**Manuscript-Style Thesis Guidelines**

An alternative to a “Thesis-Style” Thesis in which text might include chapters such as: 1- Introduction, 2- Methods, 3- Results, 4- Discussion), a “Manuscript-Style” Thesis has embedded within it an entire manuscript formatted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. The chapters included in a “Manuscript-Style” Thesis might include: 1- Literature Review, 2- Manuscript, 3- Discussion, Conclusions and Interdisciplinary Statement.

This alternative format is very common among peer institutions and gives students a head start toward publishing their findings in a peer-reviewed journal. It can be very tedious and frustrating to try and turn the information in a “Thesis-Style” thesis into a publishable manuscript. Given space limitations in journals, manuscripts that are derived from theses are typically much more concise than the theses themselves. For example, a typical thesis may contain additional figures and results that the author ultimately chose not to include in the manuscript because they may have been of secondary importance relative to other components of the study. Further, the introduction and discussion sections of manuscripts are often abbreviated relative to those found in theses.

This handout provides some guidelines for formatting your thesis in the “Manuscript-Style.” This handout does not alter the general formatting requirements of your thesis found in the MES Thesis Handbook. Please refer to that document for the formatting of the following components:

* Length
* Margins
* Line spacing and font
* Paper and printing
* Required pages in thesis

This alternative format does not change any of the required pages in your thesis, but alters the “text” component of your thesis. You are still required to complete:

* Fly-leaf page
* Title page
* Copyright page
* Approval page
* Abstract
* Table of Contents
* List of figures
* List of tables
* Acknowledgements
* \*\*Text (see below for formatting a “Manuscript-Style” thesis)\*\*
* References
* Bibliography (optional)
* Appendices (optional)
* Colored paper

**Manuscript-Style Thesis Format**

The Text component of your thesis (which excludes references) should be 80+ pages and provide both a solid background on your thesis topic as well as a comprehensive discussion of the implications of your research. To this end you should include (at a minimum) the following chapters:

**Chapter 1. Literature Review** – To provide the reader with a solid foundation of past literature, you need to write a comprehensive and exhaustive literature review for this chapter. It needs to be organized and flow well and should identify the context of your thesis within the larger fields you are working in. It should be grounded in the current theory that is necessary to understand your study. Your literature review should end with a section which identifies a gap in the existing scholarship and shows the significance of your thesis for addressing that gap. It is likely that this literature review will be interdisciplinary in nature.

**Chapter 2. Manuscript** (complete and formatted for a peer-reviewed journal chosen by you and your reader). This manuscript will likely include: title page, abstract, keywords, introduction, methods, results, discussion, acknowledgements, tables (with legends), figure legends, and figures, but the order and style will depend on the journal chosen. In-text citations should follow the format specified by the journal. The following exceptions from the journal requirements apply: 1) Do not number individual lines, 2) Do not include references (instead they will be located at the end of your thesis), and 3) After the title page, include an additional page that specifies the journal that your manuscript has been formatted for.

**Chapter 3. Context/Significance/Conclusions** – The title of this chapter can be determined by you and your reader, but it should be an extensive body of work. Discussion points not addressed in the manuscript could be elaborated on in this chapter. For example, the significance of your results could be further related back to the existing literature, explaining convergences and divergences. Additional conclusions should be clearly linked to data and evidence, not based on speculation or opinion.

This chapter should also fully address the interdisciplinary nature of your research. This chapter could also include additional results and/or figures that you were not able to present in your manuscript. Additional discussion points could include the implications of your findings for conservation, management or policy, or recommendations for future studies.

References

References from all chapters should be combined and included at the end of the thesis as explained in the Thesis Handbook.