

Final Project Processes

Most USI graduate programs require some form of final graduate project. Thesis and capstone projects have established university processes and procedures. Capstone projects tend to be academic scholarship that is more applied, community-centered, or practice-oriented than traditional thesis projects. However, for any final project that requires the collection of data from human subjects, the project must be pre-approved by the USI Institutional Review Board. Failure to obtain IRB approval for any project involving human subjects can result in serious academic and legal consequences. For more information on conducting research using human subjects and IRB training, please visit [http://www.usi.edu/ospra/institutional-review-board-\(irb\)](http://www.usi.edu/ospra/institutional-review-board-(irb)). For details on authoring Master's theses and capstone projects, please visit: <http://www.usi.edu/graduatestudies/graduate-studies-forms>.

The university-wide processes for submitting thesis and capstone projects at USI are as follows:

- The content of the master's thesis and/or capstone project report is the responsibility of the student and research committee. Colleges and/or departments may choose the style manual appropriate to their individual fields; most use MLA or APA. A copy of any other approved manual must be supplied to the Office of Graduate Studies. ***Before turning in the thesis/project report, students should ensure that the thesis/project guidelines they are following are the most recent version.***
- *The student is responsible for fulfilling all requirements in the preparation, submission, and distribution of the thesis or project report.* The following guidelines explain the required submission procedure. Please read carefully so that delay and confusion may be minimized.
 - The thesis/project report should be presented to the thesis/project committee for editing and revisions, including but not limited to, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and adherence to graduate studies thesis/project report guidelines.
 - The student creates an Acceptance Page (see Sample B) when the thesis/project is defended. All committee members should sign the Acceptance Page. The Acceptance Page is **NOT** the same as the Thesis/Project Routing Form. You **cannot** substitute the Routing Form for the Acceptance Page. **All original signatures must be on the original Acceptance Page. Blue ink is strongly recommended.** The Acceptance Page is bound in the official thesis/project report.
 - All revisions suggested by the thesis committee must be made before the thesis/project report is submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies.
 - Submit one copy of the laser-printed final draft thesis/project report with a copy of the Acceptance Page and the Thesis Review Contact Information Sheet to the Office of Graduate Studies for review by the Thesis Editor.
 - The Thesis Editor from the Office of Graduate Studies will review the thesis/project report for adherence to required format and basic spelling and grammar. The Thesis Editor may take up to four weeks to proofread the thesis/project report and contact the student.

- If corrections are required, the student will pick up the list of corrections from the Office of Graduate Studies. **These corrections will not be mailed, faxed, or emailed.** Students can include a postage-paid envelope to have the corrections sent to them *if they are unable to pick up the corrections. These arrangements must be made at the time of draft submission.* The student will correct the thesis/project report and resubmit the final thesis/project report to the Office of Graduate Studies.
- When the Thesis Editor has approved the thesis/project report, the student will complete section A of the Thesis or Capstone Project Report Routing Form and get the major advisor to sign it. The student will print one original of the thesis/project report on quality paper and make appropriate copies of the entire thesis/project report, including an Acceptance Page in each. **The Office of Graduate Studies is not responsible for making these copies.** (See the binding instructions from the Rice Library for information about copies and fees for binding.)
- The student will return the following items to the Office of Graduate Studies: (a) The final approved original Thesis/Report; (b) the Acceptance Page with original signatures; (c) the Routing Form with Section A completed; (d) all exact copies of the original to be bound for personal use; and (e) a check or money order for the binding fee (payable to USI; the binding fee is \$15 for the original and \$15 for each personal bound copy). The student is strongly urged to make an appointment to submit these items to the Office of Graduate Studies.
- The director of Graduate Studies will check the submission for completeness and sign and distribute the Routing Form. The Office of Graduate Studies will forward the original thesis and all copies for binding to the Rice Library with the binding fee.

The university-wide **mechanics** for submitting thesis and capstone projects at USI are as follows:

- *Type Style.* Times New Roman (12 point).
- *Paper.* The original (after approved by the Committee and Graduate Studies Office) must be printed on 100% cotton fiber content, 8 ½ x 11 white bond paper.
- *Spacing.* All typing should be double spaced throughout with exception to: inset quotation, footnote, tabular form, and bibliography.
- *Margins.* Left margin must be 1.5 inches to allow for binding. Make top, bottom, and right margins 1-inch. These margins should be used on all pages and right-hand margin should be kept as uniform as possible without right justify. Do not use running heads in the text. Paragraphs should be tab indented. Long quotations should be indented five spaces on the left, right, and an additional five spaces to indicate paragraphs within the quote.
- *Illustrative Material.* Special care should be given to the preparation of tables, charts, pictures, and graphs. Large foldouts should be placed in the appendix. Illustrative

material may be reproduced by typing, computer graphics, lettering with black ink, photographing, or other permanent duplicating processes. Be sure to give proper credit to any reference used.

- *Numbering.* Page numbers should be placed in the upper right corner of the page, except for pages with major headings (the first page of chapter, etc.), which should be numbered at the center bottom of the page. Preliminary pages (abstract, acknowledgement, table of contents, list of tables and list of figures, etc.) are numbered with lower case Roman numerals centered at the bottom of the page beginning with iii. The title and Acceptance pages are not numbered but are considered as page one and two in a series. The text and subsequent parts are given cardinal numbers.
- *Parts of the Thesis or Project.* The pages should be arranged in the following order.
 - First fly-leaf (blank sheet).
 - Title page (do not number). The month at the bottom can be only May or December.
 - Acceptance page.
 - Abstract, not to exceed 350 words.
 - Acknowledgements.
 - Table of Contents.
 - List of illustrations.
 - Text.
 - Appendix.
 - Bibliography.
 - Last fly-leaf.

Note: If using APA style manual, the appendices should be placed after the bibliography if no references are used in any of the appendices.

Completion of the thesis or project is the student's responsibility. Neither the Office of Graduate Studies nor a final project committee is obligated to finalize the document. ***Students are strongly encouraged NOT to leave the Evansville area until Graduate Studies has given final clearance of the thesis/project report and degree.*** Any incompletes (for thesis/project research hours or other course work) must be taken care of by the student and thesis/project director or appropriate faculty member. No degree will be awarded until all grade changes have been processed in the Registrar's Office. Graduating students need to complete and submit a "Formal Application for Graduation" (including all applicable signatures) and Diploma Form to the Office of the Registrar two semesters before you complete degree requirements.