



Master's Thesis Guidelines

The Master Programme of International Fisheries Management
The Norwegian College of Fishery Science
University of Tromsø, Norway

I. Purpose of the Thesis

Writing a thesis offers the student an excellent research experience. Identifying and defining problems, locating and evaluating relevant information, devising and executing ways of getting clear answers to good questions, and mastering the conventions of research writing are the essence of scholarship.

II. The Adviser and the Student

When a student begins work on a thesis, he/she will need to work closely with the thesis adviser. The adviser confers with the student frequently at times which are mutually convenient. It is the student's responsibility to initiate these conferences.

Although thesis advisers may differ somewhat in the manner in which they work with graduate students, generally an adviser will expect the student to:

- a. Obtain the adviser's approval of the topic selected for research.
- b. Submit an outline of the proposed thesis indicating the nature of the problem, the purpose to be fulfilled, the procedure to be used, and pertinent information the adviser deems necessary.
- c. Confer with the adviser frequently as the work progresses in order to obtain approval of every phase of the project. Failure to do this may result in the need to rewrite certain sections, or even the entire thesis.
- d. Obtain the adviser's final approval on the finished project.

While the student should look to the adviser for guidance and an objective critique as the work progresses, the student should not submit rough drafts, which have not been neatly typed and proofed for spelling and grammatical errors. The adviser's role is to help shape the content and explain some of the intricacies of scholarly style, not to serve as proofreader.

III. Format of the Thesis

Theses adhere to relatively standard patterns. The format guidelines presented here indicate that which is generally preferred.

The thesis contains: (a) preliminary pages, (b) chapters forming the body of the thesis, and (c) supplementary material including reference list and appendices.

Preliminary Pages

Preliminary pages include a title page, acknowledgments (optional), a table of contents and a list of tables and charts (optional). A foreword may also be included if deemed helpful.

The acknowledgments section is used to recognise those who helped with the thesis project. The table of contents includes chapter headings and subheadings together with the page numbers on which these can be found.

If a list of tables and charts is presented, it should give the name and number of each chart or table and the page where it can be found.

Body of the Thesis

The body of the thesis consists of an abstract, an introductory chapter, a chapter on related literature, methods and procedures, a results chapter, and a chapter containing discussion and conclusions. In addition, a summary chapter may be helpful. A thesis may vary from this pattern when considered desirable by the student's thesis adviser. Each chapter begins on a new page.

The abstract is simply a presentation of the problem focused and the most important findings. No references should be given in this section. The abstract should contain a statement of the problem, an explanation of the methods and procedures employed, and a summary of the findings and conclusions. The abstract should not exceed 500 words and be one paragraph only. Normally the abstract is the last to be written in the thesis work.

In the introductory chapter the problem is stated either in the form of a question or a hypothesis. Each term in the problem statement and others essential to understand the topic should be defined. Some lines on the limitations of the study should also be presented in this chapter.

The method or procedures chapter explains in detail the methods used to investigate the problem. Instruments used in the investigation must be described and samples, questionnaires, etc must be provided in the appendices.

The chapter on results should contain the facts obtained from the application of procedures stated in the previous chapter. This chapter should also contain tables and charts, placed as near accompanying text as possible. This chapter should only contain results of the student's research, leaving all discussion of implications to the next chapter.

The discussion chapter should cover implications of the findings and any conclusions, which can be drawn. The student may generalise beyond the findings in the previous chapter, but this speculation must be clearly labelled as such.

While some departments may specify that the abstract serve as a summary, a somewhat longer chapter summarising the entire paper is frequently helpful.

This description of the body of a thesis does not attempt to be full and comprehensive. The adviser can help the student develop each part of the thesis fully, carefully, and appropriately in terms of the problem being investigated and the procedures being employed.

Supplementary Material

The final section of the thesis contains a complete reference list. Sources which are not cited should not be placed in this list, but when particular sources have been used, this shall be clearly stated in the text. The reference list should be carefully prepared in a format approved by the supervisor.

Appendices follow the reference list and contain examples of cover letters, test instruments, survey forms, interview schedules, computer programs, etc. Appendices are usually identified by capital letters. Each appendix should have a separate title sheet with the appropriate letter, and the title of the appendix.

Material in appendices need not be retyped in the style of the thesis, but may be photocopied onto the thesis grade paper, provided it produces a clean copy. The title pages for each appendix should have page numbers and each page of material in the appendices should be counted in the page numbering, however it is not necessary to place thesis page numbers on this material (some of which may have their own page numbers).

IV. Technical Requirements for Theses

Style of Writing

A thesis is written in impersonal report language using the third person. The student is referred to as the researcher or writer, but not the author (this is reserved for those who have published books). Academic standards of English usage, spelling, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalisation are expected. The adviser will help with issues not addressed in these guidelines.

Margins and Spacing

With the exception of footnotes, lengthy quotations, and the reference list, the entire paper should be spaced 1.5 lines. The paper can be printed on both sides as long as the margins allow it. The student should confer with the thesis adviser on this matter.

Typing/Printing

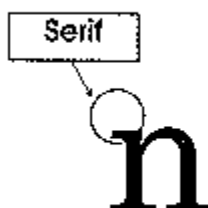
Acceptable print quality may be obtained from laser printers, and some ink jet printers.

Fonts/Typefaces

Modern word processing has made available a variety of fonts (typefaces and sizes). For the thesis, students should choose a simple, serif font in 12 point type and at 10 pitch (10 characters per inch) for monospaced type. Serifs are small marks attached to

the upper and lower ends of the strokes of a letter (see diagram). Research has shown that body text is much easier to read when using serif type fonts. Type faces which lack serifs are called sans serif. Decorative type should also be avoided.

Point size refers to the height of a letter, while pitch refers to the number of letters per inch. Monospaced type as found on traditional typewriters makes each letter the same width, while proportional spaced type faces vary the width of the letter according to how it is shaped.



Examples of acceptable fonts (all shown at 12 point) include:

1. Courier (monospaced)
2. Times Roman (proportional)

The following fonts would be **UNACCEPTABLE** for a thesis:

1. Helvetica (sans serif, proportional)
2. *Zapf Chancery* (decorative, proportional)

Reproduction

Students must submit four copies of the thesis. While one of the four copies may be an original, this is not required.

V. Oral Examination

After the student has completed the thesis and has received the adviser's approval of it, the faculty will arrange an oral examination on the thesis. Normally this will be late in late May.

VI. Abstract of the Thesis

After having the thesis accepted, each student must e-mail a copy of the abstract to arne@nfh.uit.no (Arne Eide).

VII. Deadline for Submission

In order for a student to graduate in the given semester, the four copies of the thesis must be submitted to the Student Administration Office no later than May 15. It is the student's responsibility to meet the deadline.