

2026-2027

GUIDE TO THESIS PREPARATION



Graduate School
Emporia State University

The Graduate School has not adopted an official thesis style. Students should contact their advisor or discipline designee concerning the thesis style sheet or manual used by the discipline. A listing of thesis guides, by discipline, is included at the end of this booklet.

APPROVALS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Thesis projects require prior approval when either humans and/or vertebrate animals are being used as research subjects. Approval documentation must be included in the thesis. Application materials are available from the Research and Grants Office, located in Plumb Hall 315, or online at <https://www.emporia.edu/academics-majors/research-and-grants/>. Students should consult with their advisors about obtaining clearance from the following boards or committees:

1. Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects. This board was established to enforce federal regulations enacted by the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in 1976. It is the responsibility of the Board to determine those individuals serving as subjects not be placed "at risk due to their involvement in research projects." An individual is considered to be "at risk" if exposed to the possibility of injury, including physical, psychological, or social injury as a consequence of participation as a subject in any research, development, or related activity. A Human Subjects Training Module must be completed and a quiz taken and passed at 80% before research applications will be considered by the Institutional Review Board. Please contact the Research and Grants Office for information on IRB approval.
2. Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. To assure compliance with the Public Health Service Policy (PHS) on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, the University has formed an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. An animal care and use Training module must be completed and a quiz taken and passed at 80% to receive approval from the Animal Care and Use Committee. It is the responsibility of the Committee to insure that all individuals involved in testing, research, and training with animals act in accordance with principles outlined by the PHS (<http://ori.hhs.gov/federal-policies>). Please contact Dr. Melissa Bailey at 620-341-5619.

THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Each candidate writing a thesis must have the work supervised by an advisory committee. A discipline may also require an advisory committee for the supervision of research papers or projects which are part of a degree program. The candidate will select a chair of the thesis advisory committee in consultation with the candidate's advisor. One member of the committee must be from outside the candidate's area of specialization. Students are required to complete and submit the [Thesis and Dissertation Committee Declaration Form](#) to the Graduate School the semester prior to completing the thesis or dissertation:

ENROLLMENT IN THESIS CREDITS

A grade of "IP" (In Progress) will be issued each semester until the thesis is complete and approved.

THESIS APPROVAL PROCESS

Candidates should confer with their major advisor regarding the role of the thesis committee in thesis approval. Each thesis must be carefully proofread and edited by the student, thesis advisor, and thesis committee for typographical errors, grammar, mechanics, style, citation/reference accuracy, and format before the thesis is submitted to the Graduate School. A copy of the completed thesis should be submitted to the advisor no later than four weeks before the day on which the degree is to be conferred. Requests for variations to the thesis requirements listed in this guidebook must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

The final exam for a master's student completing a thesis is the thesis defense. The chair of the thesis committee is responsible for setting up the defense date, time, and place and for communicating that information to the Graduate School at least one week in advance of the defense. After successfully defending the thesis and making all changes as requested by the discipline, the student will submit an electronic copy of the thesis in Word format to the Graduate School for review. The penultimate copy of the thesis is due in the Graduate School, ready for review by the Graduate Dean, according to the following schedule:

THESIS DUE DATES

Summer 2026	July 10, 2026
Fall 2026	November 13, 2026
Spring 2027	April 9, 2027
Summer 2027	July 16, 2027
Fall 2027	November 12, 2027
Spring 2028	April 14, 2028
Summer 2028	July 14, 2028

The Graduate School will review the submitted thesis for any additional changes that need to be made and return the thesis to the student for revision. It normally takes two weeks to review a thesis. After all edits have been made, the student will submit the final copy in pdf version to the Graduate School.

Candidates should check with their thesis chair for discipline requirements for thesis binding.

THESIS FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Times New Roman, 12 pt font.
2. All margins are 1 inch; however, candidates who are binding theses should check with the bindery for print specifications.
3. Chapter headings must all be upper case, or the first letters capitalized, followed by lower case.
4. The "Permission to Copy" page (see sample below) must be completed and submitted with each copy of the thesis.
5. For APA style, each table or figure must have a heading and must be on its own separate page.
6. Any photocopies used in the thesis must be letter quality and legible.
7. Although discipline requirements may vary, theses should be written in a format suitable for submission to a professional journal in the field. Students should contact advisors or discipline designees concerning the style sheet or manual used by the division.
8. All pages must be numbered, except blank pages, abstract, title page, and copyright pages. The title page, although not numbered, is counted as the first page of the thesis. Lower-case Roman numerals are used in preliminary pages (centered, bottom), while Arabic numerals are used in the remainder of the manuscript (right margin, top). Order of the thesis is detailed below:
 - a. Blank Sheet (do not number)
 - b. Abstract with keywords* (do not number)
 - c. Title Page* (do not number)
 - d. Approval Sheet*(begin Roman numeral ii)
 - e. Acknowledgment* (not required)
 - f. Preface* (not required)
 - g. Table of Contents*
 - h. List of Tables
 - i. List of Figures
 - j. Text/chapters(begin Arabic numerals)
 - k. Bibliography
 - l. Appendices
 - m. Permission to Copy Statement*
 - n. Blank Sheet (do not number)
9. Final PDF copies of thesis must be Accessibility Compliant.
How To: Turning a PDF Accessibility Compliant

You will need: Adobe Acrobat and a PDF File. Adobe Acrobat can be downloaded from Adobe Creative Cloud on all university computers. Please reach out to the IT Helpdesk for assistance getting the software installed if you do not have it already.

Step 1: Open the PDF file in Adobe Acrobat.

The screenshot shows the Adobe Acrobat interface with a PDF file titled "BA Biology (General Biology)". The document content includes three tables for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years of a degree program, detailing Fall and Spring semesters, course titles, and hours.

Degree/Major BA Biology (General Biology)

1st year

Fall Semester (Course & Title)	Fall Hours	Spring Semester (Course & Title)	Spring Hours
Science & Lab Requirement: QIB 120/121 recommended: 101	4-5	QIB 190/191: Principles of Organismal Biology and Lab	4
CW 101: First Year Seminar - Biology	1	CH 123/124 Chemistry I and Lab	5
Mathematics & Statistics Requirement: BBA 110 recommended: 100	3	EG 102 Composition II: 010	3
EG 101 Composition I: 010	3	Social & Behavioral Requirement: 050	3
Communication Requirement: 020	3		
Arts & Humanities Requirement: 060	3		
Fall Total Hours	17-18	Spring Total Hours	15
Total hours for 1st year: 32-33			

2nd year

Fall Semester (Course & Title)	Fall Hours	Spring Semester (Course & Title)	Spring Hours
CH 126/127: Chemistry II and Lab (Pr: CH 123/124)	5	2nd prog	3
Arts & Humanities Requirement: 060	3	2nd prog	3
Social & Behavioral Requirement: 050	3	Information Technology Requirement: 070	3
Approved Elective	4	Approved Elective	3
		Approved Elective	4
Fall Total Hours	15	Spring Total Hours	16
Total hours for 2nd year: 31			

3rd year

Fall Semester (Course & Title)	Fall Hours	Spring Semester (Course & Title)	Spring Hours
Language	5	Language	5
2nd prog	3	2nd prog	3
Approved Elective	4	Approved Elective	4
Elective - upper level	2	Cultural Awareness & Cultural Competency Req: 070	3
Fall Total Hours	14	Spring Total Hours	15
Total hours for 3rd year: 29			

Step 2: Select “View More” on the left-hand menu. Followed by “Prepare for Accessibility”. *If you do not see a menu on the left-hand side, click the “All Tools” button in the top left.*

All tools

×

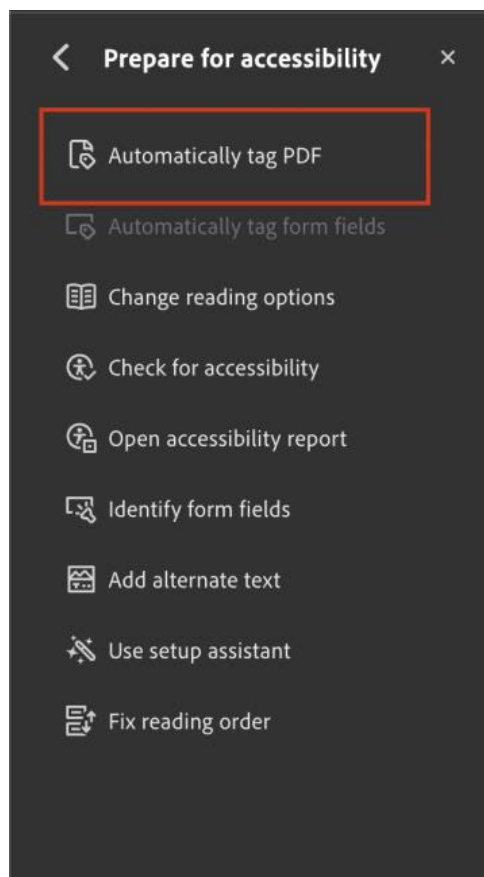
-  Export a PDF
-  Edit a PDF
-  Create a PDF
-  Combine files
-  Organize pages
-  Send for comments
-  Scan & OCR
-  Protect a PDF
-  Redact a PDF
-  Compress a PDF
-  Prepare a form
-  Fill & Sign
-  Add comments

[View more](#)

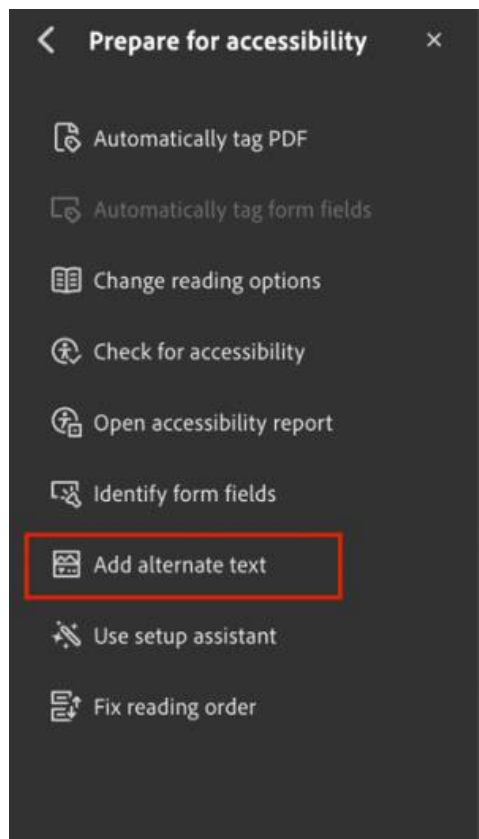
-  Add comments
-  Convert to PDF
-  Add a stamp
-  Use a certificate
-  Use print production
-  Measure objects
-  Compare files
-  Add rich media
-  Use guided actions
-  Prepare for accessibility
-  Apply PDF standards
-  Add search index
-  Use JavaScript
-  Create custom tool

[View less](#)

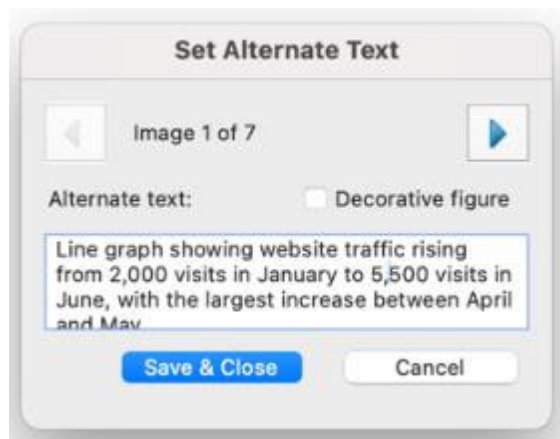
Step 3: Select “Automatically tag PDF” on the left-hand menu.



Step 4: If there are images in the file, select “Add alternate text” on the left-hand menu. Images include photos, graphs, logos, charts, infographics, illustrations, or wordmarks. **If you do not have images, please skip to step 7.**



Step 5: For each image in the file, write a short description of what is happening in the image. It should be descriptive enough that a person can understand the image without seeing it.



Step 6: Select the blue arrow until a description for each image is complete. Then select “Save & Close”.

Step 7: Save the file to your computer.

Your file should now be accessible and ready to upload to the university webpage

*Examples attached.

All required pages must be submitted with the thesis for approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

_____ for the _____
(name of student) (degree)

in _____ presented on

Title:

Thesis Chair: _____

Abstract approved: _____
(Thesis Advisor's Name)

(A succinct summary of the thesis not to exceed 300 words.)

Keywords:

Example of Title Page
(Center top to bottom
with equal margins top
and bottom)

CRUSADERS ON CAMPAIGN:
RELIGIOUS ISSUES IN THE PRESIDENTIAL
CAMPAIGN OF 1984

A Thesis

Presented to

The School of Humanities &

Social Science

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Craig Andrew Balden*

May 1995

*Use full name as you would on an official document

Example of Master's approval sheet

The electronic copy need not contain departmental signatures. Please type the names of the representatives on the signature lines.

Name, Discipline Designee

Name, Vice Provost & Dean of the Graduate School

Example of Specialist in Education approval sheet
(May also be used by Master's students within certain disciplines)

The electronic copy need not contain departmental signatures. Please type the names of the representatives on the signature lines.

Name, Discipline Designee

Name, Committee Member

Name, Committee Member

Name, Committee Member

Name, Vice Provost & Dean of the Graduate School

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My deepest thanks to my thesis chair, Dr. Jan Byes and committee members Dr. Pat White and Dr. Loren Smith. Their help in the writing of this thesis will always be greatly appreciated. I would also like to express sincere gratitude to my spouse, children, parents, brothers, and sisters for their encouragement and love.

PREFACE

A preface gives the reader an idea of the organization of a thesis. It may also contain a statement of the scope or of the general characteristics of research that has been done. In addition, the acknowledgment may be placed in the final paragraph of the Preface or may be inserted separately as illustrated above.

A thesis may contain different components than those listed below.

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Example of "Permission to Copy Statement"

This statement, with all information and signatures, must be included in each copy of the thesis submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies.

With my typed signature below, I, (name of student), hereby submit this thesis/dissertation to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available to use in accordance with its regulation governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, digitizing or other reproduction of this document is allowed with proper attribution for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author. I also agree to permit the Graduate School at Emporia State University to digitize and place this thesis in the ESU institutional repository, and ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis database and in ProQuest's Dissertation Abstracts International.

Typed Signature of Author

Date

Title of Thesis

USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

Students writing theses must be careful when using copyrighted materials not to violate the rights of copyright owners. Generally speaking, students may make limited use of short passages from copyrighted materials, if they give proper credit to the owner of the copyright. Extensive use of copyright materials, however, requires the permission of the copyright owner.

The use of tables, graphs, figures, or illustrations from a copyrighted work is not generally considered a limited use, and permission of the owner should be obtained before any of these are used in a thesis. Usually, the publisher can grant permission to quote excerpts from a copyrighted work; if not, the publisher can refer you to the owner of the copyright.

Permission is often granted to use copyrighted material in scholarly or educational works without any payment or compensation to the copyright owner. However, a copyright owner may charge for any permission granted. If permission is obtained, a letter of release from the copyright owner must be included in an appendix in the manuscript, and an acknowledgment of the copyright owner should be included in the acknowledgments preceding the thesis.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism in its purest form is copying entire passages or images, either verbatim or nearly verbatim, without directly acknowledging the source of these passages. Students found plagiarizing their thesis will be dismissed from the university and no degree will be awarded.

All scholars should keep in mind the following requirements:

1. When material is quoted, it is quoted exactly as it appears in the original, mistakes and all. Any additions, deletions, or alterations are clearly signaled by brackets or ellipses, as indicated in style manuals.
2. The acknowledgment of material quoted from or paraphrased from a single passage includes the page number(s) on which the passage appears in the original document.
3. Data not commonly available are never cited without a clear indication of their source.
4. Terminology or phraseology that is not common in literature is not used without proper acknowledgment.

RECOMMENDED STYLE MANUALS

Biology	Consult discipline thesis advisor.
HPER	American Psychological Association (2009). <i>Publication Manual</i> . (6th ed., 3 rd printing) Washington: The Association.
IDT	American Psychological Association (2009). <i>Publication Manual</i> . (6th ed., 3 rd printing) Washington: The Association.
Mathematics	Consult thesis advisor.
Psychology	American Psychological Association (2009). <i>Publication Manual</i> . (6th ed., 3 rd printing) Washington: The Association.