

FORMATTING AND PAPERWORK ERRORS THAT CAUSE TROUBLE

• **The Approval form is oftentimes not filled out completely and correctly**

- A fillable PDF of the approval form is available at: <https://grad.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/etd/Approval%20Form%20April%20%202017.pdf>
- **ALL fields must be filled out.** If human or animal subjects were used the Approved IRB# (not the application number) must be listed and/or the AUF application# must be listed.
- Actual or electronic signatures must be on the form for the student and major professor. Typing the name in a cursive font does not suffice.

• **The IRB or IACUC (AUF) letter**

- Letters on letterhead from the IRB office or Animal use office are required.
- If the student name is not on the IRB letter then documentation is needed to prove that the student is an approved researcher on the project.

• **Numbering of the Preliminary pages**

- Count, but do not number: title page, abstract page(s), copyright page (if applicable).
- Count and number the remainder of the preliminary pages with lower case roman numerals: Dedication, Acknowledgments, Preface (if applicable), Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, Key to Symbols or Abbreviations.
- Page numbers are to be centered, ½ inch from the bottom of the page regardless of page orientation.

• **Numbering of the Body of the document**

- The body of the document (whether an Introductory chapter OR Chapter 1) is to begin on page 1 using Arabic numbers.
- Page numbers are to be centered, ½ inch from the bottom of the page regardless of page orientation.

• **Formatting the preliminary pages**

- Each of the preliminary pages is to be formatted in a particular way. There are margin and spacing requirements on ALL of these pages.
- Spacing errors are common. One double space is the amount of space between lines of text in the body of your document. ALL double spaces in the entire document are to be the same size.
- Sample pages may be found at: <https://grad.msu.edu/etd/sample-pages>.

• **Headings and sub-headings in the body of the document and the Table of Contents**

- All headings and sub-headings in the body of the document (NOT those found in appendices) must be included in the Table of Contents as well.
- All headings and sub-headings must match in the document and the Table of Contents with regards to wording, capitalization and punctuation.

• **Table and figure names and captions**

- Table and figure names and captions must match exactly in the document and in the List of Tables and List of Figures with regards to wording, capitalization and punctuation.

If a table or figure continues from one page to the next, the table or figure name and caption are to appear on the first page that the table or figure appears on in the document. Subsequent pages would have “Table x (cont’d)” or “Figure x (cont’d)” on the top line of the page and then continue on with the table or figure.

- In the Lists: single space within each entry, double space once between each entry and include the page number that the table or figure first appears on in the document.

• **Font size consistency**

- We no longer have a font size requirement. However, you must remain consistent throughout the document in what font size you do use.
- Similar pages with similar types of headings or text should all use the same font size. A 12-point font is the norm that most people use in the body of the document, so that should be used as a guide to maintain consistency throughout the document.

• **Margins**

- All margins must be at least 1 inch all the way around (top, bottom, left and right).
- ProQuest does not need a left margin larger than 1 inch for bound copies. Margins should be equal, if possible, especially the left and right margins.

• **References**

- ALL references throughout the entire document must be formatted the same way. Whatever is the convention in your discipline may be used.
- Single space within each entry and double space once between each entry.
- References are always last whether within each chapter or at the very end of the document. If you have appendices, they are to come before the references.

• **Chapters in the document that were previously published elsewhere**

- ALL chapters in the document must be formatted the same way and must follow MSU’s formatting requirements.

• **Consistency**

- The biggest errors we see across all disciplines are due to lack of consistency.
- All chapters need to be formatted the same way.
- All references need to be formatted the same way.
- All table names and captions must be formatted the same way.
- All figure names and captions must be formatted the same way.
- All double spaces need to be the same size throughout the entire document—the size that is between lines of text in the body of the document.
- All similar type headings need to be formatted the same way—including the font size.