and sourced.

Titles for Table

A simple "label" title will suffice. It is to be placed at the top-left of the table of the table. Note: Lowercase all prepositions.

Example: Table 1. Estimated EITC Participation Rates among Eligible Filers

Titles for Figures

A simple "label" title will suffice. It is to be placed at the bottom-left of the table of the table. Note: Lowercase all prepositions.

Example: Figure 1. Concentration of EITC Participation among Eligible Filers

Source lines

Source lines may be brief but should appear below label of all tables, charts, maps, and figures. The source line is to be 10-point type. The source line should be italicized and placed at the lower left-hand corner, as follows:

Example: *Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

BASIC STYLE POINTS

In general, the program follows the Brookings Institution Press style described in “Guidelines for Editors and Proofreaders,” which largely derives from The Chicago Manual of Style. Staying close to this format promotes continuity while allowing us to set an accessible style similar to that employed by some of our leading audiences. At the same time, the program departs from BI Press style in a number of ways. Most notably, we adhere on a number of issues to the Associated Press’s guidelines—as collected in The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law—which prevail in many media outlets. For the most part the guidelines below are all that students need to prepare their work.

The following guide includes key aspects of BI Press and AP style as well as program-specific exceptions.

Abbreviations

Be sure that all abbreviations and acronyms are spelled out fully and correctly at first mention in the manuscript, with the acronym noted without periods in parentheses immediately after.

Example: The federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) delivered nearly \$31 billion to lower-income workers and their children in Tax Year (TY) 2000.

Acknowledgments

Spell with no “e” after the “g.”

Administration

Rarely capitalized e.g. Bush administration or the administration; when part of the formal name of an organization like the Federal Transit Administration, it takes caps.

Ages

Always use figures. Note the following punctuation:

Examples: 75-year-olds
55- to 75-year-olds
in her 30s

But:

The law is eight years old.

Ampersands (&)

We don’t use them. Spell all out.

baby boomers

Two words lowercase

Census nomenclature:

U.S. Census Bureau

Don’t use: Census Department, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Census, etc.

Census 2000

Always refer to the 2000 count as the bureau formally named it.

The program

The formal name of the organization is the Urban Affairs and Planning Program, Virginia Tech, Alexandria Center. In succeeding references it can be named “the program” or “UAP.”

Congress

Capitalize direct references to Congress, which takes the pronoun “it” instead of “they.” Do not use “the Congress.”

Example: Congress is in session.” 101st Congress. When Congress convenes next month...

The adjective “congressional” is lower case except when part of a formal name i.e. Congressional Research Service.

Decisionmaker, decisionmaking

Use one word

Directions and regions

Capitalize regions (but not compass directions) as well as their adjectival and derivative forms.

Examples: North
Southwest
Midwestern

However: Development is moving north from the city limits.

District of Columbia

Abbreviate it D.C.; may also refer to the city as the District

E-mail

Use e-mail, not email or E-mail, or Email

Ethnic designations

Ethnic designations follow no single rule, though the program generally writes black rather than African American. Please keep all compound designations open (i.e., “African American” without the hyphen) even when compound is a modifier (the “African American population”).

The federal government

Don’t capitalize either federal or government.

Examples: the federal government
the U.S. government

Fractions

Write out, and hyphenate.

Examples: one-third
three-quarters

Highway designations

Capitalize. However, lowercase the “s” in “state.”

Examples: U.S. Highway 89
U.S. 89
Utah Highway 33
However: state Highway 33

Hyphenation

Do not hyphenate such phrases as “1 percent increase.”

Example: a 23 percent cut in services

Do use a hyphen in fractions, and write them out.

Example: three-quarters

Latin phrases used as adjectives should not be hyphenated.

Example: per capita income

Hyphenate modifying phrases only where confusion might be a problem. But do not hyphenate modifying phrase where the modifier ends in “ly.”

Examples: Slow-growing suburbs
Gun control policy
State-owned parcels
Privately owned parcels

Newspapers

Name the paper in ital as it appears on their own site or paper banner, and insert the city name in parentheses, non-ital, if it's not part of the title.

That yields:

Examples: *The Washington Post*
The New York Times
Los Angeles Times
The (Harrisburg, PA) Patriot-News
The (Cleveland) Plain-Dealer

Numbers

Numbers one to nine are written out, 10 and higher are expressed in numerals, except in the case of percentages, for which numbers are always used (but never the percent sign).

Examples: nine (but 9 percent)
10 (10 percent)
11

Use the hybrid form to express large numbers, but never use it for numbers ending with fewer than six zeroes.

Examples: 24 million
\$9 million
But: 50,000

Percents

Always spell out this word. Never use % sign or spell it “per cent.”

Examples: 23 percent
a 2 percent gain in GDP

Policymakers

Use one word

Ranges

Use an en dash to indicate a range. Use all digits (1995–1998, not 1995–98)

Examples: pages 8–10
the years 1995–1998

A dash is never used in number or year spans preceded by “from” or “between”

Example: between 1988 and 1992 (not “from 1993–1996”)

If a range of numbers expressed in millions is given, the word “million” must follow each number.

Example: From 8 million to 10 million (not “from 8 to 12 million”)

If the range describes percentages, “percent” not be repeated.

Example: From 2 to 5 percent

Serial comma

Insert a comma after all items in a series, and before the final “and.”

Example: Growth of the Hispanic, African American, and Asian populations increased in the 1990s.

State abbreviations

Use postal (ZIP) abbreviations.

Example: CA, not Calif. or Ca.

State governments

Capitalize the word “state” only when formally naming the government or a government entity.

Example: the State of Missouri Office of Administration

Otherwise the word “state” should be lowercased.

Examples: Missouri’s state government
the state of Missouri

Statistical areas

The term metropolitan statistical area (MSA) is a formal OMB designation that should be introduced in lower case (as shown) and then given an acronym. The same goes for consolidated metropolitan statistical areas (CMSAs) and primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs).

Sun Belt

Two words with caps. Similarly Frost Belt and Rust Belt.

Titles

Use quotation marks to set off titles of articles, presentations, PowerPoints, and speeches but italicize book titles.

Capitalize the principal words of titles, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters. Also: Always capitalize the first and last word of every title.

United States

Abbreviate it as U.S. only as an adjective before a noun, as in “the U.S. economy.” Otherwise, spell out.

Example: Office vacancy is up all across the United States.

Universities

Use a comma rather than “at” to distinguish campuses of a university.

Example: University of California, Berkeley

URLS

URLs are cited without http:// if they have a www.

Also: Internet URLs should not be italicized, boldfaced, or underlined.

Example: www.hcfa.gov/medicaid/trends97htm

World Wide Web

Use World Wide Web; the web; website

ZIP code

Capitalize ZIP (an acronym for Zoning Improvement Program) but not “code”

PUNCTUATION

Commas

In a series, use commas to separate elements, including one before the final conjunction. This is called a “serial comma.”

Example: Low-density, poorly planned development strains roads, sewers, schools, and government finances.

Dashes

Use em-dash, with no spaces on either side, rather than double hyphens to set off inserted material. Find this under "Insert" and then "Symbols."

Example: Boomburbs—places like Santa Clarita, CA, and Overland Park, KS, that emerged as cities in the late 20th century—are now the size of older core cities like Ann Arbor, MI, and Providence, RI.

Lists

Use a colon after an introductory statement that contains the words “as follows” or “the following” to introduce bulleted or numbered topics (Words Into Type, p. 181).

Example: Older suburbs in the Midwest are suffering from the following challenges:

- (1) Aging infrastructure
- (2) Fiscal stress
- (3) Aging homes and declining real estate value

When the introduction is not a complete sentence and one or more of the items of the list are needed to complete it, no colon or dash should be used.

Example: This work finds that the program

- Reduces poverty
- Promotes work

Sentence spacing

Place two spaces after the period at the end of a sentence.

State Abbreviations

Use postal (ZIP) abbreviations.

Example: CA rather than Calif.
But: D.C. rather than DC, as in Washington, D.C.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

The Urban Affairs and Planning Program insists on high-quality scholarship. The program insists therefore on the complete, accurate, and consistent citation of research materials drawn on by authors. Careful attention to the content and format of notes and references is a critical responsibility of authors.

Notes and citations

Use notes to identify sources of information, give credit for the use of another author's work, or present elaboration or explanation that is not integral to the text.

Sources should be cited uniformly and concisely using the following style. Only literature reviews bibliographical essays (most of which will be discussion papers) will employ in-text author-date citations from a list of references. Do not employ source references in parentheses in the text (except for references to other papers or chapters in a volume); instead, make such references into numbered notes citing the reference fully.

In general, the program utilizes traditional endnotes in all publications except for discussion papers and, as noted above, literature reviews. Discussion papers should utilize footnotes; literature reviews should use—as noted above—author-date references to a references list.

Specific page numbers only need be supplied to source direct quotations.

Endnotes

Note numbers go outside the punctuation, always at the end of the sentence.

There should be no punctuation after the title citation and before the publication data, which is placed in parentheses.

Do not specify place of publication for university presses or well-known New York publishing houses (Random House, Basic Books). However, "Washington" should proceed Brookings and other policy-shop or research-organization publications. Note that it is not necessary to include D.C. with Washington.

Brookings Press is named "Brookings" in publishing data.

Also: If the author and publisher are the same (as in a foundation report) there's no need to indicate publisher.

In general page numbers need not be provided, except to locate a journal article. Pages do need to be supplied for newspapers and for specific quotations.

Shortened cites will suffice for subsequent references to an already cited document. These should include author and shortened title.

Examples

Brookings publication

1. Edward L. Glaeser, Matthew Kahn, and Chenghuan Chu, "Job Sprawl: Employment Location in U.S. Metropolitan Areas" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2001).

Note: Publisher for program research is always Brookings Institution (*not* Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program)

Note: Do not include month of publication

Note: Do not include page number, except in the matter of a direct quotation. Then you *must* provide it.

Repeat citation immediately following

2. Ibid.

Subsequent citation of earlier-cited publication

3. Glaeser, Kahn, and Chu, "Job Sprawl."

Citation of publication with four or more authors

4. William Fulton and others, "Who Sprawls Most?" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2001).

Note: "and others" should be used for *four* or more authors. Three are spelled out.

General policy shop

5. Nicholas Johnson, "States Can Use IRS Computer Tapes to Identify Potential Recipients of State Earned Income Tax Credits" (Washington: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2000).

Organization as author

6. Annie E. Casey Foundation, "Earn It, Keep It, Save It: A Guide to a Successful Tax Credit Campaign in Your Community" (2002).

Book

7. Pietro Nivola, *Tense Commandments: Federal Prescriptions and City Problems* (Washington: Brookings, 2002).

Chapter in edited book

8. Jeffrey B. Liebman, "The Impact of the Earned Income Credit on Incentives and Income Distribution." In James Poterba, ed., *Tax Policy and the Economy*, vol. 12 (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998).

Journal article

9. Bruce Meyer and Dan Rosenbaum, "Making Single Mothers Work: Recent Tax and Welfare Policy and Its Effects," *National Tax Journal* 53 (4) (2000): 1027–1062.

Working paper

10. Timothy M. Smeeding, Katherin Ross Phillips, and Michael O'Connor, "The EITC: Expectation, Knowledge, Use, and Economic and Social Mobility." Working Paper 13 (Syracuse University Center for Policy Research, 2000).

Newspaper article

11. Ken Leiser, "Building New Highways Is Good for Suburban Development, But Are They Good for the Urban Core?" *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 24, 1999, p. B1.

Magazine

12. Karen Pennar, "It's Almost As If It Never Happened—Almost." *Business Week*, April 18, 1988, pp. 56–59.

Web citation

13. "National Summary of Medicaid Managed Care Program and Enrollment: Managed Care Trends," available at www.hcfa.gov/medicaid/trends97htm (May 1999).

Note: The date of access, May 1999, follows the web address.

Note: "http://" is not included in the Internet address.

Dissertation

14. Jeffrey Leibman, "The Impact of the Earned Income Credit on Labor Supply and Taxpayer Compliance." Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1996.

Unpublished material (book)

15. Rex Campbell (with Mary Campbell and Coleen Hughes), "A Revolution in the Heartland: Changes in Rural Missouri Communities, 1990–2000," University of Missouri, Department of Rural Sociology, 2000.

Unpublished material (personal communication)

16. Personal communication from Walter Leutz, senior research associate, Heller School, Brandeis University, September 18, 1987.

Congressional/legislative documents (law, bill, committee report, etc.)

17. *Social Security Benefit Indexing Act*, H. Rept. 14430, 94 Cong. 2 sess. (Government Printing Office, 1976).

18. *Congressional Record*, daily ed., October 21, 1988, p. S17319.

19. Joint Committee on Taxation, *Estimates of Federal Tax Expenditures for Fiscal Years 1994–1998* (Government Printing Office, 1993).

Note: The Government Printing Office may be shortened to GPO in subsequent references in the same chapter as follows.

20. *Foreign Assistance Legislation for Fiscal Year 1979*, Hearings before the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the House International Relations Committee, 95 Cong. 2 sess. (GPO, 1978).

Executive branch document

21. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States 1996*, 11th ed. (Department of Commerce, 1996), p. 120, table 173.

References

A list of documents consulted—titled “References” rather than “Bibliography”—appears at the end of most program documents, immediately after the main text and before any endnotes.

It may function as a stand-alone list of documents cited or as the full reference list for author-date in-text notes.

Entries are listed alphabetically, by author (or first coauthor) with first name inverted and date immediately following (which allows the program’s standard reference style to be used in concert with author-date citations in a literature review).

When two or more entries by the same author (or authors) are cited, they are listed chronologically (earliest to most recent); authors’ names are not repeated (three em dashes are substituted for the name). However, if a book is written by this same author and a different coauthor (or coeditor), spell out the names, and alphabetize the coauthored works by the coauthors’ last name(s), giving works by two authors before works by three. If there are more than three coauthors use “and others” and put this entry last.

Examples

Program publication

Frey, William. 2001. “Melting Pot Suburbs: A Census 2000 Study of Suburban Diversity.” Washington: Brookings Institution.

Suro, Roberto, and Audrey Singer. 2002. “Latino Growth in Metropolitan America: Changing Patterns, New Locations.” Washington: Brookings Institution.

Glaeser, Edward L., Matthew Kahn, and Chenghuan Chu. 2002. “Job Sprawl: Employment Location in U.S. Metropolitan Areas,” Washington: Brookings Institution.

Series of publications by same author

Frey, William. 2001. “Melting Pot Suburbs: A Census 2000 Study of Suburban Diversity.” Brookings Institution.

———. 2002. “Metro Magnets for Minorities and Whites: Melting Pots, the New Sunbelt, and the Heartland.” Research report no. 02-496, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan.

Frey, William, and Elaine L. Fielding. 1995. "Changing Urban Populations: Regional Restructuring, Racial Polarization, and Poverty Concentration." *Cityscape* 1 (2).

Work with more than three coauthors

Fulton, William, and others. 2001. "Who Sprawls Most?" Washington: Brookings Institution.

General policy shop

Johnson, Nicholas. 2000. "States Can Use IRS Computer Tapes to Identify Potential Recipients of State Earned Income Tax Credits." Washington: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Organization as author

Annie E. Casey Foundation. 2002. "Earn It, Keep It, Save It: A Guide to a Successful Tax Credit Campaign in Your Community." Baltimore.

Book

Nivola, Pietro. 2002. *Tense Commandments: Federal Prescriptions and City Problems*. Washington: Brookings.

Chapter in edited book

Blank, Rebecca. 2002. "Welfare Reform and the Economy." In I. Sawhill and others, eds., *Welfare Reform and Beyond: The Future of the Safety Net*. Washington: Brookings.

Liebman, Jeffrey B. 1998. "The Impact of the Earned Income Credit on Incentives and Income Distribution." In James Poterba, ed., *Tax Policy and the Economy*, vol. 12. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Journal article

Meyer, Bruce, and Dan Rosenbaum. 2000. "Making Single Mothers Work: Recent Tax and Welfare Policy and Its Effects." *National Tax Journal* 53 (4): 1027–1062.

Working paper

Smeeding, Timothy M., Katherin Ross Phillips, and Michael O'Connor. 2000. "The EITC: Expectation, Knowledge, Use, and Economic and Social Mobility." Working Paper 13. Syracuse University Center for Policy Research.

Newspaper article

Leiser, Ken. 1999. "Building New Highways Is Good for Suburban Development, But Are They Good for the Urban Core?" *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. October 24, p. B1.

Magazine

Pennar, Karen. 1988. "It's Almost As If It Never Happened—Almost." *Business Week*. April 18, pp. 56–59.

Web citation

U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1994. "Historical Poverty Tables." *March Current Population Survey*. Series 94-1, no. 233. Department of Commerce (www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/hispov/hstpov10.html [June 3, 1999]).

Dissertation

Leibman, Jeffrey. 1996. "The Impact of the Earned Income Credit on Labor Supply and Taxpayer Compliance." Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University.

Unpublished material (book)

Campbell Rex (with Mary Campbell and Coleen Hughes). 2000. "A Revolution in the Heartland: Changes in Rural Missouri Communities, 1990–2000." University of Missouri, Department of Rural Sociology.

Unpublished material (will generally appear only in footnotes)

Leutz, Walter. 1987. Personal communication. September 18.

Congressional/legislative documents (law, bill, committee report, etc.)

Social Security Benefit Indexing Act. H. Rept. 14430, 94 Cong. 2 sess. Government Printing Office, 1976.

Congressional Record, daily ed., October 21, 1988, p. S17319.

Joint Committee on Taxation, 1993. *Estimates of Federal Tax Expenditures for Fiscal Years 1994–1998*. Government Printing Office.

Hearings before the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the House International Relations Committee. 1978. *Foreign Assistance Legislation for Fiscal Year 1979*. 95 Cong. 2 sess. Government Printing Office.

Executive branch document

U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1996. *Statistical Abstract of the United States 1996*, 11th ed. Department of Commerce.

Author-date + references system

Author-date citations in the text of a document referring to the reference list may be used only for reviews of the literature. Note that the reference list remains identical in format to that used in other cite systems.

Once again, page numbers need only be supplied for direct quotations. When they are provided they are set off by a comma, and follow the year within the parenthesis. Example: (Ikeda et al. 1997, pp. 12-13).

Text example:

National victimization surveys have found that the frequency of gun use in self-defense ranges from as high as 503,000 incidents in the preceding year to as low as 32,000 incidents, depending on how the survey is conducted and what questions are asked (Cook 1991; Ikeda et al. 1997). In one sample of state prisoners, 74 percent agreed that one reason burglars avoid residences when people are at home is that they fear being shot (Wright and Rossi 1994).

Note: no commas after author names before publication date

Note: Place references in *alphabetical* order within parentheses

Associated references:

References

Azrael, Deborah, Philip J. Cook, and Matthew Miller. 2001. "State and Local Prevalence of Firearms Ownership: Measurement, Structure, and Trends." Working Paper no. 8570. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Cook, Philip. 1991. "The Technology of Personal Violence." In Michael Tonry, ed., *Crime and Justice: An Annual Review of Research*, vol. 14. University of Chicago Press.

Ikeda, Robin, and others. 1997. "Estimating Intruder-Related Firearm Retrievals in U.S. Households, 1994." *Violence and Victims* 12 (4): 363–372.

Wright, James, and Peter Rossi. 1994. *Armed and Considered Dangerous: A Survey of Felons and Their Firearms* (expanded edition). New York: Aldine.

Wright, Richard T., and Scott H. Decker. 1994. *Burglars on the Job*. Northeastern University Press.

Thesis and Dissertation Document Divisions

The thesis or dissertation is divided into front matter, body matter, and back matter.

Front Matter

The front matter contains the following items, in the order each should appear:

Title Page:

- *Title* This is the full title of your thesis or dissertation.
- *Author* You alone are the author of your thesis or dissertation.
- *School* The official name of the university is "Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University."
- *Degree* Usually, this is either "Master of Arts," "Master of Science," "Doctor of Education," or "Doctor of Philosophy."
- *Major* Put the official graduate program name for your major.
- *Approval names* These are the members of your committee. List the chair (or chairs) first. Do not include signature lines
- *Date of Defense* Put the date you defended, e.g. "October 23, 1998."
- *City, State* Put the city and state in which you defended.
- *Keywords* Four to six keywords or short key phrases aid the catalogers who provide bibliographic access to your document through the local online catalog (like VTLS at Virginia Tech) and an international database, OCLC. These words will be indexed along with all the words that appear in your title and abstract.
- *Copyright* In any work, copyright implicitly devolves to the author of that work. One may make this statement of ownership explicit, however, by including a copyright notice, such as "Copyright 1996, Albert J. Kippleby."

Abstract: Each ETD must be accompanied by an abstract that has been approved by the student's committee. Abstracts will be part of the bibliographic record in the library's online catalog: Limit the abstract for a doctoral dissertation to 350 words. Limit the abstract for a master's thesis to 250 words. Additionally, abstracts for dissertations will be published in *Dissertation Abstracts*. Include the thesis/dissertation title and your name above the word Abstract, centered at the top of the abstract page.

Grant Information (optional): You may acknowledge any granting institution here.

Dedication (optional): You may provide a dedication.

Author's Acknowledgments (optional): Here you may acknowledge those that assisted you in your work.

Table of Contents: Include the chapter and section numbers and title along with the page on which each chapter or section begins.

Lists of Multimedia Objects: For each multimedia type (table, graph, diagram, equation, etc.) list the number and title of the object and the page on which it occurs.

Abbreviations/Symbols (optional): A listing of abbreviations or symbols used in the body of the document

Body Matter

There are two permissible overall formats for presenting the thesis or dissertation. They are the traditional and manuscript format.

The body matter for a traditional format contains the chapters of the thesis or dissertation, in logical order, each with its own title. Chapter titles may include:

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Materials and Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusions
- Summary

The body matter for a manuscript format will vary but generally contains the chapters of the thesis or dissertation, in logical order, each with its own title. Chapter titles may include:

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Chapters 1
- Title
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Materials and Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusions
- Overall conclusion
- Data summary
- Overall model if appropriate (text or illustration if appropriate)
- Suggested future investigations
- Bibliography
- Appendices (if needed)

Consult your department or the Graduate School for specifics.

Back Matter

The back matter contains the references (bibliography), and appendices. Students have the option of including their vita.

References: Consult your departmental guidelines for the standard forms for citation.

Appendices: The student may include the source code or output of computer programs as an enumerated appendix. Place figure references with PDF links to multimedia objects here also.

Optional vita: The vita is an autobiographical sketch, based on your academic and professional experience. Include your name (as it appears on the title page), positions held, and degrees earned. You may also mention your family and date of birth.

Style

Each department is requested to specify or develop an acceptable style or styles for theses/dissertations/major papers prepared by its graduate students. Generally, the style should conform to the major professional or scientific journals in the student's area of study. If there is available a suitable style manual, such as the Style Manual for Biological Journals or the APA Publication Manual, the department may wish to specify such as being an acceptable style. If a style manual is not available, the department may wish to develop its own or suggest the major journals whose style is acceptable. Students should inquire of their major professor regarding an acceptable style and should become thoroughly familiar with it before they begin preparing their thesis.

Do not use a thesis previously submitted by another student as a style guide. There are many appropriate books that deal specifically with writing style. Among those not specifically limited to style for a particular area are the following: *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian; *Form and Style in Thesis Writing*, by William G. Campbell; *The Elements of Style*, by William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White.

Numbering of Pages

Except for the title page and abstract, all pages of the thesis, including tables, graphs, figures, photographs, etc. must be numbered. The sections of the thesis should be arranged and numbered in the following order:

1. Title page: Not numbered, but considered as small Roman numeral i.
2. Abstract: Not numbered, but considered as small Roman numeral ii.
3. Dedication: Numbered small Roman numeral iii (plus consecutive small Roman numerals for more than one page of dedication).
4. Acknowledgments: Numbered small Roman numeral iv (plus consecutive small Roman numerals for more than one page of acknowledgments).
5. Table of Contents: Small Roman numerals, continuing from where Acknowledgments ended. All Roman numerals should appear at the bottom of the page.
6. Introductory section: Arabic numerals, starting with 1.
7. Review of literature: Arabic numerals, continuing from Introduction.
8. Materials and methods: Arabic numerals, continuing.
9. Results: Arabic numerals, continuing.
10. Discussion: Arabic numerals, continuing.
11. Conclusions: Arabic numerals, continuing.
12. Summary: Arabic numerals, continuing.
13. Literature cited: Arabic numerals, continuing.
14. Appendix: Arabic numerals, continuing.

Pagination set forth by the Graduate School takes preference over all style manuals.

Multimedia Objects: Figures, Tables, Graphs, and other Illustrations

Figures and tables may be included in the text or placed on separate pages. If necessary tables and figures may be included in landscape orientation and tables may be more than a single page.

All tables, figures, etc. shall be numbered according to the method specified by the student's major department or used in the major journals whose style is being followed. Each table, figure, graph, or photograph should have a concise descriptive title.

The title (caption) of a table must be placed above **the table**, with footnotes shown at the bottom of the table. Titles (caption) of figures, graphs, and photographs are usually placed on the page **below** the material presented. All tables, figures, graphs, and photographs should be arranged or centered on the page.

Scanned photographs and drawings should be labeled like figures.