**Mini Guide to Formatting the ALM Thesis in Social Sciences**

Last revised July 19, 2016

**Preliminaries**

Before you type anything into your thesis file, turn points before and after to 0 (zero). In Word, you can do this by clicking on “Format” on the toolbar. On the dropdown menu, click on “Paragraph”, and then under “Spacing” there are two boxes preceded by “Before” and “After”. Make sure the numbers in those boxes are 0 (zero). That will ensure that your line spacing is what you intend it to be and not what Word thinks it should be.

**Front Matter**

The materials preceding the text are collectively known as the **front matter**. There are precise requirements for the format and sequence of the front matter in theses. With the exception of the title page and blank page, all headings for these pages must be formatted in a consistent manner, with each occurring 1½ inches from the top of the page. After each heading, quadruple space and start your text.

All theses begin with a **title page**, followed by a **blank page (**also known as the **copyright page)**, and then the **abstract page**, on which appears a summary of the whole thesis. These first three pages are unnumbered but counted in the pagination. Thus, in the following order and on separate pages, there appear:

1. title page
2. blank page (includes copyright)
3. abstract

*front matter pages above are NOT numbered; front matter pages below ARE numbered*

1. optional frontispiece
2. author’s optional biographical sketch
3. optional dedication
4. optional acknowledgments
5. table of contents
6. list of tables
7. list of figures

Pages four through nine of the front matter are counted in the pagination and numbered consecutively with lower-case Roman numerals centered at the bottom of the page, beginning with “iv” for the first page after the abstract.

If the student wishes to **copyright** the thesis, the statement “Copyright YYYY Author’s Name” (but reproduced without quotation marks and using the current year) should appear at the bottom of the blank page, item ii in the list above. Or the word “Copyright” may be replaced by an upper-case “C” within a circle ©, followed by the date and the full, legal name of the author. Do not print a page number on the copyright page. It is understood to be page ii for counting purposes only.

On the **title page**, which is entirely double-spaced, the title of the work appears two inches from the top, in appropriate upper-case and lower-case letters. The author’s name, including initials, appears centered on the page, 2 ½ inches below the top of the first line of the title (the title may, in some cases, require 2 lines). A standard statement concerning the field of concentration appears 2 inches below the author’s name. The name of the university and the author’s date of graduation appear one inch below the field of concentration with the last line showing the date, 2 ½ inches from the bottom of the page. Nothing on the title page is underlined or typed in boldface. The date is always November, March, or May depending upon the time of graduation.

The **abstract** is typically a one-page, double-spaced summary, although a second page is also acceptable. An outline of the thesis is not a satisfactory substitute for the abstract. As in the research proposal, the abstract asks and answers a question. If the rest of the thesis were missing, the abstract could stand alone as a summary of the research, and would be comprehensible to a reader unfamiliar with the text. The abstract presents a succinct overview of the thesis in the following order:

1. the hypothesis or basic goal of the project
2. the relevant background
3. the research methods employed
4. the chief results
5. the author’s overall conclusion(s)

**The optional biographical sketch** is written in the third person (e.g., “The author is a YYYY is a graduate of the University of Chicago . . .” or “John Wilson Davies is a native of South Dakota”) and includes whatever personal data you deem interesting or relevant. In some cases, the information establishes the scholarly expertise of the writer. The sketch should not be used as an advertisement for your company or place of employment (e.g., John Wilson Davies works at Genzyme, which recently developed a drug that will rid the world of the common cold.)

**The heading for the table of contents** should be typed 1 double space from the top margin (i.e., 1½ inch from the top of the page), with quadruple spacing (i.e., two double spaces) before the first line of text. The table of contents is entirely double-spaced.

**Each chapter title** should appear exactly as it does in the text, using upper- and lower-case with no underlining or boldface. **Each a-head** should be indented ½ inch in from the left margin under its numbered chapter title. **Each b-head** should be indented an additional ½ inch in from the a-head under the preceding a-head, and so on.

The number of the beginning page should be indicated in each instance, connected to the title by a continuous line of spaced periods with no gap between the last period and the page number.

Page numbers should be exactly aligned. (It may be necessary to produce the table of contents as a separate document in order to achieve exactly aligned page numbers.) If a lengthy chapter title requires two lines, the second line of the title should be aligned under the first word of the title. The first line of the title should be extended nearly to the right margin before the title drops to the second line; the spaced periods and page number occur on the second line of the title. No words should appear directly above or below the column where the aligned page numbers occur.

The **list of tables** and **list of figures** should follow the format of the table of contents. Each table or figure should be numbered consecutively, given a title or other appropriate legend, and the page number on which each table or figure occurs. The title is connected to the page number by a line of continuous spaced periods.

**Headings**

If the completed thesis can be readily reduced to an outline, it is probably well organized. A question then arises concerning the use of this outline to form headings. To what extent, if any, should the thesis contain major and minor headings to guide the reader? The answer will vary with the different fields, specific research problems, and the investigator’s inclination.

The ALM thesis is divided into **chapters**. The word “Chapter” and its upper-cased Roman numeral are centered and typed one double space from the top margin. The chapter title is also centered and placed, with one double space, directly under the word “Chapter” and its Roman numeral. A new chapter always begins on a new page. If the chapter title is more than one line long, it should be double-spaced. After the chapter title, two double spaces precede the text. The chapter title uses upper-case and lower-case letters, with no underlining or boldface.

In some theses the chapters are subdivided, and each subdivision is marked with its own heading. The headings for the major subdivisions, equivalents so to speak of the capital-letter divisions of an outline, are called a-heads; subsections of these rubrics (equivalent to the Arabic-numeral divisions of an outline) are called b-heads; and subsections of these (equivalent to the lower-case-letter divisions of an outline) are called c-heads:

(A) The **a-heads** are centered using upper-case and lower-case, with the usual double spacing after the heading.

(B) The **b-heads**, also upper-case and lower-case with double spacing below, appear flush to the left margin.

(C) The **c-heads** are run-on heads, beginning a paragraph. They appear in lower-case, except for the first letter, and they are followed by a period. The c-heads must be italicized in order to separate them from the rest of the paragraph. C-heads are not indented.

When beginning a new section within a chapter, quadruple space before the a-head or the b-head. There is no extra spacing before the c-head, which consists simply of a few words at the start of a paragraph, underlined or italicized, and followed by a period. Please note that these headings are not interchangeable units; they must be used in sequence: first a-heads; then, if necessary, b-heads; and finally, c-heads, each group of which represents a subdivision of a preceding rubric. The text should be double-spaced throughout.

In no instance should headings appear consecutively without interspersed text. After the chapter title, for example, there should be some introduction to the first a-head. After an a-head, there should be some general introductory statements before any b-head appears. The issue here is successful transitions, which are a mark of clear and careful writing. Without such transitions, the presentation becomes an outline. Nor should a subhead appear at the bottom of a page without any text after it on that page. Kick it over to the top of the next page Note as well that all subheadings appearing in the thesis must appear exactly as they do in the table of contents and that they must be formatted accordingly. Below are sample chapter, a-, b- and c-headings headings:

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(1 double space from top margin, or 1.5" total)

Chapter III

Review of U.S. Foreign Policy during the Cold War **[chapter]**

Quadruple spacing precede the chapter text

President Reagan welcomed the fall of the Berlin Wall… (several lines of double-spaced  
  
text must follow the **Chapter** heading – no consecutive heads allowed and no page number

appears on the first page of each chapter)

Quadruple spacing precede a-heads

Prisoner’s Dilemma in Game Theory **[a-head]**

When participants are pitted against each other in a zero sum game… (again, several   
  
lines of double-spaced text must follow all headings)

Quadruple spacing precede b-heads

Computer Simulation. **[b-head]**

The computer can be used to simulate a completion… (again, several lines of double-  
  
spaced text must follow all headings)

*Use of computers*. **[c-head]** In a broad sense, computer programs are used for two general  
  
purposes…. (*italics* in c-heads, but are not used in the TOC; note the text continues directly after the c-head plus a period; note also that double spacing, not quadruple spacing precedes c-headings)

**Text of the Thesis**

Each page in the body of the thesis is numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals, following the formatting explained under “Margins and Pagination.” Double line spacing is expected throughout the manuscript (note that footnotes or endnotes and bibliography are spaced differently from the text [see below]). All new paragraphs must be indented ½ inch from the left margin, with no additional spacing between paragraphs. Typeface must be 12-point font for the text and no smaller than 10-point font for the notes. Times New Roman is preferred. Full justiﬁcation of the text is not recommended. Students should take care that the same style of font and typeface that appears in the main body of the text is also used in all headers, page numbers, footnotes, and bibliography.

Single line spacing is acceptable in those few instances where it may improve readability, as in long bibliographic entries, long quotations (more than four typed lines), and extensive ﬁgure captions. Introduce the quotation with a sentence, typically followed by a colon; then double-space before beginning the quotation. In order to distinguish them visually from ordinary new-paragraph indentions, long quotations are indented ½ inch from the left-hand margin.

The first line of all **footnotes** and **endnotes** should be indented ½ inch with single line spacing within each note and double line spacing between notes. Lengthy quotes (four or more lines) need to be indented 1 inch without quotation marks around them. Because of indentation, these quotes are redundant. Do not include the source of these quotes in the text itself (following the quote); rather the source should be identified in a footnote or endnote.

Notes, headings, references, bibliographic entries, and all other mechanics must be presented in a consistent manner throughout the thesis. Unless the thesis is being prepared for publication in a journal that uses a particular notational style, students must use CMS footnote style of citation. Students should be attentive to all of the details involved in correctly citing sources, from the arrangement of the required items of information to their proper spacing. The successful thesis always shows careful attention to these details.

Manuscripts that follow a CMS approach employ Arabic numerals for citations, notes, cross-references, and other documentation. These numerals appear as superscripts, elevated above the text and following the ﬁnal punctuation. They begin with the number 1 and continue consecutively throughout each chapter or throughout the entire manuscript. If the thesis is short, it is preferable to number notes consecutively throughout the manuscript. To use the documentation, the reader consults the relevant note.

**Use of Tables, Figures, and Other Displays**

In some cases, tabular, graphic, and other types of displays are useful in the presentation. These should be placed as soon as conveniently possible after the first mention of the data in the text. If they are small, they may appear on the same page; if large, the next full page may be appropriate. They may be placed on a page with no text above or below, or they may be placed directly into the text. If a table or figure is alone on a page (with no narrative), it should be centered within the margins of the page.

However, if there are many tables or figures, they are sometimes presented in an appendix following the text of the thesis, if inserting them into the text would be too disruptive or distracting. They may not be placed at the end of the chapter. If they appear on the same page with the text, quadruple space (i.e., double space twice) both before and after the table or figure to clearly distinguish it from the text (see next page).

All tables or figures interleaved with text should be counted in the pagination, but page numbers need not necessarily be typed on these pages if they interfere with the display. A consistent method must be followed throughout, however, either typing page numbers on all these pages or omitting them. If placing page numbers on the page, they appear in the same “portrait” orientation as the other pages in the text, regardless of the orientation of the

table or figure.

The purpose of these displays is to amplify but not to repeat the text. The text should indicate the main points of the topic in question; further details are presented in the display. Whether a table or figure, it should include a number, title, and legend (i.e., a description or explanatory caption). The legend should be placed at the bottom of the figure. The heading for a table should be placed at the top of the table. Figure and table numbering must be either continuous throughout the thesis or by chapter (e.g., 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2).

Horizontal figures and tables (i.e., those landscaped onto the page) must be positioned correctly and bound at the top, so that the top of the figure or table will be at the left margin. Figure and table headings/captions are placed with the same orientation as the figure or table when on the same page. When on a separate page, headings/captions are always placed in vertical orientation, regardless of the orientation of the figure or table. CMS wants captions to be written with sentence-style capitalization.

Illustrations of all kinds should be positioned to fit vertically on the page (“portrait” layout). Large tables may be positioned horizontally, if necessary (“landscape” layout). In this case, page numbers must be omitted from all pages containing illustrations.

If all of the data are already contained in the text, a table is superfluous.

Amid the diversity of displays today, and with the continually increasing capabilities for typesetting, the longtime distinction between tables, which were typeset, and figures, which were not, has changed. Tables are simply textual or numerical material, while figures are graphic or pictorial.

Each **table or figure** must be connected with a specific portion of the text in systematic fashion, and labeled with sufficient clarity to be understood independently of the text description. This keying or reference commonly occurs in parentheses at the end of the sentence, like any other reference. Thus it is available to the interested reader, but it does not interfere with the flow of the text, as in the example of this sentence (Table 1).

The basic rule is to use titles and headings that are not cumbersome but sufficient in length to be informative. Tables should be numbered serially throughout the thesis or by chapter.

Illustrations in a thesis may consist of line drawings, graphs, maps, photographs, facsimiles of manuscript pages, works of art, musical scores, or other types of displays. These are acceptable, as long as the media used to produce them (paper, inks, digital printing processes, traditional photographic processes, and adhesives) are permanent. Figures can be numbered serially throughout the thesis or by chapter.

All displays should include a figure number, title, and legend. Images such as art works taken from books may be in several formats, two of which are shown below. Again, you should be consistent in the method you select to present your images. The entire bibliographical reference for the work from which the image was taken is not included in the legend

but is cited in the bibliography; the last name of the author and the title of the book are sufficient. Each page containing an illustration should be counted in the pagination.

**Line drawings** or any other hand-lettered illustrations or labels must be done in India or other permanent black ink or reproduced by offset printing on high-quality paper consistent with the other pages of the thesis.

**Photographs** included in the thesis may be originals or maximum-quality photocopies. Original black-and-white photographs should undergo “archival” or “optimum” processing to ensure reasonable permanency. Original color photographs should not be used since they are impermanent; however, color xerographic reproductions are acceptable.

**Other types of illustrations** such as maps, manuscript pages, musical scores, or autographs should be presented or reproduced in accordance with the specifications outlined above for the use of photographs, fine arts prints, and original drawings. They can be photographically or digitally reproduced or off set printed.

Reduction and Enlargement. When drawings need reduction or enlargement, the author should make sure that the scale chosen will allow at least one-inch margins on each of the three open sides of the page and 1½-inch on the binding side. In addition, space should be left for page and figure numbers, and for a legend if one is to be typed beneath the figure.

**End Matter**

Like the front matter, the materials at the close of the thesis have a special format and sequence. Known as end matter, their headings are formatted and paginated in a manner consistent with the other major headings throughout the thesis, beginning 1 double space (2 lines) from the top margin (i.e., 1½ inches from the top of the page), with quadruple spacing after the heading. They appear in the following order and begin on separate pages:

1. appendices or supplements
2. endnotes
3. bibliography or references
4. optional index

Any **appendix** or supplement should be prepared and formatted as a chapter, including a title. If there are several, they should be numbered. While the MLA Handbook suggests completely double-spacing entries in the bibliography, we recommend double-spaced between entries but single-spacing within entries. Because an ALM thesis typically contains numerous notes and an extensive list of source materials, this alternative method of formatting them will help somewhat to reduce the overall pagination of the thesis.

A list of references contains only those works specifically cited in the thesis. The list of references should be consecutively paginated after the text.

Bibliographies, on the other hand, contain all sources that you have used, whether they are directly cited or not. A bibliography includes sources that you have used to generate ideas or ‘read around’ a topic, but have not referred to directly in the body of the document.

**Differences in Formatting between the Thesis and the Proposal.**

The proposal does not have any front matter.

The proposal does not have chapter headings. The subheads of the thesis do not begin on a separate page as the chapter headings of thesis chapters do, but it may be preferable to begin the List of References of Bibliography on a new page.

The left margin of the proposal is 1 inch, not the 1½ inch of the thesis.