Project Thesis Format Review Guidelines

Introduction:

This document serves to guide you through the process of the format review for your project thesis. In the following pages, you will find guidelines to help you format your thesis, a template of the report generated by the thesis coordinator, and a list of formatting issues common to many D.Min. project theses. Please read through this guide carefully before submitting your thesis for a format review.

At least two format reviews are required for all S.T.M. theses, D.Min. project theses, and Ph.D. dissertations at the School of Theology. The format review will not evaluate the content of your project thesis, but it will check your formatting to make sure it is compliant with both Boston University and School of Theology requirements. It is important to note that your draft must be complete for a format review report to be generated.

All theses must be formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition, though the best resource for every STH student is Kate Turabian’s A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition (2018). Turabian had an illustrious career as the dissertation secretary at the University of Chicago, where she condensed the relevant parts of the Chicago Manual of Style into a booklet for university students working on their thesis and dissertation projects. To this day, the latest volume of Turabian’s original formatting booklet is updated according to the most recent edition of the Chicago Manual of Style.

You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with the formatting tools in your word processing software. Most systems have tools for indenting block quotes, creating footnotes and endnotes, and creating hanging indentation as appropriate for bibliographies. If you have been away from academic writing for several decades, some standards may have changed. For example, it is no longer appropriate to follow a sentence with two spaces; now standard usage is only one space after a period.

School of Theology Guidelines:

Please consult the following formatting resources, both of which are available online via the School of Theology website. These resources constitute the guidelines for your thesis specific to the School of Theology and your program. Updated deadlines are listed in the second link below.

The D.Min. Handbook

School of Theology Graduation Deadlines and Formatting Guidelines

University Guidelines:
There are two resources published by the university: the first is a list of formatting guidelines and the second is a collection of sample thesis and dissertation pages. Treat the university’s formatting guidelines like Turabian’s manual.

Formatting Guidelines
https://library.bu.edu/ld.php?content_id=30310050

Sample Thesis and Dissertation Pages
http://library.bu.edu/ld.php?content_id=24728519

Using the Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition:

All footnotes must be formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style 17 guidelines, which is much more accessible in Kate Turabian’s A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition. You can access the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style while logged in to the university network. Sometimes it might be easier to search the CMS 17 website for more information on how to cite a specific resource than it is to search the physical volume in the library.

Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition, Online
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/

You can access the Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition, Online when you are off campus by accessing the site via our A-Z Databases directory. You must log-in with your BU username and password.

A-Z Databases, Boston University Libraries
http://library.bu.edu/az.php

Using Kate Turabian’s A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition.

Chapter 17 of Turabian’s guide contains specific examples of the notes-bibliography citation method. The following is an outline of its contents and corresponding page numbers.

17.1. Books 171
17.2. Journal Articles 187
17.3. Magazine Articles 191
17.4. Newspaper Articles 192
17.5. Websites, Blogs, and Social Media 194
17.6. Interviews and Personal Communications 197
17.7. Papers, Lectures, and Manuscript Collections 198
17.8. Older Works and Sacred Works 202
17.9. Reference Works and Secondary Citations 204
17.10. Sources in the Visual and Performing Arts 206
17.11. Public Documents 213
Commonly Cited Sources

The following contains a list of commonly cited types of sources. This list is not comprehensive, so please refer to Turabian 9 or CMS 17 for more detailed information.

(Key: 1. initial citation; 2. subsequent citations; • Bibliography)

Single author book: (Turabian 17.1; note: well-known cities of publication do not need a two-letter state abbreviation [e.g., New York, Los Angeles, etc.] whereas lesser-known cities of publication require a two-letter state abbreviation [e.g., Dayton, OH, Albany, NY, etc.])


Chapter in an edited volume: (Turabian 17.1.8.2)


Journal article: (Turabian 17.2)


Article accessed on the internet (JSTOR and ATLA articles or chapters should be cited using the above models, not this one): (cf. Turabian 9 17.5 for a range of examples; also: include an internet source in the bibliography only if it is integral to your argument or frequently cited [if your internet source ticks neither of these two boxes, you do not need to include it in your bibliography])

(Without an author or time stamp)

2. “About STH.”  
(With an author and time stamp)


2. Rollston, “By God I am King.”

All other citation formats can be found in either Turabian’s manual or the Chicago Manual of Style link listed above. If you are still unsure after consulting Turabian and CMS, please contact the STH writing center or your academic advisor.

Sample Thesis Coordinator review report:

You will receive a report with the following structure after each format review submission. In this sample review report, you will find the most common formatting issues found in D.Min. project theses. This is not a comprehensive list, but following these guidelines will help you prepare your draft for the first review. After you receive a report from the thesis coordinator, you must complete all noted changes before resubmitting your thesis for a second review. If the changes are not completed, a third format review may be necessary.

TITLE

Author Name

Reviewed DAY Month YEAR
Name, Thesis Coordinator

A short, personalized message will appear here. This message serves to highlight any major formatting issues that need your attention. Following this message, you will find individual elements of the thesis with bullet points for each issue you must address before resubmitting your thesis for another review.

Title Page

• The title page must follow the format listed in the sample pages PDF:
  • http://library.bu.edu/ld.php?content_id=24728519

Copyright Page

• The copyright page must follow the format listed in the sample pages PDF:

**Approval Page**

• The approval page must follow the format listed in the sample pages PDF:

**Abstract**

• According to the D.Min. Handbook, the abstract should contain no more than 100 words (and the abstract must be approved by your faculty advisor).

**Contents Page**

• Pages that appear before the table of contents (including the table of contents page itself) do not appear on the table of contents page. The first page listed in your table of contents should be the page that appears immediately following your table of contents. Usually, this is a “List of Abbreviations” page or the first page of the “Introduction” chapter.
• Include every chapter on the contents page along with each major heading in your chapters. Some committees require subheadings to be listed on the table of contents page as well, so be sure to ask your faculty advisor.
• Elements of the project thesis, including those that should appear on the contents page, appears in this university resource:
  • [https://library.bu.edu/ld.php?content_id=30310050](https://library.bu.edu/ld.php?content_id=30310050)

**Overall Paragraph Spacing**

• All regular paragraphs must be double-spaced. Block quotes should be single-spaced and indented to 0.5” (cf. notes on “Block Quotes” below).

**Margins**

• Use the following margins for your thesis: top, 1.5 inches to first line of text or heading; left, 1.5 inches; right, 1 inch; bottom, at least 1 inch from the bottom of the page

**Font**

• The font of your thesis should be a well-known, unicode typeface such as Times New Roman, Helvetica, or Courier (cf. Turabian A1.2)
• Use 12-point font for the body of your work, but do not use less than a 10-point font anywhere in your project thesis (for example, in footnotes or endnotes).

**Block Quotes**
• Block quotes must be indented 0.5“ and single-spaced. Your word processing software has a tool for block indentation.

Subheadings

• All levels of headings and subheadings must be formatted consistently throughout your work.

Pagination

• Every page has a number, but this number is omitted from the title page, copyright page, and approval page. The word processing software has tools for pagination.
• Pages prior to the first chapter or introduction have roman numerals. The abstract page starts at iv (remember that the title page [i], copyright page [ii], and approval page [iii] are not numbered, but they are pages i, ii, and iii)

Text

• General notes about the body of your text will appear here.

Footnotes

• Turabian’s guide will be especially important here: chapter 17 contains everything you need to know about citing a source in a footnote. Be sure to note the difference between a footnote citation (preceded by an “N:”) and a bibliography citation (preceded by a “B.”). You will need to format the source according to the footnote format (“N:”) in your footnotes and according to the bibliography format (“B:”) in your bibliography.
• The Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition strongly discourages the use of “ibid” for repeat citations. Instead, use a shortened form of citation that includes the author’s last name, abbreviated title, and page number. All of these citation formats can be found in Turabian’s guide.
• Well-known cities of publication, such as New York, Boston, London, Buenos Aires, etc., do not need further identification. Lesser-known cities, such as “Winona Lake, IN” must be further identified with a two letter state abbreviation (or “Harmondsworth, UK” for international cities). (cf. Turabian 17.1.6.1 for more information)
• If you are using reference software that will format your sources according to Chicago Manual of Style, note that they are good but not perfect. You are advised to review the citations in footnotes for formatting consistency.

Bibliography

• Turabian’s guide will be especially important here: chapter 17 contains everything you need to know about citing a source in a bibliography. Be sure to note the difference between a footnote citation (preceded by an “N:”) and a bibliography citation (preceded by a “B.”). You will need to format the source according to the footnote format (“N:”) in your footnotes and according to the bibliography format (“B:”) in your bibliography.
• Use three em-dashes —— for repeated authors.
• If you are using reference software that will format your sources according to Chicago Manual of Style, note that they are good but not perfect. You are advised to review the citations in the Bibliography for formatting consistency.

CV

• Include your name, birth year, a physical address where you can receive mail for the next 2 years (the STH address is just fine for this), and an email address.