THESIS/DISSERTATION COMPONENTS CHECKLIST
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL • VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

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*OPTIONAL ITEMS
THESIS/DISSERTATION COMPONENT DETAILS

Each component is discussed in the order it appears and must be included in the final document. This applies to all doctoral dissertations and master's and EDS theses. For information about style, see Style Information. Or visit style manual web pages for APA, MLA, Chicago, or APSA (note: some Graduate School requirements may supersede manual styles).

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Title Page

The title should reflect the actual content of the study by using key words that represent major areas of your investigation. Space text from top to bottom margins (see samples). Avoid using symbols, formulae, and numerals in the title. You should also avoid “jargon” in the title, wherever possible, and avoid being “cute.” Do not count or number this page. Left margin - 1.5"; top, right, and bottom margins - 1". Include month and year of your graduation. Text is centered on this page.

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The abstract should tell the reader your topic, research methods, and major findings. The abstract is double-spaced and should not exceed one page in length. The most common length is approximately 350 words. Keep it to the point; keep it simple. Begin numbering using Roman numeral i, bottom center on the 1st mark.

Table of Contents

Only material following the table of contents is listed in the table of contents (do not include abstract, figures, tables, acknowledgements, etc. - start with the first chapter). Use Roman numerals (for example, Chapter I, Chapter II, Chapter III, etc.); the chapter title should be in all caps (INTRODUCTION, REVIEW OF LITERATURE, METHODOLOGY, etc.); include appendices and their titles. Be sure to check page numbers; if multiple corrections are made page numbers may require adjustments.

List of Tables, Figures, or Illustrations

Number and title all tables, figures, photographs, and illustrations. If you have three or more figures and/or illustrations, present a list showing their location after your table of contents. There should be a separate list for Tables, a list for Figures, and one for charts or illustrations if needed. Do not include a list if there are less than three tables or figures. (Hint: When using tables, present a brief summary of the contents before the table is presented rather than repeat all statistics in the narrative. Try to limit tables and figures; if there are more than 15 of each, it is permissible to place in the appendices to avoid disrupting the flow of the narrative.)

Preface (optional)

The preface may be included in an introductory section of a manuscript. The preface is preliminary to and separate from the main text and explains the purpose, plan, or preparation of the work. A preface is not necessary for most theses or dissertations but may be included if the author believes it serves a useful purpose, and his or her committee agrees. If a preface is included, it normally contains acknowledgments. (Double space.)

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While your thesis or dissertation must be your intellectual property, you could not have written it without the assistance of a number of individuals and institutions. The acknowledgements page provides you with the opportunity to thank those who provided that assistance. You may include as many individuals as you desire. This is also the appropriate place to list permission to quote copyrighted material. Single space text.
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Bibliography (References or Works Cited)

Consult your program's style. For example, in APA style, a bibliography includes all sources consulted that relate to your research project. A Reference List is used to compile all the sources actually cited in your manuscript. If you are not using APA, consult the appropriate style manual for the proper format preferred by your department. The Graduate School requires that book titles be capitalized, like journals.

Appendices

Supplemental material should be placed in appendices. You need a separate appendix for each type of material presented. Some style manuals allow you to place tables, figures, and other graphical representations in an appendix, rather than dispersed throughout your text. *Each appendix should have a cover page that identifies it.* Reference the cover sheet page number in the *Table of Contents*. Center the title on the page (see below). A copy of your IRB or IACUC approval or exemption (if applicable) *must* be included here. Be sure to mention the IRB or IACUC in your “Methods” chapter.

APPENDIX A:

Institutional Review Board Approval/Exemption Report
Autobiographical Statement (optional)

If you wish to provide an autobiographical statement, it should appear as the final component of your document. It should include basic vita information such as schools attended, degrees received, positions held, titles of publications, and honors received. It should not include your address or telephone number, as your thesis or dissertation is a public document.

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