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**MSU Thesis Guidelines**

1. **Style and Formatting Guidelines**
2. Title Page - Please use the official title page for the MSU thesis.
3. Publication Style – The MSU thesis must conform to publication style guidelines selected by the student’s department. Common style guidelines include APA, Chicago, MLA, although others are acceptable.
4. Citation of references – Students should assure that references are cited in accordance with the selected style guidelines.
   1. Quotations – be sure to include page numbers with citations in text if required by your publication style guidelines
   2. Lengthy quotations – a number of publication style guidelines require that quotations of significant length be formatted differently. Be sure to check on this.
   3. MSU offers EndNote, a tool to help manage references. It can format your in-text reference citations and your bibliography or reference page. However, it is important to check to see that these are correctly formatted in the final thesis document.
5. Margins – Because students may elect to have their theses bound, the following margins are expected:
   1. 1 ½ inch left margin, and
   2. 1 inch for top, right, and bottom margins.
6. Spelling and grammar ~ The thesis is a formal document; spelling and grammar are expected to follow standard guidelines for the English language and the designated publication guidelines. Most word processing programs have spelling and grammar check that can be quite helpful; however, please be aware that these tools do not capture all errors.
7. Plagiarism – Plagiarism carries stiff academic penalties. Students must carefully reference material gleaned from references, as this is the best defense against any possibility of plagiarism.
8. Writing Center – The staff in the Writing Center is available to help students with enhancing their writing acumen. It is important to plan ahead and make an appointment. The Writing Center is not, however, an editing service. Should you wish to have assistance with editing, please check with your graduate coordinator for guidance.
9. Table of contents – A table of contents must be included and is to be formatted as per the publication guidelines.
10. Acknowledgements – Students may include an optional acknowledgement.
11. Chapters – The thesis document sections should comply with the guidelines provided by the department.
12. Protection of confidentiality or anonymity – The thesis is held to the highest standard of protection for human subject participants, when applicable. Students must protect the confidentiality or anonymity of their study participants in accordance with the human subjects protection guidelines assured through the Institutional Review Board. If the thesis is of a nature that includes quotes through which the source may be identifiable, a form has been developed by the General Counsel of the University that must be completed and submitted with the thesis, titled *Interview Release Form*.
13. **Submission to the Graduate School:**
14. The student shall submit the final thesis document to the Graduate School in both a Microsoft Word and PDF format at [thesis@mwsu.edu](mailto:thesis@mwsu.edu).
15. The student shall submit the original, signed Thesis Approval document with all committee signatures affixed to the AVPAA and Dean of the Graduate School.
16. The Thesis Information Form shall be prepared by the student and sent electronically to the Graduate School at [thesis@mwsu.edu](mailto:thesis@mwsu.edu)
17. A paper copy of the thesis is only required if the student wishes to have bound copies prepared. There is a fee of $25 per bound copy, payable at the MSU Business Office. The receipt and the number of collated paper copies desired to the bound is to be brought by the student to the Assistant to the Graduate Dean in Hardin 114. Copies for binding must be printed on 20 pound weight, 25% rag content bond paper.
18. When the AVPAA and Dean of the Graduate School has approved the final copy of the thesis, the Thesis Approval form will be submitted to the Office of the Registrar, which serves as official notification of completion of the thesis requirement.