

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
THE HENRY EDWIN SEVER GRADUATE SCHOOL  
DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

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A MOCK THESIS ON THE PROPER FORMAT OF  
THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

by

Ima B. Student

Prepared under the direction of Professor I. Tenyear

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A thesis presented to the Henry Edwin Sever Graduate School of  
Washington University in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

May 2005

Saint Louis, Missouri

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
THE HENRY EDWIN SEVER GRADUATE SCHOOL  
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ABSTRACT

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This mock thesis illustrates the Henry Edwin Sever Graduate School rules for formatting a thesis/dissertation. It includes information on what components a thesis/dissertation should include, and how pages of a thesis/dissertation should be formatted. Follow each rule as closely as possible. If you have questions or wish to vary from the guidelines, please check with the Thesis Advisor in the Engineering Registrar's Office, located in Lopata Hall, room 324. You must get an official approval on the formatting from the Thesis Advisor prior to submitting your final completed thesis or dissertation. There are no exceptions to this requirement. You should try to fit your abstract text onto one single page as shown here. You may need to single space the text as shown here, plus be certain not to exceed 350 maximum words per abstract page. Do NOT place a page number on your abstract page, but do include the page in your page count. Your abstract page will technically be your first counted page, but your Roman numeral page numbers should not begin displaying until the table of contents page. If you run out of room on this single page for your abstract, then you may reduce some of the "white vertical space" above (i.e. between the abstract header lines) as needed. Use a two page abstract only if there's no other way to fit everything on one page. NOTE: You must always maintain a 1" margin at top, bottom, and right, with a 1.5" left margin . . . and with NO text printing within these reserved margin areas. NOTE: Be sure to read the preface within this document for further explanation of how to use this document as a template to simplify the task of formatting your thesis. L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X users be sure to see Appendix D.

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To all future Henry Edwin Sever graduate students

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# Acknowledgments

Thanks to the many graduate students and professors who reviewed drafts of this document and helped set up templates and style files.

Ima B. Student

*Washington University in Saint Louis*  
*May 2005*

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# Preface

This guide contains the Henry Edwin Sever Graduate School rules for formatting theses and dissertations.<sup>1</sup> Departments, advisors, and committees may impose additional rules. In the past, students were required to study a similar (but much longer) set of rules and apply them to their theses. The Association of Graduate Engineering Students has helped to prepare templates and style files that simplify thesis preparation. These files have been set up to produce acceptably formatted theses and dissertations using several popular word processing and text formatting programs. There should be one available in Microsoft WORD, and another in L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X. Students may be able to retrieve these files and their accompanying instructions from the AGES home page or at the School of Engineering's Registrar's main web page. Check with the Registrar's Office to see what is currently available. Students who create their own templates or style files are invited to submit these files for future use by others.

This guide you are now reading can be downloaded (in either an MS WORD formatted version or a L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X version) and can be utilized as a template for formatting your own thesis. In short, the margin settings, pagination, table of contents logic, etc. are already established in the downloadable versions. You can simply replace the text within the template with your own text, thereby saving you much setup time.

Note: This page is optional. You can remove it completely, but then, just be sure the reference to this page is also removed from the Table of Contents.

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<sup>1</sup>Throughout this guide, the word thesis refers to both theses and dissertations.

# Chapter 1

## Thesis Format

The following guidelines offer you some degree of flexibility in formatting your thesis. Options are summarized in Table 1.1. Whatever options you choose to use, you must use them consistently throughout document.

### 1.1 Margins

Your printed output must reflect a physically measurable left margin of at least 1.5 inches, with top, bottom, and right margins measurable at 1 inch. Some systems' settings produce varying results when printing to different printers, so be sure to measure your output. Remember, nothing (not even page #'s) should print in the margins.

### 1.2 Page Numbers

Unless otherwise specified, count and number all pages of your thesis. Number all pages that come before chapter 1 with a centered lowercase Roman numeral, set just above the bottom margin. (Note: the Roman numerals should not begin displaying until the table of contents page, even though the Roman numbered "page count" begins with the abstract page.) Number pages starting with the first page of the first chapter with Arabic numerals, set just below the top margin, and just to the left of right margin.

## 1.3 Body Text

Use a 10, 11, or 12-point Times Roman or Times New Roman font for your thesis text. Use 1.5 or double line spacing for most body text. Block quotes should be single spaced. Use either left justification with a ragged right edge, or full justification. Paragraphs may be set in a block style, with no indentation, or they may be indented up to 0.5 inch. Skip a line between paragraphs.

## 1.4 Titles and Headings

Titles and headings may be left-justified or centered. Capitalize the first letter of the first word and the first letter of each subsequent major word in a title or heading. Do not capitalize articles, prepositions, and conjunctions that are not the first word of a title or heading. For example, do not capitalize such words as the following: a, an, the, for, to, on, or. Formatting specifications for particular types of headings and titles are described below. You may use a plain or bold version of the body text font for all titles and headings.

### 1.4.1 Chapter Titles

Begin each chapter on a new page. You may start the chapter title below the top margin and page number (1.5 inches from the top edge of the page), or you may leave some space and start the chapter title up to 3 inches from the top edge of the page. There are two options for formatting the chapter title:

- type the word “Chapter” followed by the chapter number, skip a line, and type the chapter title on the following line; or
- type the chapter number followed by the chapter title, all on the same line.

You may use a font size of up to 36 points for the chapter title.

## 1.4.2 Section Headings

You may use a font size of up to 24 points for section headings. Type the chapter number and section number before the section title.

## 1.4.3 Subsection Headings

You may use a font size of up to 18 points for section headings. Type the chapter number, section number, and subsection number before the subsection title.

## 1.4.4 Headings for Divisions Smaller than Subsections

Use unnumbered headings for divisions smaller than subsections. You may use a font size of up to 14 points. Headings may be typed above or on the same line as the sections they label. You may use both styles within your thesis.

**Run-in Headings** To the left is an example of a run-in heading. Notice that it is typed on the same line as the section that it labels. It may be used for divisions smaller than subsections.



Figure 1.1: An Irrelevant Fox Wearing Sox

## 1.5 Figures and Tables

Figures and tables must be referenced in the text by number. They must be numbered consecutively throughout each chapter, with the chapter number preceding each figure or table number. For example, the third figure in chapter 1 would be labeled Figure 1-3. You may either:

- maintain one numbering sequence for figures and another for tables, and label figures with the word “Figure” and tables with the word “Table”; or
- label both figures and tables with the word “Figure” and maintain one numbering sequence.

Place figures and tables as close to their references in the text as possible. Place a figure number and title below each figure (or table labeled as a figure). Place a table number and title above each table labeled as a table. In figures and tables, avoid using color and avoid text smaller than 10 points. Do not let figures or tables spill out into the margins. Figure 1.1 is an example figure.

## 1.6 Lists

You may include lettered, numbered, or bulleted lists in your thesis. Use consistent punctuation and capitalization throughout each list. Lists may be indented.

## 1.7 Footnotes and Endnotes

You may use footnotes or endnotes for brief notes that are not appropriate for the body of the text. Use either footnotes or endnotes consistently throughout your thesis. Position footnotes in 10 point type just above the bottom margin. Use a short horizontal rule to separate footnotes from the text. Position endnotes at the end of each chapter. Type endnotes using the same font size and justification as the body

text. Single space within each footnote or endnote; double-space between footnotes or endnotes. Footnotes and endnotes should be consecutively numbered.

## 1.8 Quotations

You must use quotation marks and parenthetical references to indicate words that are not your own. Put quotation marks around short quotes. Put long quotes in separate single-spaced paragraphs, indented up to 1 inch from the left margin (these are called block quotations). Kate Turabian, editor of official publications and dissertation secretary at the University of Chicago for over 25 years, distinguishes short and long quotes as follows:

Short, direct prose quotations should be incorporated into the text of the paper and enclosed in double quotation marks: “One small step for man; one giant leap for mankind.” But in general a prose quotation of two or more sentences which at the same time runs to four or more lines of text in a paper should be set off from the text and indented in its entirety.... [8]

## 1.9 Equations

Equations may be set in-line with the text or numbered and placed in separate paragraphs. Use the same numbering style for equations as you would for figures and tables. Here is an example of an equation set in-line with a paragraph:  $E = mc^2$ . Here is an example equation placed in a separate paragraph:

$$E = mc^2 \tag{1.1}$$

Equation numbering and formatting should follow the usual convention of your discipline and be acceptable to your thesis committee.

Table 1.1: Thesis Formatting Options

| Thesis Element                             | Formatting Options   |
|--|--|
| title page font                            | 12-point or 14-point Times or Roman  |
| table of contents chapter title font       | bold or plain  |
| first-level table of contents indentation  | 0 to 0.5 inch  |
| second-level table of contents indentation | 0 to 1 inch  |
| body text font                             | 10-point, 11-point, or 12-point Times or Roman   |
| body text line spacing                     | 1.5 or 2   |
| body text justification                    | left or full   |
| paragraph indentation                      | 0 to 0.5 inch  |
| chapter title position                     | 1.5 to 3 inches below top edge of page   |
| chapter title style                        | heading preceded by the word “Chapter” and the chapter number or heading preceded only by the chapter number |
| chapter title                              | 10-point to 36-point font, centered or left-justified, plain or bold   |
| section heading                            | 10-point to 24-point font, centered or left-justified, plain or bold   |
| subsection heading                         | 10-point to 18-point font, centered or left-justified, plain or bold   |
| unnumbered headings                        | 10-point to 14-point font, plain or bold   |
| table labels                               | label tables as “Table” or “Figure”  |
| parenthetical reference style              | author-date system, numbered, or another style acceptable to your committee                                  |
| reference list style                       | any style acceptable to your committee   |



# Chapter 2

## Parts of the Thesis

This chapter describes the components of a thesis. You need not include all components described here, but you must follow the prescribed order for the components you do include. Table 2.1 lists the required and optional components in the order that they should appear. Your thesis should include three main parts: the front matter, the text, and the back matter. Each of these parts is described below.

### 2.1 Front Matter

The front matter includes all material that appears before the beginning of the main text. Unless otherwise specified, use regular body text (defined in Chapter 1) on all front matter pages. Number pages with lower-case roman numerals, centered just above the bottom margin. Each of the following sections should begin on a new page.

#### 2.1.1 Title Page

Format the title page precisely as the title page to this document is formatted: include a 1.5-inch left margin, a 1-inch top margin, a 1-inch right margin, and a 1-inch bottom margin. Use a 12- or 14-point regular Times or Roman font on this page. If you are writing a dissertation, substitute the word “dissertation” wherever the word “thesis” appears in this document. The date on the title page should reflect the month and

Table 2.1: Required and Optional Thesis Components

| Major Part   | Thesis Component         | Required       | Optional |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------------|----------|
| Front Matter | Title Page               | •              |          |
|              | Abstract Page            | •              |          |
|              | Copyright Page           |                | •        |
|              | Dedication               |                | •        |
|              | Table of Contents        | •              |          |
|              | List of Tables           | (Rqrd if used) |          |
|              | List of Figures          | (Rqrd if used) |          |
|              | List of Abbreviations    |                | •        |
|              | Glossary or Nomenclature |                | •        |
|              | Acknowledgments          |                | •        |
|              | Preface                  |                | •        |
| Text         | Chapters                 |                | •        |
| Back Matter  | Appendices               |                | •        |
|              | References               | •              |          |
|              | Vita                     | •              |          |
|              | Short Title Page         | •              |          |

year the degree will be awarded and should be one of the following months: December, May, or August. Do not number this page or include it in your page count.

### 2.1.2 Abstract Page

The abstract must be 350 words or fewer. Format the abstract page precisely as the abstract page to this document is formatted. Do not number this page, but count it in your page count.

### 2.1.3 Copyright Page

Include a copyright page only if you plan to copyright your thesis. If used, the copyright page must be unnumbered, immediately following the abstract page. It

should include three lines, centered on the page with regular body text font and spacing. The 1<sup>st</sup> line should be “copyright by”, the 2<sup>nd</sup> line should contain your full name. The 3<sup>rd</sup> line should contain the year the degree is to be awarded. Do not number this page, but count it in your page count. If you are an MS candidate and would like to copyright your thesis, you must make all arrangements for copyright, independent of the Dean’s office.

### **2.1.4 Dedication**

The dedication page is optional. If you decide to include a dedication, make it short and center it on the page. Do not number this page, but count it in your page count.

### **2.1.5 Table of Contents**

The table of contents must include the page numbers of all chapters and sections of your thesis. In addition, it may include the page numbers of all subsections. It must also include the page numbers of all front and back matter elements, unless otherwise specified. Chapter titles should appear flush left, section headings may be indented up to 0.5 inch, and subsection headings may be indented up to 1 inch. Chapter titles may be typed in plain or bold font. All titles and headings must be followed by a dot leader and a page number. The word “Contents” must appear in chapter title style at the top of the page. If possible, use your wordprocessor’s built in table of contents generator to create the table of contents.

### **2.1.6 List of Tables**

Include a list of tables only if your thesis actually contains tables. Format the list of tables the same way the table of contents is formatted, but put the word “List of Tables” in the heading.

### **2.1.7 List of Figures**

Include a list of figures only if your thesis actually contains figures. Format the list of figures the same way the table of contents is formatted, but put the word “List of Figures” in the heading.

### **2.1.8 List of Abbreviations**

Include a list of abbreviations only if you use abbreviations that are not common in your field. Arrange the list alphabetically. Type the word “List of Abbreviations” in chapter title style at the top of the page.

### **2.1.9 Glossary or Nomenclature**

Include a glossary or nomenclature section only if your thesis contains technical words that are not commonly used by people in your field. Type the word “Glossary” or “Nomenclature” in chapter title style at the top of the page. The glossary or nomenclature section should consist of an alphabetized list of words and their definitions.

### **2.1.10 Acknowledgments**

An acknowledgments section is optional. If you include an acknowledgments section, use it to thank those who supported your research through contributions of time, money, or other resources. Type the word “Acknowledgments” in chapter title style at the top of the page. If the acknowledgments fill more than one page, put the heading only on the first page.

### **2.1.11 Preface**

A preface is optional. If you include a preface, use it to explain the motivation behind your work. You may also include acknowledgments in the preface. However, you should not include a preface if it contains nothing but acknowledgments - include an acknowledgments section instead. Format the preface the same way the acknowledgments section is formatted, but substitute the word “Preface” in the heading.

## **2.2 Text**

The text part of the thesis should be divided into numbered chapters, sections, and subsections. Divisions smaller than subsections may be used, but they should not be numbered. Use arabic numerals for numbering. Place arabic page numbers just below the top margin and just to the left of the right margin.

## **2.3 Back Matter**

Throughout the back matter, use the same page number formats as in the text section.

### **2.3.1 Appendices**

Appendices may be used for including reference material that is too lengthy or inappropriate for the thesis text. If one appendix is included, an appendix title is optional. If more than one appendix is included, each one should be titled and lettered. In general, appendices should be formatted like chapters. However, they may be single spaced or include photocopied material. If photocopied material is used, you must add page numbers to it in the upper right corner. Put the page numbers in square brackets to indicate that they are not part of the original document.

### **2.3.2 References**

The reference section should follow the final appendix (or the conclusion of the text if there are no appendices). Type the word “References” in chapter title format at the top of the page. Single space within references and double space between them. More information on formatting references is included in Chapter 3.

### **2.3.3 Vita**

Your vita should include your name, relevant academic and professional achievements, and current month and year. It may also include your date and place of birth, publications, and professional society memberships. Your vita should be the last page of your thesis.

### **2.3.4 Short Title Page**

The short title page should be prepared as described in Appendix B.

# Chapter 3

## Citing References

In the References section at the end of your thesis, list references cited using the style recommended in *The Chicago Manual of Style* [9] or another style acceptable to your committee. Insert parenthetical references where the reference material is referred to in the text. This chapter explains how to format references according to *The Chicago Manual of Style*. If you use a different style, you should obtain the appropriate style rules. For example, most journals periodically print instructions for authors that include reference style rules.

### 3.1 Parenthetical References

References should be cited at the position in the text where they are noted. *The Chicago Manual of Style* [9] recommends two systems for citations. You may use either of these systems or an alternative system acceptable to your committee.

#### 3.1.1 Author-Date System

In this system, the last name of the author and the year of publication appear in parentheses following the quoted text. If the reference is alphabetized in the References section by its editor, publisher, or organization, then the name it is alphabetized under is used in place of the author. Some examples follow:

- Single author: (Smith 1993)

- Two authors: (Jones and Yang 1991)
- Three authors: (Jones, Smith, and Yang 1984)
- Four or more authors: (Johnson et al. 1994)
- Organization as author: (Association for Computing Machinery 1989)
- Two works referenced in one sentence: (Black 1994; Smith 1993)

### 3.1.2 Numbered References

In this system, the reference number appears in square brackets following the quoted text. This system is used throughout this document.

## 3.2 Reference List

References should be listed in alphabetical order by the last name of the first author (or organization or publisher, if no author is given). If the numbered reference style is used, the reference list should obviously be numbered as well. Several example references are listed in this document's reference list. Most of these references are taken from *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* [8].



## Appendix A

# The English Language and Other Confusing Things

While this guide answers most questions about how to format a thesis, it does not address questions about English grammar, use of abbreviations, punctuation, spelling, and other confusing subjects. Students should obtain a dictionary and a style or grammar book to refer to as questions arise. The dictionary is important because most electronic spelling checkers are not complete and do not contain definitions. (You may also need to refer to some of the references you cite for the spelling of technical terms.) The grammar or style book is useful for checking grammar and punctuation rules. A good style manual contains information about correct English usage as well as advice for preparing a manuscript. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* [8] is one such concise and inexpensive manual based on the lengthy and more expensive *Chicago Manual of Style* [9]. *The Elements of Style* [7] is another good style manual.

The following rules will help you avoid three mistakes frequently made by students:

- Hyphenated words must begin and end on the same page.
- When a page break falls in the middle of a paragraph, at least two lines of text from that paragraph must appear on the second page.
- At least one line of text from a section or subsection must appear on the same page as the title of that section or subsection.

# Appendix B

## Procedures and Deadlines

**Deadlines** When you believe you will complete all requirements by the end of the current semester, you should consult with the Thesis and Dissertation Advisor in Lopata Hall, Room 324 to determine the deadline for completion of your file and for receipt of your thesis or dissertation copies. The deadlines are ironclad; no exceptions will be made. Note that the deadline printed in the course schedule and posted outside Lopata 324 refers to the date by which the final version of all theses and dissertations must be approved by the Thesis and Dissertation Advisor. The Advisor must receive all theses and dissertations at least ten working days prior to this deadline so the approval process can be completed.

**Oral Examination** Each member of the oral examining committee must be given a copy of the thesis or dissertation, in final form, in sufficient time to study it before the oral examination. Members of the examining committee have the right to request rescheduling of the examination if these copies are not made available to them at least one week in advance of the scheduled examination date. Copier paper may be used for these preliminary copies.

**Final Copies** After the oral defense, final copies of the thesis or dissertation approved by the examination committee and department are to be distributed as follows, on or before the date stated in the current academic calendar. All final copies must be printed using only one side on high-quality, 8.5 x 11 inch white paper, minimum 20-pound weight.

The student should submit to the Sever Institute (Lopata 324):

- two copies of the thesis or dissertation, each placed in a separate manila envelope with a copy of the title page attached.
- a loose sheet containing (1) a short title of 35 letters or less (including spaces), (2) the author's last name, (3) the degree, and (4) the year of its award, centered on the page and punctuated as in the example.<sup>1</sup>
- one additional copy of the dissertation abstract (dissertations only), typed double spaced, for publication in Dissertation Abstracts.
- a loose copy of the dissertation title page (dissertations only) for the microfilming contract.
- the original and a photocopy of the University Microfilms Inc. contract (dissertations only). If a copyright is desired, attach a certified check, cashier's check, or money order for the current price listed in the University Microfilms contract. Personal checks are not accepted. The microfilming contracts are available in Lopata 324. Note that the check or money order should not have an expiration date.

The student should also submit one copy of the thesis or dissertation to his or her advisor and one copy to his or her department (or departments if the degree is a joint degree).

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<sup>1</sup>See the sample short title page for this document

*Please fill out this form and submit it to the Registrar's Office in Lopata Hall, Room 324, when you submit your thesis for format review.*

Reference list style (parenthetical, etc.):

# Appendix D

## Special Notes for L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X Users, Including a Demonstration of Wrapping Appendix Titles

It is strongly recommended that you use this file as a template for your thesis, since it greatly simplifies conforming to the required formatting standards.

There are several important points that students using the L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X version of this template should verify before submitting a thesis.

### D.1 Front Matter

Much of the front matter (i.e. the Roman numbered pages) is automatically generated. Use `\renewcommand` command to customize the fields of these templates. For example, `\renewcommand{\thesisauthor}{your name here}` will customize the author name.

Most authors will need to customize the `\thesismonth`, `\thesisyear`, `\thesisauthor`, `\thesisauthorlastname`, `\thesisdefensedate`, `\thesistitle`, `\thesisshorttitle`, and `\thesisadvisor` fields. Examples of these can be seen in the sample `thesis-main.tex` file.

You must also specify `phdthesis` or `mastersthesis` when selecting the `\documentclass`. An example of this can also be seen in the sample `thesis-main.tex` file.

## D.2 Table of Contents and Bibliography

The Table of Contents is automatically generated. `latex` should be run twice in succession after making any changes to the Table of Contents.

Due to the way  $\text{\LaTeX}$  formats the Table of Contents, long appendix titles will not automatically wrap and indent properly. If you need to use a long appendix title, you must manually wrap and indent the appendix's table-of-contents entry. The `\wrappedappendix` command is defined in this template to assist with this; an example is seen at the top of the sample `thesis-appendixD.tex`. This requirement only applies to appendix titles: other section titles will automatically wrap properly.

If changes need to be made to the Table of Contents' formatting, you can use the `\addtocontents` command to insert some formatting commands directly into the Table of Contents page. More significant changes can be made by editing the `.toc` file that  $\text{\LaTeX}$  automatically generates. However, editing this file by hand is not recommended unless absolutely necessary, since it will automatically be re-generated the next time  $\text{\LaTeX}$  is run.

Like the Table of Contents, the Bibliography is automatically generated. After editing the bibliography file, you should run `latex`; run `bibtex`; and re-run `latex` twice in succession.

## D.3 Captions

Multiline captions will not automatically be centered. To correct this, place `\usepackage[center]{caption}` in the document preamble. The sample `thesis-main.tex` already includes this command.

## D.4 Widows and Page Breaks

L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X may create widows if you have a one-line paragraph followed by a list. To get rid of this widow, you must force L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X to break the page somewhere else. Either insert a `\newpage` command before the paragraph, or insert a `\samepage` command between the paragraph and the list. An example of this can be seen in `thesis-appendixB.tex`.

L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X may also create widows in the Tables of Contents. You can force L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X to break the page in a more convenient location by inserting `\addtocontents{toc}{\newpage}` before the corresponding `\chapter`, `\section`, `\subsection`, or `\subsubsection` command in the text.

Excluding these two situations, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X should not create orphans or widows. However, in some situations it may place page breaks at strange places — such as several inches above the bottom margin — in order to avoid creating orphans or widows. You can fix this by altering the `\clubpenalty` or `\widowpenalty`, or by manually adding `\newpages` where L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X guesses incorrectly.

# References

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# Vita

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May 2005

*Note:* Use month and year in which your degree will be conferred.

Short Title: The Proper Format of Theses

Student, M.S. 2005