

THESIS/DISSERTATION FORMATTING GUIDE

Instructions for Preparation and Submission

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INTRODUCTION

This guide provides specific format requirements for the preparation and submission of your official graduate thesis or dissertation at Georgia State University in the College of Arts and Sciences. **These guidelines are intended to be the final word on the uniform style required of Arts & Sciences theses and dissertations. The thesis or dissertation must be the original work of the student. The student also must be the first author of any journal articles included in the chapters.** That said, you should conform to the convention of your discipline's style manual as well as the content recommendations of your advisor and committee.

The *Thesis and Dissertation Guide* is reissued every year, and it is the student's responsibility to obtain the most recent edition to be sure that his or her document follows the current and acceptable format. The rules set forth in this guide take precedence over any previous publications issued by the Office of Graduate Services, College of Arts & Sciences. **Please do not consult or rely on older bound copies of theses or dissertations that may be available in your department.**

Questions regarding the format of the thesis/dissertation not adequately answered in these instructions should be directed to Samantha Jakobeit at asmanuscriptreview@gsu.edu.

I SUBMISSION PROCEDURES & DEADLINES

I.1 Initial Format Review

All students are required to submit one complete copy of their thesis or dissertation to Graduate Services by the initial format review deadline. Please visit the Graduate Services webpage and click “Graduation and Deadlines Calendar” in order to see current deadlines: <https://cas.gsu.edu/thesis-dissertation-formatting/>. **Likewise, all students are required to make use of the templates available on the Graduate Services website.** By the format review deadline, you must submit a single, **complete draft** of your manuscript within the mandatory template provided by our office. A **complete draft** includes the following:

- All preliminary pages, fully completed
- A complete table of contents and list of tables, figures, and abbreviations where applicable
- Captions for all tables and figures
- All major headings, section headings, and subsection headings
- At least one or two paragraphs of text beneath every heading
- A draft version of your references and/or works cited pages

Your thesis/dissertation is not required to have been defended by the initial format review deadline, but it does have to be a complete, formatted draft. If it has been determined by Graduate Services that your document requires formatting corrections, these corrections must be completed in time for the final submission.

You may use one of two methods to submit your thesis or dissertation to Graduate Services for the initial format review:

1. **Dropbox Link** – If your thesis or dissertation file is too large to be sent through email, you can send a Dropbox link to asmanuscriptreview@gsu.edu. If you have an emergency and you will not be able to submit by 5 pm on the deadline, please email the format editor, Samantha Jakobeit, at asmanuscriptreview@gsu.edu.
2. **Email your thesis/dissertation** – If your thesis or dissertation file size is relatively small, and does not contain many images, you can email it as a single MS Word doc to the general email account at asmanuscriptreview@gsu.edu. We will only accept pdf files from LaTeX users. “MANUSCRIPT FOR REVIEW” should

appear in the subject line and the email should contain your intended semester and year of graduation. If you have an emergency and you will not be able to submit by 5 pm on the deadline, please email the format editor at asmanuscriptreview@gsu.edu.

I.2 Final Submission

All students are required to upload a Word doc or PDF of their final thesis or dissertation to the library's institutional repository, ScholarWorks, by the final completion deadline (<https://cas.gsu.edu/thesis-dissertation-formatting/>). No paper copies are accepted in lieu of the electronic submission. For tips on how to convert your final document to a PDF, see Appendix A in this guide. Your final thesis/dissertation may be uploaded to ScholarWorks **only after:**

1. All revisions have been completed,
2. You have made use of the template and all formatting corrections identified by the formatting reviewer have been made,
3. Your document has been successfully defended, and
4. Your official approval form, containing all of your original committee members' signatures, has been submitted to Graduate Services. <https://cas.gsu.edu/thesis-dissertation-formatting/> **NOTE: Do NOT include the approval form as a page in your thesis or dissertation; this is a separate document of its own, independent of your project.**

Once you have received approval for your thesis/dissertation format and you have submitted the original hard copy of your official signature page, you will be e-mailed the directions and a password for uploading your document to the library server. Please follow the instructions for performing the upload carefully. You will receive an automatic confirmation email after Graduate Services has reviewed your submission to ScholarWorks to ensure it was uploaded correctly and has manually transferred it to the University Library System. *PLEASE NOTE: Once your ScholarWorks submission has been uploaded and approved, it is part of the University record and no further changes may be made to it.*

I.3 Additional Requirements for Doctoral Candidates

Survey of Earned Doctorates: A completed Survey of Earned Doctorates must be submitted to Graduate Services by the final completion deadline. This survey gathers data from all doctorate graduates each year and the responses become part of the Doctorate Records File, a virtually complete data bank on doctorate recipients from 1920 to the

present. These data serve policymakers at the federal, state, local and university levels. The survey data are reported only in aggregate form or in a manner that does not identify information about any individual. Please complete the survey online: <https://sed-nces.org/GradDateRouter.aspx>. You will need to provide a confirmation email to your college level advisor for clearance.

I.4 Embargo Process and Restricting Access to ScholarWorks

The Georgia State University library's institutional repository, ScholarWorks, publishes your work to the internet, making it publicly available and affording you a better chance of citation and use by the scholarly community. If you wish to restrict access to the distribution of your thesis or dissertation, you must obtain written approval by the Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs in the College of Arts and Sciences **before** uploading it to ScholarWorks. For more information on the embargo process, please contact Chad Van Gorden at cvangorden1@gsu.edu.

I.5 Obtaining Bound Copies of your Thesis or Dissertation

Dissertation and thesis binding is an optional step in the graduation process. There are several companies that specialize in binding, one such being [Thesis on Demand](#). However, you may research and use the company that best suits your needs. Printing recommendations are as follows: double-sided pages, page numbers at the bottom center of the page, and cotton paper in the 8.5 X 11 letter size. If you have questions about binding, please contact Samantha Jakobeit at asmanuscriptreview@gsu.edu in the Office of Graduate Services.

2 GENERAL FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

THE FINAL DRAFT OF YOUR THESIS OR DISSERTATION MUST COMPLY WITH ALL THE REQUIREMENTS DESCRIBED IN THIS FORMATTING GUIDE AND THE REQUIRED STYLE SPECIFIC TEMPLATE.

Once you have inserted your text into the appropriate template, you are responsible for proofreading and editing the final version of your document, thus it is ultimately your responsibility to present for approval a document of professional quality, free of errors. Graduate Services does not prescribe a particular style of writing, but departments and committee members often do. Consult your committee chair to determine the internal arrangement within the text and reference sections. The following sections specify the general format and organization that must be followed in preparing the final copy of your dissertation.

2.1 Page Size

All pages of a thesis or dissertation must be printable on the standard U.S. paper size: 8.5 x 11 inches.

2.2 Margins

Margins must be consistent throughout the document (they should be exactly the same on each page of your manuscript). Centering is always done relative to the text area (i.e., within the margins), not the page edge. Left, right, top, and bottom margins must all be **1 inch**. Please note, the minimum 1-inch side margin applies to your tables, figures and schemes as well. **No text or images should fall outside of the 1-inch margins.**

EXCEPTION: Page numbers inserted into the footer may fall below the 1-inch margin.

2.3 Justification

The preferred justification is the default “ragged-right,” with your type aligned on the left and unjustified on the right.

2.4 Page Numbering

Your abstract, title page, copyright notice and electronic approval page **should not** physically display a page number. The first page of your document that should physically display a page number should be your dedication or acknowledgments (it may also be your table of

contents if you choose to omit the dedication and/or acknowledgments). This page will show a roman numeral iv (not a roman numeral v). Your subsequent preliminary pages will be assigned consecutive roman numerals (v, vi, vii...). The first page of your introduction or first chapter will begin with an Arabic numeral 1. Your subsequent text will then be assigned consecutive Arabic numerals (2, 3, 4...). For tips on how to accomplish this in Word, see Appendix C in this guide.

Placement of your page numbers must be consistent throughout the document, and should fall at the top right corner of your page.

2.5 Landscape-Oriented Pages

Page numbering for landscape-oriented pages must be set for the best on-screen readability, thus page numbers should appear in the correct position (consistent with the position of your other page numbers) when the page is viewed on a screen. This is usually what word processing software does by default when pages are changed to landscape layout within a document. NOTE: Landscape pages are turned so that they are portrait-oriented in bound copies, thus if your department requires you to obtain a bound copy, you may want to change the location of the page number in your **printed version only**.

2.6 Line Spacing

The body of the thesis or dissertation, the abstract and the acknowledgments must be **double-spaced**. Single spacing is allowed only in the following text:

- bullet point lists
- index words on the abstract page,
- footnotes,
- block quotations,
- tables and figures and their captions,
- bibliography entries (if single spaced, double-space between entries).

2.7 Font

Font Size: The body of the thesis or dissertation, the abstract and the acknowledgments must be in either 11 or 12 point font. **No font size larger than 12 point is acceptable throughout the body of the thesis or dissertation.** A smaller font size is permitted **only** in the following cases: footnotes, subscripts, tables, figures, documents reproduced

illustratively and portions of the main text where the content absolutely requires a different font (e.g., computer code, different voices in a dialogue, etc.)

Font Type: The entire thesis or dissertation, including figure and table captions and all page numbers, must be typed in the same font style. The selection of the font type is very important. The font type should be one normally associated with a standard word processing program. Non-typical or non-standard fonts may not survive the conversion into PDF format or may cause the document to be excessively large. Anyone who is in doubt about the suitability of a font style should contact Graduate Services for assistance.

2.8 Headings and Subheadings

Graduate Services does not set specific style standards for the format of chapter headings and subheadings except for font size—**font size for all headings should be the same as the body of your text** (if your text is 12 pt., then your headings must also be 12 pt.). There is a suggested format for heading style in the required templates provided by Graduate Services. Students should refer to the standards set by their department's choice of style manual. Regardless of the formatting style chosen, Graduate Services **does require** that the style be applied consistently to all headings and subheadings throughout the document.

2.9 Widows and Orphans

No heading or subheading can appear at the bottom of a page with less than two lines of text underneath. If this occurs, the heading must be pushed to the top of the next page. In addition, the first or last line of a paragraph cannot be isolated by a page break.

2.10 Tables and Figures

All figures and tables must fit within the margins described earlier in the manual. Large tables and figures must be reduced in size in order to meet the margin requirements. **Captions, like footnotes, can be reduced in size to no less than 10**

pt. font. Tables and figures may be rotated 90 degrees so that the bottom of the table or figure runs along the right edge of the page.

Numbering: Figures and tables must be uniquely numbered in one of the following two manners:

- Associated chapter, section, subsection, and figure/table number designation, e.g., Figure 1.1.3.2, 1.2.2, 1.3.2.2, etc...
- Associated chapter and figure/table number designation, e.g., Figure 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, etc...

Placement: A table or figure may be in one of the following positions:

- Embedded in the text (should not have excessive blank space above or below the figure/table)
- Placed on a separate page immediately following the text where it is first cited (no extra space should be left at the bottom of the previous page; the text should run continuously),
- At the end of its respective chapter
- Tables and figures should not be found entirely at the end of the document unless you have decided to place them in the appendix.

Table Captions: The number and caption of a table must be placed above the table using the “insert caption” function. The table and the associated caption must appear in the same page as the table. Captions must be formatted in a consistent style throughout your document.

Figure Captions: The number and caption of a figure must be placed below the figure OR on a separate page preceding the figure, using the “insert caption” function. Captions must be formatted in a consistent style throughout your document.

2.11 References

In the three templates available on the Graduate services website, references and works cited pages fall toward the end of your document. Treat the title of this section as you do those of all other sections/chapters, but do not number this section. Format the entries according to your department or discipline's choice of style manual. That said, you do have the option to create references or works cited pages for each chapter rather than a large comprehensive list of references.

2.12 Appendices

Appendix sections are optional, and their placement is determined by the template style that you are working in. In the MLA and Chicago templates, the appendices should be placed before the works cited and reference pages (this is specific to these two formatting styles). In the APA template, the appendix should be placed after the bibliography. Treat the title of this section as you do those of all other sections/chapters, but do not number this section. Your appendices must fit within the required margins, even if they contain reproduced content or tables and figures. Appendices must be listed in the Table of Contents. If only one appendix is used, it should be titled "Appendix," not "Appendix A."

2.13 Journal Articles used as Chapters

In some departments, theses or dissertations may include as chapters, articles that have been or will be submitted to scholarly journals. This is an acceptable style; however, you must be listed as an author with clear evidence of your intellectual leadership in the publication. How this is represented varies across disciplines; it may take the form of sole authorship, lead authorship, or corresponding authorship, and the publication may not be included in any other individual's thesis or dissertation, whether at GSU or any other institution. A brief statement should be included at the conclusion of the chapter describing the intellectual leadership and any other research roles played by the student in developing and publishing the research.

In addition, the general formatting requirements listed above also apply to articles used as chapters. You **MUST** apply a consistent style in your font, headings, subheadings, tables and figures throughout each article used as a chapter, as well as your general introduction and conclusion. Evidence of permission to use articles which have been published or accepted for publication must be included. It is the student's responsibility to secure such copyright releases prior to submitting the thesis/dissertation to Graduate Services. Graduate Services will accept a letter of permission or an e-mail from the publisher. Graduate Services will not accept a thesis or dissertation for the final submission unless all copyright releases are on file (articles that have yet to be submitted or are under review do not need copyright releases.)

3 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS/DISSERTATION

Word documents submitted to Graduate Services are organized into three sections - the preliminary pages, the text and the back matter. The list of the pages within each section and the order in which they should appear is as follows:

1. Preliminary

Pages

- Title Page (required)
- Abstract (required)
- Copyright Page (required)
- Approval Page (required)
- Dedication (optional)
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Table of Contents (required)
- List of Tables (required if tables used)
- List of Figures (required if figures used)
- List of Abbreviations (optional)
- Preface (optional)

2. Text

- Introduction (if appropriate)
- Main Text (divided into numbered chapters or sections)

3. Back matter

- Endnotes (unless footnotes are used)
- Appendices (optional)
- References/Works Cited/Bibliography

The organization of the back matter might vary slightly based on whether you are using the MLA, Chicago, or APA template. Be sure that you are using the correct template because this organization is specific to the formatting recommendations of each respective style guide.

4 GUIDELINES FOR THE PRELIMINARY PAGES

4.1 Title Page (required for every thesis/dissertation)

The title page should not display a page number and **MUST BE** formatted precisely like the sample found in section 6 of this guide entitled “Sample Pages.” The year at the bottom of the title page is your graduation year, and the degree listed must be chosen from the following list of official degree titles (**DO NOT** abbreviate the degree or add your department name to the degree):

- Doctor of Philosophy
- Master of Arts
- Master of Fine Arts
- Master of Heritage Preservation
- Master of Science

4.2 Abstract (required for every thesis/dissertation)

The abstract is a statement of the problem, the procedure or methods, and the results and conclusions. The abstract must also include a list of index words related to the topic and which can be used to find the document when searching the library’s database. **The maximum word count for the abstract paragraph (not including the index words) is 350 words for dissertations and 150 words for theses and it should be double-spaced.** No page number is assigned to the abstract.

4.3 Copyright Page (required for every thesis/dissertation)

The copyright page should not display a page number and **MUST BE** formatted precisely like the sample found in section 6 of this guide entitled “Sample Pages.” You automatically own the copyright on your thesis or dissertation by virtue of the fact that you wrote it. It is not necessary to register the copyright with the Library of Congress in order to protect your exclusive right to the material in the document, but you may obtain this service for an additional fee through our office. For more information on registering your copyright, please contact Graduate Services.

4.4 Approval Page (required for every thesis/dissertation)

The approval page should not display a page number and **MUST BE** formatted precisely like the sample found in section 6 of this guide entitled “Sample Pages.” The approval page includes the names of all the committee members as well as your month and year of

graduation. PLEASE NOTE: The approval page is separate from the signature page. The signature page is the hard copy form you will have signed by your committee members and turn into Graduate Services, but it will not appear in your electronic thesis/dissertation. The approval page is what will appear in your electronic thesis/dissertation and should list your committee members' names, but will not contain their signatures.

4.5 Dedication Page (optional)

If you choose to include a dedication page, it will be the first page to display a page number and MUST show a lowercase roman numeral iv. All preliminary pages that follow the dedication will show consecutive roman numerals. The dedication should not be listed in the Table of Contents.

4.6 Acknowledgments Page (optional)

If you choose to include an acknowledgements page, it will display a lowercase roman numeral page number and must be listed in the Table of Contents.

4.7 Table of Contents (required for every thesis/dissertation)

The Table of Contents is the map to your document. Each entry must match the corresponding entry in the text **exactly** in terms of wording, capitalization, punctuation, page number, etc. A complete Table of Contents, including correct page numbers for each of the entries is required for the initial format check. The Table of Contents should be formatted so that the page numbers for each of the entries align perfectly along the far right margin with period tab leaders. The Table of Contents tool in Word is mandatory, as it allows linking between Table of Contents entries and the corresponding section in the text. The Table of Contents should not appear as an entry on the Table of Contents.

4.8 List of Tables (required if tables are used in the thesis/dissertation)

The List of Tables must be formatted to match the Table of Contents. Each entry must match the corresponding entry in the text **exactly** in terms of wording, capitalization, punctuation, page number, etc. The List of Tables should be listed on the Table of Contents. The List of Tables must also provide a linking function, which can be inserted as an index.

4.9 List of Figures (required if figures are used in the thesis/dissertation)

The List of Figures must be formatted to match the Table of Contents. Each entry must match the corresponding entry in the text **exactly** in terms of wording, capitalization, punctuation, page number, etc. The List of Figures should be listed on the Table of Contents. The List of Tables must also provide a linking function, which can be inserted from the References tab on Microsoft Word.

4.10 List of Abbreviations

The List of Abbreviations is optional and should be used to convey important and repeating abbreviations that your readers will encounter throughout the text of your thesis or dissertation.

4.11 Preface

The Preface section is optional and should be the last front matter element numbered with Roman numerals before the body of your manuscript.

5 SAMPLE PAGES

This section contains samples/templates of the preliminary pages that are to be included in your thesis/dissertation, as well as the signature page that is to be turned in to the Office of Graduate Services. The spacing of the examples on each of the sample pages should be followed to the best of your ability. Please DO match the general structure and wording as closely as possible. Likewise, each of the templates contains margin comments with helpful instructions throughout.

5.1 Title Page

<p>Manuscript Title</p> <p>by</p> <p>First Name Last Name</p> <p>Under the Direction of Committee Chair's Name, MA/PhD</p> <p>A Thesis/Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of</p> <p>Level and Degree Title</p> <p>in the College of Arts and Sciences</p> <p>Georgia State University</p> <p>2021</p>

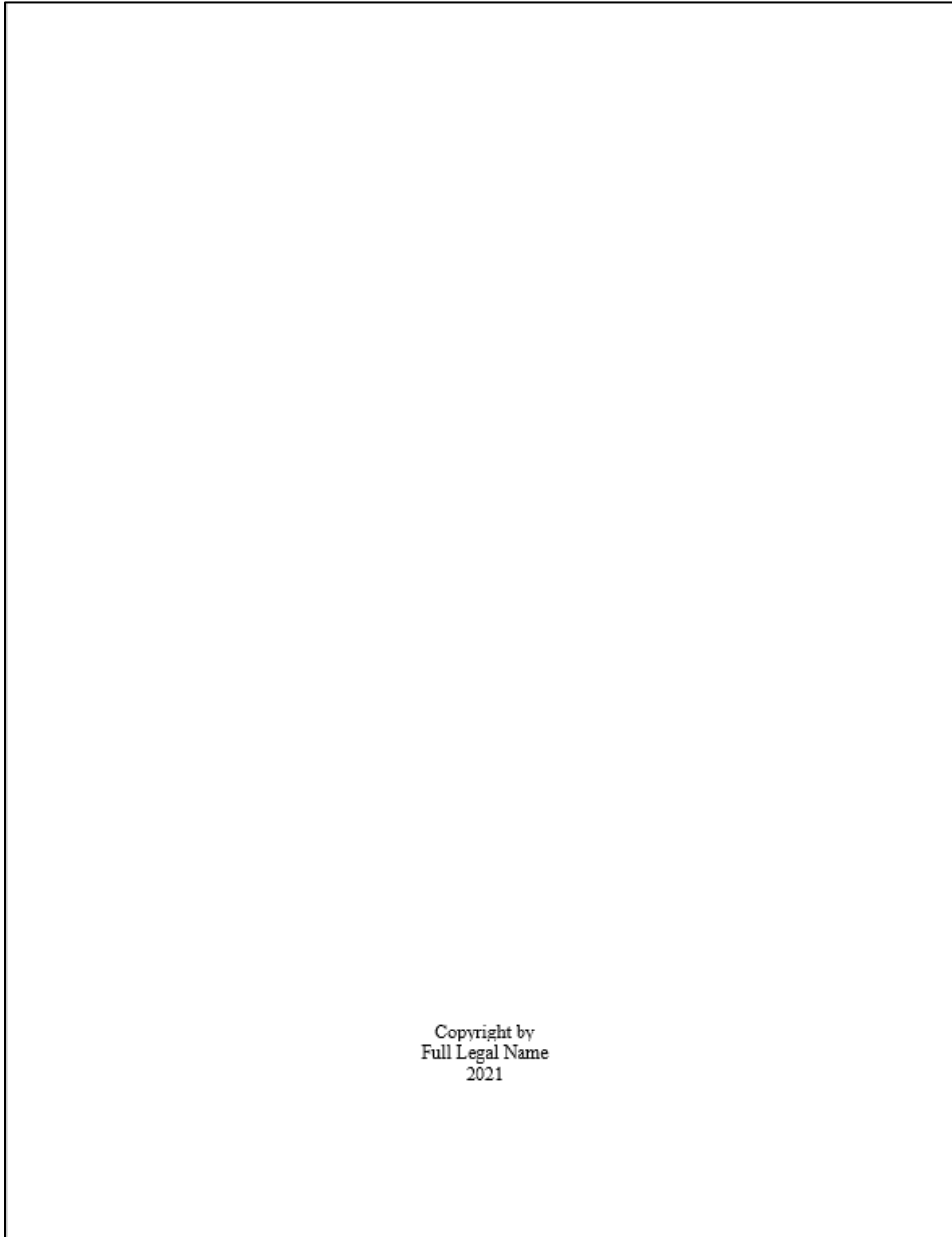
5.2 Abstract Page

ABSTRACT

The abstract paragraph is mandatory. Start the abstract paragraph here. Double-space this paragraph. Limit the abstract of a thesis to 150 words. Limit the abstract of a dissertation to 350 words.

INDEX WORDS: Sample keyword, Sample keyword, Sample keyword

5.3 Copyright Page



Copyright by
Full Legal Name
2021

5.4 Approval Page

Manuscript Title

by

First Name Last Name

Committee Chair: First Name Last Name

Committee: First Name Last Name
First Name Last Name
First Name Last Name

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Services
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University
May 2021

5.5 Dedication Page

iv

DEDICATION

This page is optional but highly recommended. The dedication is usually for acknowledging family or friends and is typically a matter of politeness.

5.6 Acknowledgements Page

v

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Again, this page is optional but also highly recommended. You may use this section to express acknowledgement of those who have helped you with this document (your committee members and instructors) and your academic career. This section should be double spaced.

5.7 Table of Contents

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5.10 Signature page (NOTE: This page should NOT be included as a page in your thesis/dissertation. Treat this as an independent document.)

 **COLLEGE OF
ARTS & SCIENCES**

Dissertation and Master's Thesis Approval Form
Georgia State University
Office of Graduate Services

IMPORTANT – Do not submit this form until you have successfully defended your dissertation or thesis.

Student Name:

Panther Number:

Date of Defense:

Dissertation Thesis

Pass Fail

Dissertation/Thesis Title:

Committee Members	Signatures
Committee Chair: <input style="width: 180px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 270px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Member: <input style="width: 220px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 270px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Member: <input style="width: 220px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 270px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Member: <input style="width: 220px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 270px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Member: <input style="width: 220px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 270px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Department Chair: <input style="width: 180px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 270px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>

6 THESIS/DISSERTATION CHECKLIST

To ensure you successfully graduate in your intended semester:

- Make sure you are in compliance with the continuous enrollment policy.
- Check the Graduate Services website (<https://cas.gsu.edu/graduate-services/student-resources/>) to familiarize yourself with the appropriate requirements and deadlines, including the non-course milestone deadlines.
- Download the thesis/dissertation guide, the appropriate template, and all required paperwork for your degree.
- After inserting your text into the template, examine your thesis/dissertation closely to ensure that it conforms to the formatting and organizational requirements listed in the thesis/dissertation guide.
- Submit an initial electronic draft of your Word document to the manuscript reviewer, Samantha Jakobeit, by the appropriate deadline.
- Schedule your defense if you have not already done so. Please be aware of the deadlines for the final submission of your document so that you have enough time after your defense in case you need to make any changes to your work.
- Submit the online “Information for Commencement” to be included in the Commencement Booklet. **(doctoral candidates only)**.
- Upload your original hard copy of your approval form, signed by each of your committee members, to Graduate Services. <https://cas.gsu.edu/academics-admissions/required-milestones/>
- Turn in your completed “Survey of Earned Doctorates,” “Publishing Agreement Form” to Graduate Services **(doctoral candidates only)**.
- Upload your manuscript to the ScholarWorks server.