

## **Thesis Formatting Guidelines**

Prepared by

**LAU Libraries – Archives Unit**

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# INTRODUCTION

The submission of a thesis is a mandatory component for graduation. This guide outlines the key requirements set by the Lebanese American University (LAU) for the preparation and submission of graduate theses. The primary objective of these guidelines is to maintain a standardized presentation style for all LAU theses, while allowing sufficient flexibility to accommodate the specific standards of each academic discipline.

Students are responsible of reviewing and adhering to these guidelines to ensure their work aligns with the standards of the Library Archives Unit. To streamline the submission process and support a consistent format, students are highly encouraged to use the official **Thesis Template**, available through the [provided link](#).

## DEADLINES

At the beginning of each semester, students will receive an email from [<thesis@lau.edu.lb>](mailto:<thesis@lau.edu.lb>) outlining the submission process and deadline for their thesis submission.

## THESIS GUIDELINES

### A. Order and Components

#### 1. Preliminary Pages

##### *Title Page (Mandatory)*

This page includes the following: **Name of the University, Full Title of the Thesis, Student's Name, Degree, School, Submission Date (Month & Year of defense)**. This page should not be numbered or included in the page count.

##### *Copyright Page (Optional)*

If you choose to copyright your thesis, add a copyright page directly after the title page. The student's name must appear exactly as it does on the title page.

This page should not be numbered or included in the page count.

##### *Signed Forms*

The following three forms must be printed in **color, at high resolution**, and signed before incorporated into the Thesis.

- o [\*\*Thesis Approval Form\*\*](#) (Mandatory)  
Ensure that all fields in the "Thesis Approval Form", including Student Name, ID., etc. are completed with full names of the advisor(s) and committee members (**signatures are no more required**).
- o [\*\*Thesis Copyright Release Form\*\*](#) (Mandatory)  
This form grants LAU the right to use and reproduce fully or partially the submitted

work. This form must include the student's name, signature, and date.

o **Plagiarism Policy Compliance Statement** (Mandatory)

This statement affirms your obligation to properly cite all sources of work that are not your own. This form must include the student's name, signature, and date.

*Dedication (Optional)*

A dedication is a brief, honorary statement from the author, recognizing a person or group to whom the thesis is dedicated. It must include the title "**DEDICATION**".

*Acknowledgment (Optional)*

This section, typically included in all theses allow the author to professionally recognize those who contributed to the completion of the work. It must include the title "**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**".

*Abstract (Mandatory)*

The abstract provides a summary of the document and must include the full title and the author's full name. At the end of your "Abstract", include at least five "Keywords" that clearly identify and reflect the subject of your document. Capitalize the first letter of each keyword.

*Table of Contents (Mandatory)*

The Table of Contents includes all sections.

*List of Tables (If any)*

If your document includes tables, provide a List of Tables with each table's number, title, and page number, formatted to align with the Table of Contents.

*List of Figures/Charts (If any)*

Similarly, include a List of Figures/Charts with each figure or chart's number, caption, and page number, formatted in the same style as the Table of Contents.

*List of Abbreviations and/or Symbols (If any)*

Provide a list of all abbreviations and/or symbols used in the document, along with their full forms.

**2. Thesis Body (Text)**

The body of the thesis includes all chapters, sections, and subsections, as well as any parenthetical citations, footnotes, or references. Begin with an introduction that provides essential background and context. Each new chapter or new section should start on a new page.

**3. Concluding Pages**

o **Bibliography/Reference (Mandatory)**

The bibliography or reference section should be placed at the end of the thesis and before any appendices and should include all cited sources, formatted consistently according to a standard citation style (e.g., APA, MLA).

o **Appendix or Appendices (Optional)**

Include supplementary materials, such as **IRB form**, survey instruments or data, in the appendices.

- o **IRB Form:** Include the IRB Form signed by the **IRB** chair in **full color**, to your submission.

- o **Glossary of Terms (If any)**

If needed, include a glossary of key terms relevant to the subject matter, listed in alphabetical order with their definitions.

## B. Format Requirements

### Headings & Subheadings

For disciplines where section numbering is typically used, adhere to the following guidelines for headings:

#### *Chapter Title*

- o **Format:** Sequentially numbered by chapter.
- o **Style:** 18 pt. size, bold, and centered.

#### *Main Headings*

- o **Format:** Numbered according to the chapter (e.g., 3.1 for Chapter 3, Section 1).
- o **Style:** 14 pt. size, bold, and left-aligned.

#### *Second Headings*

- o **Format:** Follows a hierarchical structure (e.g., 3.1.4 for Chapter 3, Section 1, and Subsection 4).
- o **Style:** 12 pt. size, bold, and left-aligned.

#### *First Subheadings*

- o **Format:** Further subdivided (e.g., 3.1.4.1 for Chapter 3, Section 1, Subsection 4, and Sub-subsection 1).
- o **Style:** 12 pt. size, regular, and left-aligned.

#### *Second Subheadings*

- o **Format:** Preferably unnumbered.
- o **Style:** 12 pt. size, italic, and left-aligned.

| Level | Description              | Format                                        | Sample      |
|-------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1     | <b>CHAPTER TITLE</b>     | 18 pt. size, bold, centered                   | CHAPTER ONE |
| 2     | <b>Main Heading</b>      | 14 pt. size, bold, left-aligned               | 1.1         |
| 3     | <b>Second Heading</b>    | 12 pt. size, bold, left-aligned               | 1.1.1       |
| 4     | <b>First Subheading</b>  | 12 pt. size, regular, left-aligned            | 1.1.1.1     |
| 5     | <b>Second Subheading</b> | 12 pt. size, italic, unnumbered, left-aligned | Text        |

### Text Font

- o Use the same font throughout the entire paper.
- o Acceptable fonts include, but are not limited to, Times New Roman 12, Helvetica 12, and Letter Gothic 12, as generated by word processing programs. The font provided through LaTeX<sup>1</sup> is also acceptable.
- o Bold and italics should be used only when essential and applied sparingly.
- o Colored text is not permitted.

### Spacing & Indentation

- o Double or one and a half spacing is required for the text throughout the thesis;

except for the footnotes.

- o The text throughout the thesis should be double-spaced or set to one and a half spacing, with the exception of footnotes.
- o Each paragraph should be indented by four spaces.

### **Margins**

- o Use 2.5 cm margins on all sides of the page (top, bottom, left, and right).

### **Page Numbering**

#### *Preliminary Pages:*

- o Number all preliminary pages (those preceding the main text) using Roman numerals (e.g., i, ii, iii).
- o Begin with the approval page, which is numbered as ii.
- o Do not display the page number on the first page (i).

#### *Main Text and Subsequent Pages:*

- o Number the main text and all subsequent sections (e.g., appendices, references) consecutively using Arabic numerals (e.g., 1, 2, 3).
- o Start with number 1 on the first page of the first chapter.

#### *Placement of Page Numbers:*

- o Page numbers must appear at the **bottom center** of the page.
- o Only the number itself should be displayed (e.g., 9), without the word "**page.**"

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<sup>1</sup> LaTeX is a document preparation system for high-quality typesetting. It is most often used for medium-to-large technical or scientific documents but it can be used for almost any form of publishing. LaTeX is not a word processor! Instead, LaTeX encourages authors not to worry too much about the appearance of their documents but to concentrate on getting the right content. <http://latex-project.org/intro.html>

## Tables

- Tables must be numbered sequentially throughout the thesis (e.g., Table 1, etc.).

| Table 1         |                   |                   |                   |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Title           |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Stub<br>Heading | Column Spanner    |                   | Column Spanner    |                   |
|                 | Column<br>Heading | Column<br>Heading | Column<br>Heading | Column<br>Heading |
|                 | Table Spanner     |                   |                   |                   |
| Row 1           | 123               | 234*              | 456               | 789               |
| Row 2           | 123               | 987               | 543               | 876               |
|                 | Table Spanner     |                   |                   |                   |
| Row 3           | 432               | 567               | 543               | 908               |
| Row 4           | 256               | 849               | 407*              | 385               |

## Figures

- Figures must be numbered sequentially throughout the thesis (e.g., Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.).

## Footnotes

### *Placement:*

- Footnotes should appear at the bottom of the same page where their reference is located in the text.

### *Numbering:*

- Use Arabic numerals (e.g., 1, 2, 3) to number footnotes sequentially throughout the document.

### *Formatting:*

- The footnote reference in the text should be superscripted (e.g., ...example<sup>1</sup>).
- At the bottom of the page, the footnote explanation should begin with the corresponding reference number.
- Use a font size smaller than the main text (e.g., 10 pt).

## C. Thesis Submission Process and Embargo Period

### Thesis Submission Process

Thesis students are required to submit their thesis to the Archives Unit for format verification and correction at least two weeks before the final grade submission deadline. The submission to the archives Unit must be initiated by the advisor via the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) at <https://edms.lau.edu.lb/Forms> after the defense is done and the corrections given are checked and approved. Upon approval, the Archives Unit will use the final submitted PDF for verification and archiving. The submission must include the following three completed original forms: Thesis Approval Form, Thesis Copyright Release Form and Plagiarism Policy Compliance Statement

### E-Clearance

After the EDMS process has been completed and the thesis has received final approval from the Archives Unit, the Archives Unit will process the student's **E-Clearance**.

The E-Clearance will be shared with the **advisor and the Registrar's Office**. The student will be notified once the final thesis copy has been approved and the thesis submission process is complete.

### **Thesis Access and Availability**

Upon submission, the thesis will be subject to the following conditions:

- o The full text of the thesis will be under a one-year embargo period, as determined during the CD meeting on March 23, 2023.
- o Each thesis will be assigned a unique permanent URL.
- o A complete metadata record will be created for the thesis.
- o The thesis will be accessible via the library catalog, with a direct link to the full text in LAUR, as well as through LAUR and Google search.

### **Restricting access to your thesis known as “embargo period”**

All newly submitted theses will be subject to a one-year embargo period, as per the decision of the Council of Deans (March 23, 2023). The embargo period may be extended up to a maximum of three years; after this period, the thesis will automatically be made publicly accessible. Any request for an extended embargo must be well-justified and submitted prior to the thesis submission to LAUR. Embargo requests must be submitted through your thesis advisor to the Dean of your School using the Embargo Form. (Please refer to the Forms section for more details.)

During the embargo period, individuals wishing to access your thesis may submit a request through the library. You will be notified by email and will have the option to grant or deny access.

You may request an embargo for your thesis under the following conditions:

**Commercial Contract:** Your research contract stipulates confidentiality for a specified period.

**Patent Pending:** The University or your sponsor has filed a patent application related to your thesis research.

**Publication Pending:** Publishers may request an embargo to restrict availability of your thesis prior to the publication of related papers or books.

**Ethical Confidentiality:** If your thesis involves human subjects, the Institutional Review Board may recommend an embargo for one or two years to protect participants' identities or ensure their safety.

**Third-Party Copyright:** If there are issues with clearing copyright or using material for which permission has not been granted.

submission or other further assistance, you may contact us at

[thesis@lau.edu.lb](mailto:thesis@lau.edu.lb)

## **D. Forms**

[Thesis Approval Form](#)

[Thesis Copyright Release Form](#)

[Plagiarism Policy Compliance Statement](#)