# SCHOOL OF GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

## Big 10 Quality Checks

School Of Graduate & Professional Studies
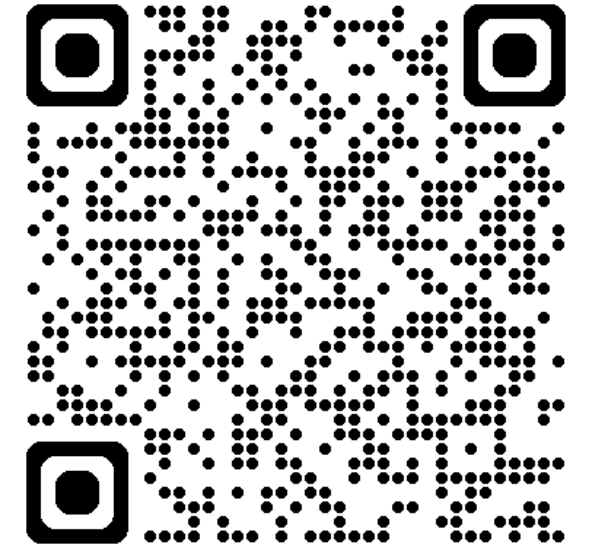
"Expand Your Horizon"

IGNITE YOUR PATH:
Merging Research Skills with Career Success

Thesis, Dissertation, &
Professional Seminars

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

# THESIS/DISSERTATION GUIDANCE



- Thesis and Dissertation Writing Process – Graduate School Website

- https://www.tnstate.edu/graduate/Thesis%20and%20Dissertation%20Workshop.aspx

# SPRING 2026 KEY DATES

**March 15, 2026**

Last day to apply for Spring graduation via myTSU

Last day to defend Theses and Dissertations

**March 27, 2026**

**April 10, 2026**

Last day to submit Theses/Dissertations into ETD ProQuest

**Dissertation/Thesis Link**
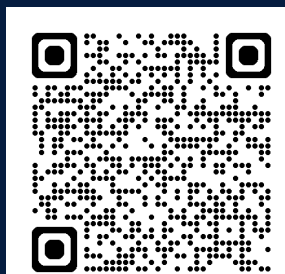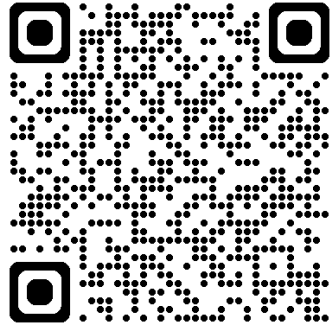
# TSU ELECTRONIC THESIS & DISSERTATION CHECKLIST

ELECTRONIC THESIS & DISSERTATION CHECKLIST

This Checklist is used to simplify the review of your document by the Graduate School. It is to ensure that student has met all thesis/dissertation completion requirements. This form must be completed, signed by student and Chair of the Thesis/Dissertation Committee, and deposited to the Graduate School along with other documents specified in the Checklist. Do NOT submit your electronic thesis/dissertation if you have not met any requirements on this "Checklist."

## PRELIMINARY STEPS

- Enrolled in thesis/dissertation credits this semester.
- Successfully defended my thesis/dissertation.
- Read and followed the "*Guidelines for the Preparation of Dissertations Projects, and Course Papers*" (visit:http://www.tnstate.edu/graduate/thesesdissertations.aspx).
- Followed style manual of my discipline: American Psychological Associ 7th edition, MLA 9th , ACS, IEEE
- My thesis/dissertation consistently followed one of the above style manu
- My thesis/dissertation meets the university's academic integrity standard *Graduate Catalog*).
- Committee Chair has checked my thesis/dissertation with plagiarism usir ®, Grammraly.

## ORGANIZATION

- Title Page
  - a. Title Page is the first page in your doc is Page Number 1(Required) 2 inches paper
  - b. Title (Centered/No more than 12 words which means first letter is capitalized a letters lower case,
  - c. Keywords: (italicized, no more than five
  - d. Running Head no more 50 spaces
- Copyright Page (Optional and included only if the $75/00 fee is paid)

- Committee Page (required)
  - a. Committee Members line up (right side) and signatures
  - b. Graduate Dean Line
- Dedication Page (Optional)
- Acknowledgments (Optional)
- Abstract (not to exceed 250 words)(Required)
- Contents (Required)
- List of Tables (Required if there are five or more)
- List of Figures, Charts, etc. (Required if there are five or more figure
- List of Abbreviations (Optional)
- List of Symbols (Optional)
- Text is divided into chapters designated (Chapter1: Introduction, Cha of Literature, Chapter 3: Methodology, Chapter 4: Findings, Chapter
- References conform to style manual of my discipline: APA 7th ACS, edition, IEEE
- Appendices conform to style manual of my discipline
- Curriculum Vitae (optional)
- IRB Approval (if applicable)
- CITI Certificate (if applicable)
- Instruments (if applicable)
- Letters (if applicable)

- a. Digital Copy: 1 inch top/bottom/left/right
- b. Bound Copy: 1.5 inches left, 1 inch top/bottom/right
- c. 1 space after punctuation marks. (checking 5 times throughout page

### SPACING

- All text is double spaced with no extra before or after paragraphs.
- One space after period.

### PAGINATION

- Every page should be assigned a number
- The APA Style rules direct authors to start page numbering at " top right corner of the page, flush right (APA, 2020, p. 44). The continue in that position to the last page of the document. Dec Dedication, Acknowledgements, Preface.

### MISCELLANEOUS

- There are no widows or orphans. Move any widow or orpha
- All page numbers in the Contents correspond with page num
- All citations in the text are included in the Reference section

### ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

- After a successful defense and after the requested changes a thesis/dissertation, then convert the Word file to a PDF file a State University ETD ProQuest website: https://www.etdadr bin/student/etd?siteId=52.
- Included and typed names of committee members with each on the Committee Page as page ii (second page) of your ma

### ITEMS TO SEND TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL (*After Electronic Submission*)

- Signed Report on Thesis/Dissertation Final Oral Examination (Defense)
- Degree Works approved by advisor to verify and validate programs of study.
- Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) "Certificate of Completion" (Ph.D. candidates only). Open https://sed-ncses.org/login.aspx to access the SED send to Graduate School.

I, the thesis/dissertation student have checked the manuscript for all of the above items.

Student's name (pleaseprint): _____

Signature:_____Date:_____E-mail Address:_____

I, the thesis/dissertation chair have checked the manuscript for all of the above items. I understand that I am responsible for verifying that the manuscript meets the university's academic integrity standards and the Graduate School's format and style guidelines.

Thesis/Dissertation Chair's Name (please print): _____

Signature:_____Date:_____E-mail Address_____

# Survey of Earned Doctorate

Overview of the SED: An annual census of all research doctorate recipients in the University States

❖ Eligible Research Doctoral Degrees:  A research doctorate that requires the completion of a dissertation or an equivalent culminating project (such as a musical composition)
  • Doctor of Philosophy
  • Doctor of Engineering or Engineering Science

❖ SED Cycle July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025

❖ Information on the SED:  1)  Detailed Educational History 2) Sources of financial support and student debt, 3) post graduation status and employment plans, and 4) demographic characteristics

❖ How the SED Data is Used

  • # of doctorates entering the workforce
  • Evaluate Graduate Education Programs
  • Make decisions about financial commitments that affect graduate education
  • Inform Governmental policies
  • Make labor force projections
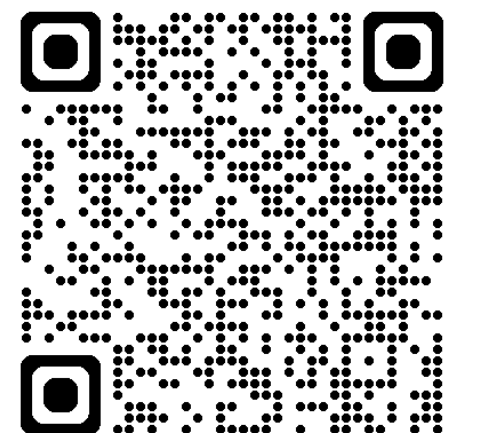
# April 10th Last day to submit Theses/Dissertations into ETD ProQuest for Spring

# START WITH COMMITTEE CHAIR

➢Responsible for assisting the student in establishing and conducting thesis/dissertation research,

➢Assisting student in identifying committee members (aligned to research)

# START WITH COMMITTEE CHAIR

➤Collaborating with committee members about:

➤ Assisting student with research proposal
  ➤ Statement of the Problem
  ➤ Review of Literature,
  ➤ Significant of Study,
  ➤ Formulation of Research Questions and/or Hypotheses,
➤ Methodology
➤ Submitting to IRB
➤ Research findings, implications, and recommendations
➤ Coordinating and convening with committee members the student's proposal defense and oral defense,
➤ Verifying originality of thesis/dissertation
➤ Ensuring approved college/department writing format (APA, MLA, IEEE. ACS)
➤➤Adherence to Graduate School Writing Format

# APPROVED WRITING FORMATS

- American Psychological Association (APA 7TH EDITION)

- Modern Language Association (MLA 9TH EDITION

- Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)

- American Chemical Society (ACS)

\*

PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR COLLEGE/DEPARTMENT FOR YOUR APPROVED FORMAT.
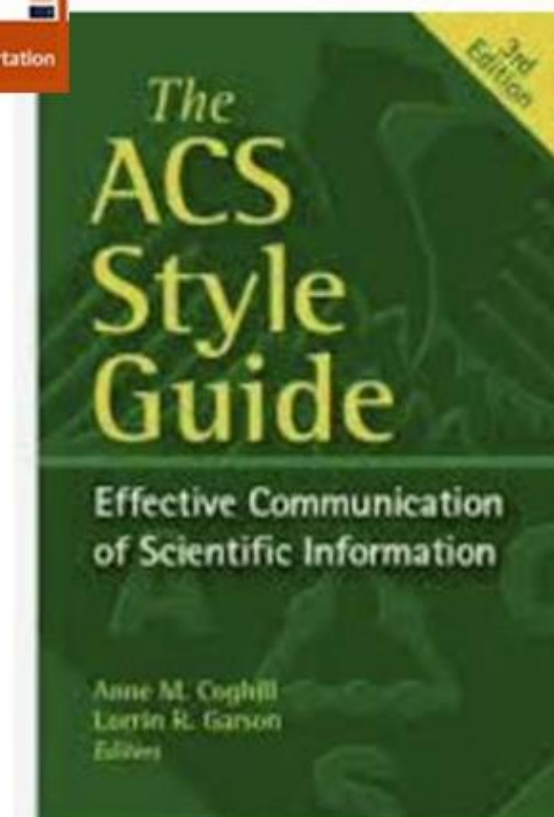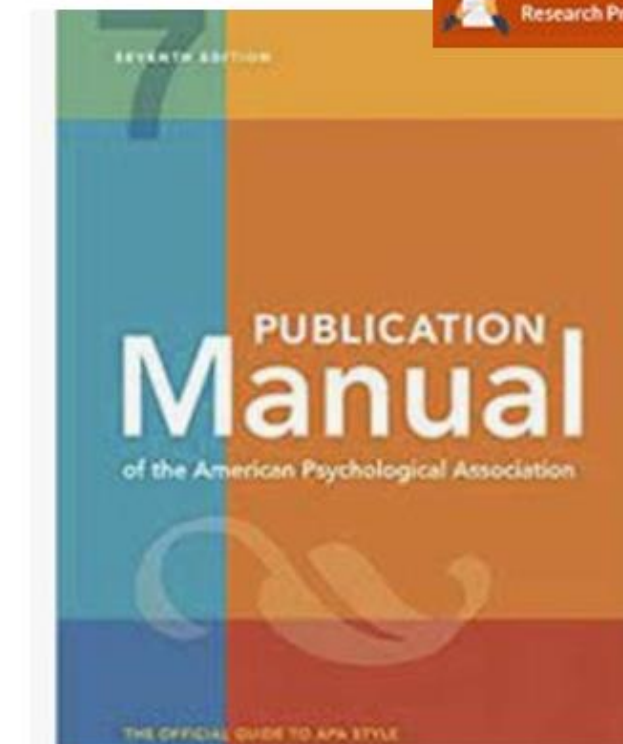
## Thesis/Dissertation Oral Defense Form

- ❏ Signature of Committee Members
- ❏ Approval or denial (if denial to identify area(s) for improvements
- ❏ Verification originality (TURNITIN, ETC)
- ❏ Adherence to *Graduate Formatting and Style Guidelines for thesis and dissertations*
- ❏ Signature of Department Chair
- ❏ Signature of College Dean
- ❏ Coordinate with you/the student any updates from the Graduate School regarding ProQuest publication and the chair resubmits to Graduate School

# BIG 10 QUALITY CHECKS

THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
2025-2026

2025-2026

## Formatting and Style Guidelines for Theses and Dissertations

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

*Think. Work. Serve.*
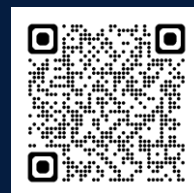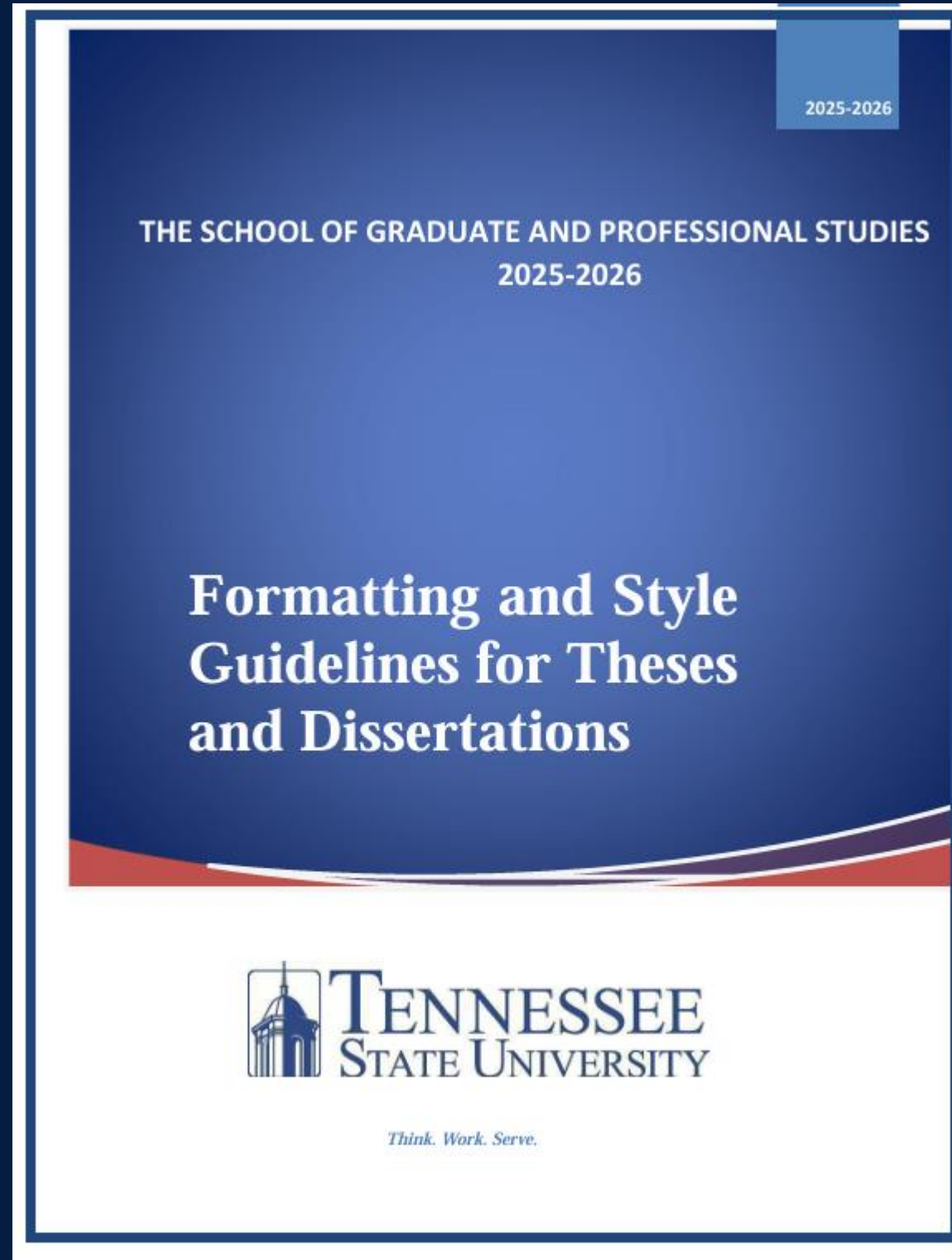
1. Title Page
2. Running Head
3. Page Numbers
4. Margins & spacing
5. Fonts
6. Abstract
7. Committee Page
8. Contents Page
9. Headings
10. Appendices

QUALITY CHECKED
QUALITY CHECKED
QUALITY CHECKED
QUALITY CHECKED

# Quality Check #1: TITLE PAGE



Running Head (one inch from top)

Title of Paper
- 2 inches from top of paper
- Title (Centered/No more than 12 words)
- *Title Case: capitalize the first word, the last word, and all major words in between.
- Capitalize the first word and if it has at least 4 or more letters regardless of it value (When, What, Which, etc.)

- Place the word Keywords on the title page
- The word keywords is bold and italicized
- The actual five words are not bold or italicized:
- no more than five words

EXAMPLE:

*Keywords*: Phonology, Semantics, Aural Rehabilitation

# Quality Check # 2. RUNNING HEAD

Thesis/Dissertation is considered a Professional Paper

**Running Head (under the 1 inch margin and flushed left)**

- An APA running head can be up to 50 characters (including spaces) and is written in **ALL CAPITAL LETTERS**.

- It's left-aligned and appears on all pages, including the **title page**.

- It's not necessary to put the label "Running head" in front of the title (as was the case in **APA 6**).



Running head
(only professional papers)

Page number

APA page header.docx

SOCIAL COMPARISONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA                    1
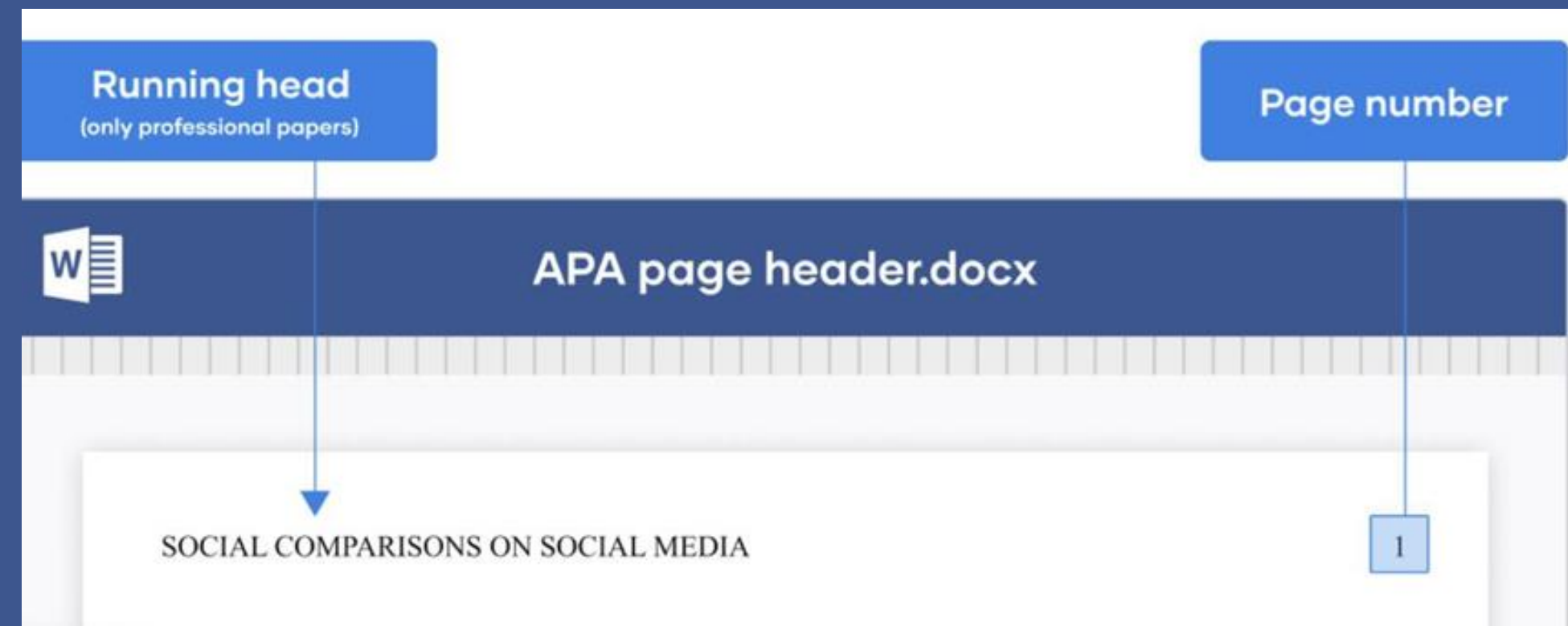
# Quality Check #3:
# PAGE NUMBERS

- NUMERIC PAGE NUMBERS (no Roman Numerals)
  - 1, 2, 3, 4 ......

ALL Pages including title pages

- Page Numbers

The APA Style rules direct authors to start page numbering at "1" on the <u>title page in the top right corner of the page, flush right</u> (APA, 2020, p. 44).
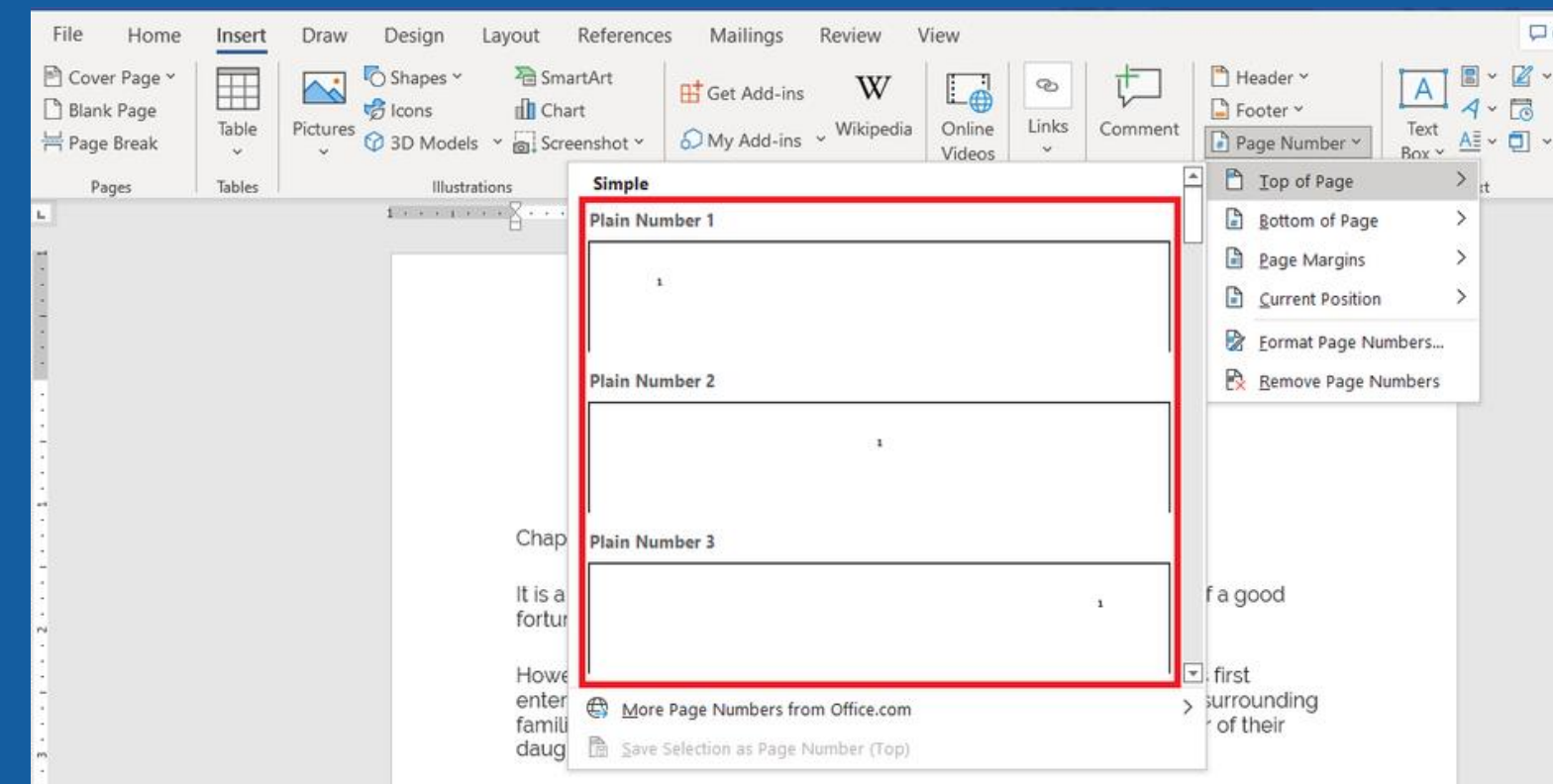
The page numbers should continue in that position to the last page of the document.

# Quality Check #4:
# MARGINS & SPACING

Margins & Spacing

- Digital Copy: 1 inch top/bottom/left/right
- Bound Copy: 1.5 inches left, 1 inch top/bottom/right

- 1 space after punctuation marks.

**Graduate School: (checking 5 times throughout page)

# Quality Check#5: FONTS

- Times New Roman 12pt

- Arial 11pt.

- Georgia 11 pt

# Quality Check#6
# ABSTRACT

**(NO MORE THAN 250 WORDS)**
**PAST TENSE NOTING RESEARCH WAS COMPLETED.**

❖ Your abstract page should already include the page header

❖ On the first line of the abstract page, center the word "Abstract" (no bold, formatting, italics, underlining, or quotation marks).

❖ Beginning with the next line, write a concise summary of the key points of your research. (Do not indent.)

❖ Your abstract should contain at least your research topic, research questions, participants, methods, results, data analysis, and conclusions.

❖ You may also include possible implications of your research and future work you see connected with your findings.

### Abstract

This guide addressed the common challenges faced by graduate students in formatting theses and dissertations, specifically focusing on the inconsistency in adherence to institutional guidelines, as many students struggled with the complexities of formatting requirements, leading to delays in submission and potential rejections. To investigate this issue, a qualitative study was conducted involving surveys and interviews with 100 graduate students across various disciplines, and the findings revealed that 75% of participants reported confusion regarding formatting standards, particularly in citation styles and document structure. In response, this guide provided a comprehensive framework for formatting theses and dissertations, offering clear instructions on essential components such as title pages, acknowledgements, tables of contents, and reference lists, while emphasizing the importance of consistent style, font, margins, and pagination. Additionally, practical tips for organizing content, structuring chapters, and presenting data through tables and figures were included to ensure visual appeal and ease of navigation, with examples and templates illustrating best practices to make it easier for students to apply these concepts to their work. Ultimately, by following this formatting guide, students enhanced the readability and professionalism of their theses and dissertations, improving their chances of successful submission; this resource aimed not only to empower scholars to present their research effectively but also to foster a greater appreciation for the rigor and creativity inherent in the research process.

# Quality Check #7 COMMITTEE PAGE

❑ Committee Members line up (right side) and signatures

❑ Be mindful to include the correct degree (Ph.D., Ed.D., M.S., etc.) for your committee members

❑ Graduate Dean Line

# Quality Check # 8: CONTENTS PAGE

## Contents Page

- ❖ No word 'Table' only Contents (centered, bold)

- ❖ Headings and Subheadings

- ❖ Page Numbering

- ❖ Graduate School will conduct a (5) random check of page numbers verification with pages)

- ❖ You should have a 'Table Page' (if you have more than 5 tables)

- ❖ You should have a 'Figure Page' (if you have more than 5 figures)

# Quality Check # 9: HEADINGS

The Graduate School will be reviewing the headings for the appropriate format (which may vary)

- **APA 7TH EDITION**
    - American Psychological Association

- **MLA 9TH EDITION**
    - Modern Language Association

- **IEEE**
    - Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers

- **ACS**
    - American Chemical Society
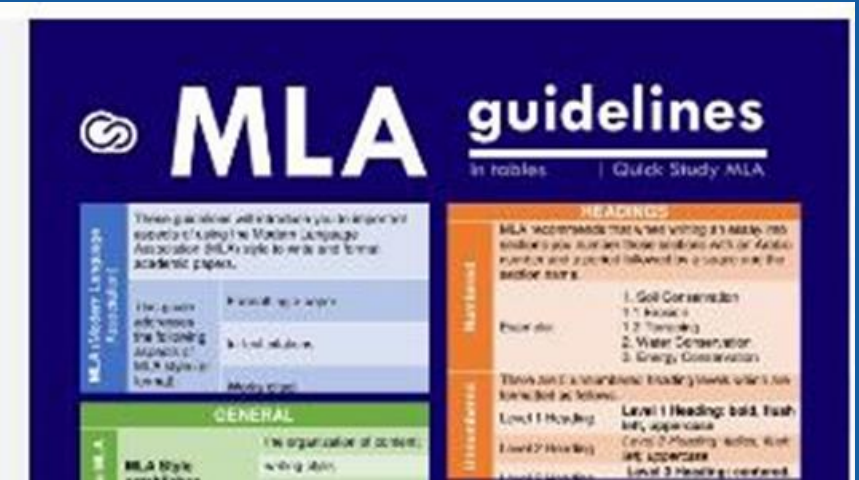




| Level | Format |
|---|---|
| 1 | Centered, Boldface, Title Case Heading<br>Text starts a new paragraph. |
| 2 | Flush left, Boldface, Title Case Heading<br>Text starts a new paragraph. |
| 3 | *Flush Left, Boldface Italic, Title Case Heading*<br>Text starts a new paragraph. |
| 4 | **Indented, Boldface Title Case Heading Ending With a Period.** Paragraph text continues on the same line as the same paragraph. |
| 5 | *Indented, Boldface Italic, Title Case Heading Ending With a Period.* Paragraph text continues on the same line as the same paragraph. |



| Level | IEEE Heading Format |
|---|---|
| 1 | I. CENTERED, SMALL CAPS, TITLE CASE<br>Text begins on a new line (first line indented). |
| 2 | A. Left-Aligned, italicized, Title Case<br>Text begins on a new line (first line indented). |
| 3 | 1) Indented, italicized, sentence case: Text begins on the same line. |
| 4 | a) indented further, italicized, sentence case: Text begins on the same line. |
| Component | CENTERED, SMALL CAPS, TITLE CASE<br>Text begins on a new line (first line indented). |

# REFERENCE PAGE

# Quality Check # 10: APPENDICES

**Appendices**

**[bold and centered]**

If there is only one appendix, then there is no need for the single page titled Appendices **Reference APA 7th Edition page 41 Section.**

**Appendix A**

**Curriculum Vitae**

A curriculum vitae (CV) is a short account of one's academic history, career and qualifications prepared typically for a job, grants, publication submissions, professional presentations, etc.

# Quality Check # 10: APPENDICES CONT.

- IRB
  - Institutional Review Board
- CITI Certificate
  - Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative
    - *Copy of Instrument/Survey*

## CITI Certificate

**CITI** Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

**Basic Learner Instructions**

The following are basic learner instructions to logon to your CITI site for the first time.

- User should be instructed to go to www.citiprogram.org to register for CITI online training.
- Once there, they simply click on "New Users Register Here".
- Under "Select your institution or organization" page they should select your institution in the "Participating Institutions" drop down box.
- Next they should proceed to create their own username and password and select the Learner group.
- After going through registration process they should be ready and setup as CITI Learners under your Institution setup requirements.

The file: (Steps to registering with CITI.ppt) will also help you and the users of your institution to register with CITI for the first time

Additionally, our knowledgebase is an excellent source of information.

Please contact citisupport@med.miami.edu in case of any question.

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### IRB Approval

**Step 1: You MUST complete the on-line CITI Training.** There is no cost to TSU students and faculty. Here is the link: https ://www.citiprogram.org. Make sure you save your certificate on your computer.

**Step 2: You'll need to determine whether to submit an EXEMPT or a non-EXEMPT application.** See the checklist below to help you determine the type of review for your Application Packet. You'll need to have a clear understanding of the research activities and population involved before making this decision. If you're still not sure after completing the checklists, please contact IRB Administration at irb@tnstate.edu.

- Checklist - Determination of Exemption from IRB Review
- Checklist - Determination of Expedited IRB Review
- Informed Consent Document

**Step 3: Complete the IRB Application and Assemble the Application Packet.** Start your IRB Application by completing the survey located at the following address: https://tnstateu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3ga0a2dKuFrRGHX ; This will provide basic information regarding your protocol. An Application Packet must be assembled and must be submitted electronically for review (irb@tnstate.edu). All instruments used to collect data, including list of interview questions and the actual surveys, should be included in the IRB Application Packet along with your training certificate. Letters of Cooperation and Letters of Permission should be typed on institutional letterhead and scanned to you computer. If your research involves collecting data at another institution or in partnership with another institution, you should include documentation.

- IRB Application

Your IRB Application Packet, when finished, should include one copy of each of the following:

- Human Subjects Form (2019) - Standard or IRB Form - Exempt (Non-Human Only)

# FIGURE EXAMPLE

# TABLES

**Number** | **Table 1**

**Title** | *Departments' Formal Requirements for Students to Learn About Graduate School in Psychology*

| Answer | % | n |
|---|---|---|
| No formal requirements | 47.9 | 78 |
| Completion of a psychology careers course or module | 35.6 | 58 |
| Required meeting with a department advisor | 25.2 | 41 |
| Other | 4.9 | 7 |
| Required attendance at a presentation on psychology careers | 4.3 | 4 |
| Required meeting with an advisor from outside the department | 1.2 | 2 |
| Unsure | 0.6 | 1 |

Body (rows and columns)

**Note (optional)** | *Note.* The survey item read as follows: "What format requirements does your department have for students to learn about [Screenshot] school in psychology? Check all that apply."

# COMPONENTS OF DISSERTATION

- Title
- Copy Right (optional) *Included only if the fee is paid $75.) Committee Page (required)
- Dedication Page (optional) Acknowledgements (optional)
- Abstract (required)
- Contents
- List of Tables (if more than 5)

- List of Figures (if more than 5)
- List of Illustrations (if more than 5)
- List of Abbreviation (it more than 5) List of Symbols (optional)
- Chapter 1: Introduction Chapter 2: Review of Literature
- Chapter 3: Methodology
- Chapter 4: Findings

- Chapter 5: Conclusion
- References
- Appendices Curriculum Vita
  - IRB Approval (if applicable)
  - CITI Certificate (if applicable)
  - Instrument (if applicable)
  - Letters (if applicable)

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **APA 7th Edition**

- **Literature Review APA 7th**

- **Section Headings APA 7th**

- **Citations APA 7th**

- **Purdue Online Writing Lab. (n.d.). APA Tables and Figures. Purdue Online Writing Lab.**

- **APA 7th Edition**

- **APA 7th Edition for Tables and Figures**

- **ProQuest Submission**

- **Survey of Earned Doctorates**

# THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

3500 John A. Merritt Blvd.

Nashville, TN  37209

615-963-5448

trespress@tnstate.edu