CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

THE DIVISION OF GRADUATE STUDIES

THESIS OFFICE

The following template was developed for students using Microsoft Word to format their master’s degree theses to conform to the publication requirements of the California State University, Fresno *Guidelines for Thesis Preparation*. Any use beyond the intended is prohibited, without permission of the Division of Graduate Studies.

Questions? Please contact:

Debbie Neufeld

278-2448

To the student: This template has been redesigned to include an automatic Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures. Also, while it is understood that you and your committee have the primary oversight on the content of your thesis, you will also find text in blue at the beginning of each chapter. This text is meant to give general guidance relative to the State of California’s Title 5 Education Code and its criteria for a thesis.

If you are using APA style documentation, please download the APA 7th Chapter template. Then, make sure you follow all guidelines according to APA. For additional information and resources, see either the APA Style Manual 7th edition or access the [online APA resources](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines). These guidelines apply to citations and the reference list as well as rendering of numbers (words vs. numerals), formatting of figures and tables, use of abbreviations, plus much more.

ABSTRACT

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Start typing the abstract text *(thesis text)* here. The abstract should fit on one page. A blank guard sheet should follow. Neither of these pages receives a page number, and neither is considered part of the thesis proper. For further information on the contents of the Abstract, consult the Division of Graduate Studies *Guidelines for Thesis Preparation.*

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by

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A thesis

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Note: The Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures are automatic. There is no need to type anything into them. When you have finished adding all text to the template, simply single-click in the Table of Contents to select it, then right-click to open the menu options. Select the option “Update Field” and fill in the circle “Update Entire Table,” then click “OK.” If you have applied the appropriate style (e.g., 1st-Level Centered Hdg) to your headings in the text, headings and page numbers will update in the TOC without you having to do anything. Delete this text box when you are finished.

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SECTION TITLE

Typically, section 1 is where you introduce the problem and its background. Per the Title 5 Education Code, this is where you might “clearly identify the problem, state the major assumptions, [and] explain the significance of the undertaking.” Consult with your committee when crafting the introductory section of your thesis. It is likely that you will want to simply title section 1, INTRODUCTION.

First-Level Heading: Include Only First-Level Headings in Your Table of Contents

Return to *thesis text* style for the next textual block of material. Be sure to review the Headings section in the *Guidelines* for further important considerations.

Side Headings too Long for One Line Are Placed on Two or More Lines

The template returns to *thesis text* style, takes the spacing back to the normal 24-point line spacing mode.

A third-level paragraph heading. For a third-level subdivision, select *3rd-level paragraph hdg* from the style box. The text will continue immediately after the heading, in normal fashion. [[1]](#footnote-1)

TITLES THAT ARE MORE THAN ONE LINE ARE SINGLE-SPACED, INVERTED PYRAMID IN TEXT

Typically, section 2 is the literature review portion of your thesis. Per the Title 5 Education Code, this is where you might critically analyze the body of literature relevant to your central research question or questions. You might identify gaps in the literature and indicate how your study fills one or more of those gaps. This is where you might exhibit Title 5’s standard for “originality” and “critical and independent thinking.” This is also the place where you might best evidence Title 5’s requirement for “accurate and thorough documentation.” Ensure here that your sources are both *current* and *credible*. Consult with your committee when crafting the literature review section of your thesis. It is likely that you will want to simply title section 2, LITERATURE REVIEW.

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SECTION TITLE

Typically, section 3 is the methodology portion of your thesis. Per the Title 5 Education Code, this is where you might identify the “methods of gathering information.” Perhaps you elicited responses through an original survey or you tested samples over the course of several trials in a laboratory. This is the section where you might craft the “blueprint” of the steps used in your study, providing later researchers the ability to replicate your work. Consult with your committee when crafting the methodology section of your thesis. It is likely that you will want to simply title section 3, METHODOLOGY or METHODS AND MATERIALS.

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SECTION TITLE

Typically, section 4 is the results portion of your thesis. Per the Title 5 Education Code, this is where you might analyze your own data and then present your original findings. Often, this presentation is in the form of tables and/or figures. Included in this template are samples of each, along with how the text should appear before and after such renderings. Consult with your committee when crafting the results section of your thesis. It is likely that you will want to simply title section 4, RESULTS or RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

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First-Level Heading

When presenting tables and figures, you must always reference them in the text, oftentimes through a parenthetical like this (see Table 1). Alternatively, you can reference the table or figure in a sentence like this: “Table 1 shows the scales used and the standard deviations for each variable.” The table or figure must follow as closely as possible *after* the paragraph in which it is referenced. Use the “Table Title” style for the title, as shown below.

Table 1. Table Titles Above Tables and Keep Them Brief, Capitalizing All Major Words

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Scale | Introversion | Extroversion | Peculiarity |
| SPG | .77 | .45 | .12 |
| AIG | .43 | .89 | .34 |
| TRF | .78 | -.34 | .45 |
| XYZ | -.03 | -23 | -.56 |
| PDQ | .09 | .89 | -.09 |

Continue typing after the table and run text to the bottom margin of the page. Use the style called “thesis text after table or figure,” which adds one line space above first line after table.

Remember to change the style back to “thesis text” when you start a new paragraph after the one following a table or figure. Again, continue text to the bottom margin of the page. You may have another reference in here to a table or figure. The example on the next page is a figure more than one-half page in size. Therefore, it resides on a page by itself (see Figure 1). Use the “Figure caption” style for the caption.



Figure 1. Figure captions below figures, capitalizing only the first word and any proper noun or adjective; like table titles, keep figure captions brief.

SECTION TITLE

Typically, section 5 offers a conclusion or recommendation, which is required per the Title 5 Education Code. Here, you might indicate what specifically has been derived from your research and offer future researchers recommendations for how the work might be expanded. Consult with your committee when crafting the conclusion section of your thesis. It is likely that you will want to simply title section 5, CONCLUSION.

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Side Headings too Long for One Line Are Placed on Two or More Lines

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REFERENCES (WORKS CITED, OR SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY)

REFERENCES (WORKS CITED, OR SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY)

(Begin typing your reference list here. Check your style sheet for the correct format of how author names, dates, journal titles, etc. should appear. For this list, use a hanging indent, single spaces within each entry, and double spaces between entries. To convert to this style, highlight your entries and switch to the *References* style in the style box.)

(The second entry will appear on this line in the list after pressing the return key, repeating the hanging indent style . . .)

(Unlike the first page of your references, the second page of the reference list will show a page number in the upper right-hand corner. Use *Page Layout* or *Print Preview* to see this.)

APPENDICES

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1. This is the first footnote that appears in the text, formatted with first line indent, single spaced. There is a double space (24 points) to the next note. The font is 2 points smaller than the text. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)