

Dissertation Formatting

General Instructions

In general, successful dissertations range from 125 to 225 pages (unless the methods & results are presented unpublications), but the number of pages can vary and may well be outside this range.

- i.) *Manual of Style:* Style, including capitalization, is not rigid, but the style selected should be adhered to strictly and consistently.
- ii.) *Line Spacing:* The text of the dissertation is to be double-spaced except for footnotes, figures, legends and bibliography, which are to be single-spaced.
- iii.) *Required Font:* Arial 11 pt., Helvetica 11 pt. or Times New Roman 12 pt.
- iv.) *Paper:* The final copies of the dissertation are to be printed on 8 1/2" x 11" high quality paper that is not punched or perforated in any way. Copies submitted to the Dissertation Defense Committee for review may be duplicated on standard photocopy paper and printed double-sided and secured using either a three-hole binder or a spring binder.
- v.) *Pagination:* Every page in a dissertation is assigned a number, which is typed on it.
- vi.) *Margins:* The margins at the top, bottom and right are to be 1.0 inch; the left-hand margin is to be 1.5 inches. All tables, charts and illustrations are to have left-hand margins of no less than 1.5 inches because of binding requirements. Any over-size material may be folded in from the right, top and bottom in such a way as to leave a 1.5 inch margin on the left side.
- vii.) *Spelling:* The spelling given in any standard American dictionary may be used. However, whatever forms are adopted should be adhered to consistently throughout the text of the dissertation.
- viii.) *Tables, Figures, Reproductions:* Tables, figures and all legends should be embedded in the document, as close to the relevant text as possible.

Tables are numbered consecutively throughout the dissertation. The word, "Table," followed by the appropriate Arabic numeral, is placed above the caption. Figures are numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals, with the word "Figure" and the appropriate numeral appearing before the caption. If possible, figures should be oriented in the "portrait" configuration. Submitted figures should be of sufficiently high resolution to be interpreted by the reader. Legends should be placed below the figure on the same page if space is sufficient, or on the following page to facilitate the reading of the dissertation.

- ix.) *References and Footnotes:* References to published articles within the text should be referred to in abbreviated form, (i.e. Student and Mentor, 1995; or Student et al., 1995). Every reference listed must appear in the bibliography (see below).

Two dissertation formats are accepted. Format A is the traditional organization of a dissertation. Format B is organized with some results included as chapters corresponding to a manuscript submitted or published as a journal article. The accepted dissertation formats are described below.

Format A

Introduction: The dissertation begins with a scholarly introduction (Chapter 1). This section should include a historical and well-referenced review of the area of research followed by a critical evaluation of the current status of the field. The student should then present the working hypotheses and give an introduction to the scientific question being addressed through the dissertation research.

Materials and Methods: The protocols and procedures used in the dissertation studies should be presented in sufficient detail to allow reproduction of the experiments (Chapter 2). A dissertation provides an appropriate vehicle for experimental details that might be omitted from journal articles due to space limitations. If the procedure was performed exactly as specified in an earlier publication, a brief statement of the procedure followed by a reference is adequate. The materials and methods section should have a section describing the statistical tests used for data evaluation.

Results and Discussion: Chapters 3 of the dissertation should each present the results of the conducted studies followed by a discussion of their significance. The format for these chapters should follow that of a highly respected scientific journal, mutually agreed upon by the student and the mentor. Data should be subjected to a statistical evaluation before conclusions are drawn.

Conclusions: The dissertation should end with a general discussion of the studies that have been conducted, including an assessment of the significance of the research, arguments of interpretation, evaluation of material included in appendices, and a plan for the experimental resolution of unanswered questions.

Format B

Introduction: The dissertation begins with a scholarly introduction (Chapter 1). This section should include a historical review of the area of research followed by a critical evaluation of the current status of the field. The student should then present working hypotheses and give an introduction to the scientific question being addressed by the dissertation research.

Manuscripts: The body of the dissertation should be in the form of manuscripts that have been or are ready to be submitted for publication in a journal. Note that each and every chapter must adhere to the format and style requirements described above. Each manuscript will constitute a chapter and will include a brief Introduction.

Unpublished Data: A separate chapter(s) should be included for unpublished data. This chapter should use the same format as described for submitted manuscripts.

Conclusions: The dissertation should end with a general discussion of the studies that have been conducted, including an assessment of the significance of the research, arguments of interpretation, evaluation of material included in appendices, and a proposed plan for the experimental resolution of unanswered questions.

The following sections of the dissertation are common to both formats.

Title Page: The title is listed at the top of the title page. This is followed by the student's full name, the full name and title of the dissertation advisor and, at the bottom, the statement: "Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell, New York (month and year)."

A sample page is shown at the end of this section which illustrates the format. The date given is not when the dissertation is submitted, but the day of the defense.

Abstract: The abstract of the dissertation is to include: the procedures followed, the significant results and the general conclusions. The abstract is to be presented on a separate page headed with the word ABSTRACT in capital letters centered on the page.

Acknowledgments: This feature is not required, but offers an opportunity to express the writer's appreciation to persons who have been especially helpful, to publishers of materials from which data have been drawn, and to whomever else acknowledgment should be given.

Table of Contents: The table of contents should list the chapters or other division headings of the dissertation, using the same words that appear in the body of the report. The numbers of the pages on which these items appear should also be given. The table of contents is to be followed by separate page listings for tables and for figures and illustrations.

List of Abbreviations: All abbreviations used in the dissertation except for very standard abbreviations such as DNA or RNA should be listed, in alphabetical order.

Bibliography: The format for the references included in the bibliography should follow that in the suggested manual of style of a highly respected scientific journal. At a minimum, each reference must include the names of all authors, the title of the article, the name of the journal, the volume number and the pages of the article, and the year of publication. The bibliographies of the dissertation may be compiled together at the end of the dissertation, or compiled for each chapter separately.

Appendix: The appendix may include but is not limited to:

- Published papers
- Written permission from the copyright holders if copyright material (e.g. tables, charts, pictures, etc.) are included in the dissertation (required)
- Submitted manuscripts
- Drafts of manuscripts expected to be submitted shortly
- Surveys of patient or other data
- High resolution figures
- Computer programs

Sample title page for doctoral dissertation

TITLE OF THE THESIS (IN ALL CAPS)

by

(Student Full Name)

(Mentor's Name), Mentor

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell
New York
Month, Year