



Libraries

Thesis Guidelines

Prepared by
LAU Libraries – Archives Unit
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INTRODUCTION

The thesis or dissertation is a demonstration of the student's mastery of the field of study. It shows the student's ability to search and work independently.

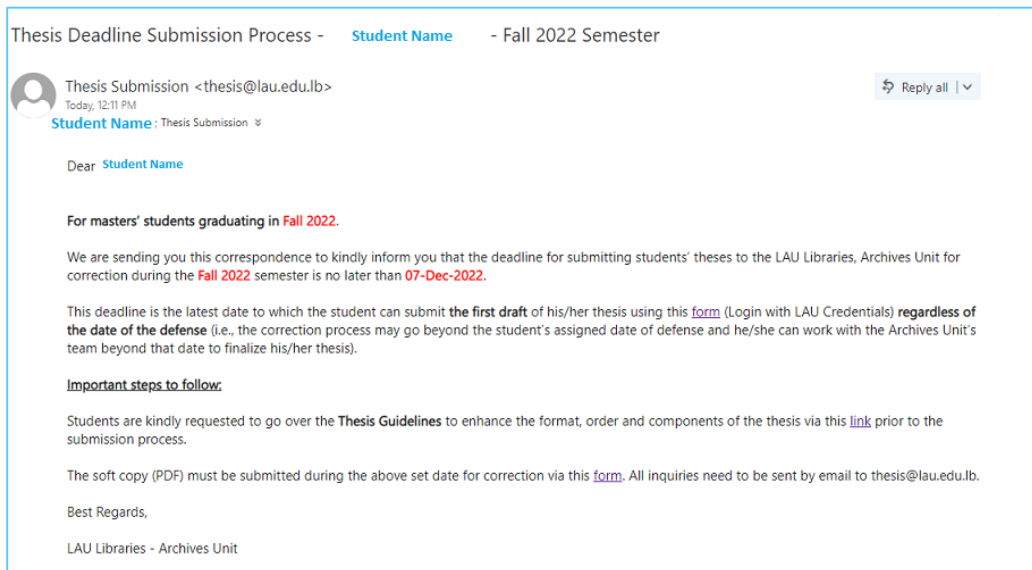
This manual sets forth the essential Lebanese American University's (LAU) requirements for the preparation and submission of graduate Theses. It is the student's responsibility to learn, apply and prepare the thesis in accordance with the following instructions. Our intent is to provide a minimum level of style uniformity across the University, with a reasonable degree of flexibility to accommodate the needs of each academic field. To facilitate your submission process and to unify our theses format, you are kindly requested to use the Thesis Template available via the following link.

The Archives Unit at LAU Libraries collects, preserves and makes a digital copy of each submitted thesis available in LAU Repository LAUR), that provides free online access to all LAU research publications and theses. All theses published after 2003 are Open Access, unless otherwise requested by the student, while those published before 2003 are accessible via student authentication.

N.B: These Guidelines are based on the view that theses are in themselves final products. Their quality reflects the standards of the University, its scholars program, its departments, and its professors. Most importantly, the quality of the author's thesis reflects upon his/her professionalism.

Deadline & Procedure

At the beginning of each semester, preferably after the first month of each semester students will receive an email informing them about the Thesis Deadline Submission:



It is the responsibility of the student to upload the first draft of his/her thesis to [Laserfiche Forms](#) within the set deadline as stated in the email above. It should be noted that any submission outside Laserfiche will not be considered for corrections.

Thesis Guidelines

A. Order and Components

1. Preliminary Pages

Title Page (Mandatory)

It includes name of the institution, title, author, degree, school and date of submission (Month of defense). This page is not numbered and not counted.

Copyright Page (Optional)

If you wish to copyright your thesis, you must include a copyright page.

Note: This page is not numbered and not counted, and comes directly after the title page. Your name should be similar to your name on the title page.

The below three forms must be **colored, high resolution** and signed:

[Thesis Approval Form](#) (Mandatory)

It certifies that the thesis is approved by the advisors.

Make sure **all** needed **signatures** are added to the form, with filling in your **ID number** next to your name.

[Thesis Copyright Release Form](#) (Mandatory)

It grants LAU the right to use and reproduce fully or partially the work being presented.

[Plagiarism Policy Compliance Statement](#) (Mandatory)

It confirms your responsibility to document all the work that is not your own by proper citation of sources.

Dedication (Optional)

A dedication is an honorific statement from the author to a person or group to whom the author commends the effort and product of the thesis. It may or may not bear the title "Dedication" and its text should be brief.

Acknowledgment (Optional)

This section is traditionally included in all theses. It is the place for the author to acknowledge professionally the various sources of direction, assistance, etc., that facilitated the work.

Abstract (Mandatory)

It summarizes the contents of the document and should include the document full title and the author's full name. At the end of your "Abstract" you are kindly asked to provide

a minimum of 5 “Keywords” as index terms that clearly identify and reflect the subject of your document. Capitalize the first letter of each keyword.

Table of Contents (Mandatory)

It includes all sections, mandatory and optional.

List of Tables (If any)

The term tables apply to numerical or statistical data set in vertical or horizontal alignment. If there are tables in your text or appendix, a list must be included. It should include table number, caption and the page number. Its style should follow that of the Table of Contents.

List of Figures/Charts (If any)

It should, as well, include figure/chart number, caption and the page number. Its style should follow that of the Table of Contents.

List of Abbreviations and/or Symbols (If any)

It lists all the abbreviations and/or symbols used in the text alongside their fully written form.

2. Body of Thesis (Text)

The body includes all divisions of the text, such as parts, chapters, sections, and subsections. It may also include parenthetical references, footnotes, or references to the bibliography.

Every new chapter/division should start on a new page.

3. Reference Pages

References (Mandatory)

The bibliography or reference section should appear before any appendices and should include all cited references. Citations should conform to a single format that is accepted as standard in your discipline such as APA, MLA, etc. (For citation style sampling, refer to [Research Guides](#)).

Appendix or Appendices (Optional)

Place in an appendix any material that is peripheral but relevant, to the main text. It could include survey instruments, additional data, computer printouts, etc.

Glossary of Terms (If any)

It is an alphabetical list of terms in a particular domain of knowledge with the definitions for those terms.

B. Format

Headings

In disciplines where section numbering is normally used, the following guidelines apply:

Chapter Title: 18 pt. size, bold and centered.

Main Headings: Should follow the chapter number, (3.1 for chapter 3, section 1) in 14 pt. size, bold.

Second Headings: Can be numbered as follows (3.1.4 for chapter 3, section 1, and sub-section 4) in 12 pt. size, bold.

First Subheadings: Can be numbered as follows (e.g., 3.1.4.1 for chapter 3, section 1, subsection 4, and sub-subsection 1) in 12 pt. size, regular.

Second Subheadings: *Preferably unnumbered, 12 pt., italics.*

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

Text Font

Acceptable fonts generated by word processing programs include, but are not restricted to Times New Roman 12, Helvetica 12, and Letter Gothic 12. The font provided through LaTeX¹ is acceptable. Bold and italics should not be used excessively in the text.

Furthermore, colored text should not be used. **A single unified text font should be used in the whole thesis from first page till last page.**

Spacing

Double or one and a half spacing is required for the text, and the beginning of each paragraph should be 4 spaces indented.

¹ 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>

Margins

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

Page Numbering

Preliminary pages of the thesis, that is, those preceding the text are to be numbered in Roman numerals (e.g., i, ii, iii). The Roman number should always start from the approval page “ii”.

The first page must not show its page number. Pages of the text itself and of all items following the text should be numbered consecutively throughout in Arabic numbers, beginning with number 1 on the first page of the first chapter. Page numbers should be placed in the lower right corner or center of the page. Only the number should appear, e.g. 9 (not page 9).

Tables and Figures

Figures and tables should be inserted at the appropriate place in the text, with adding the appropriate captions.

Footnotes

In disciplines where footnotes are normally used, they should appear at the bottom of the same page as their reference. Footnotes should be numbered in Arabic numerals. The footnote reference is superscripted and the explanation at the bottom of the page begins with the footnote reference number. Footnotes should have a smaller font size than the text (e.g. 10 pt.).

C. Publication and Copyright Publication

Original work is automatically protected under copyright as soon as it is recorded in a tangible form. Theses do not have to be registered through the U.S Copyright Office for your work to be protected by copyright, but doing so places your claim to copyright on public record, which will allow you to pursue suits if your rights are infringed.

For more information about copyright visit the U.S. Copyright Office at

<http://www.copyright.gov>

Thesis Copyright Release Form

All students are required to sign a [Thesis Copyright Release Form](#), “The non-exclusive distribution license agreement” in order to give permission for their work to be held in the LAU repository, to provide for the distribution of their work, and to allow ongoing preservation of both their work and/or related metadata.

This form grants LAU the right to use and reproduce fully or partially the work being presented: It gives LAU permission to post the material openly on the Web and to take the necessary steps to preserve the material (preserving the material might mean that the files will need to be converted to a different or newer version of a file format if the existing file format or the hardware/software needed to read it becomes obsolete).

Authors who submit their work to LAUR retain the copyright to their work, unless they explicitly give it away to a third party. LAU Libraries do not seek or claim copyright on any of the works submitted to LAUR.

A non-exclusive distribution license means that authors may make other copies of their work available on other web sites or through other means without obtaining permission from LAU. They may also formally publish their work, in the same form or in a revised form, without obtaining permission from LAU.

The Library charges no fee for the service and collects no revenue from the archive.

The form represents the text of the license agreement that authors must approve as part of the process of submitting material to LAUR.

Creative Commons

Creative Commons Licenses allow you to specify what use can be made of your thesis. All theses in LAUR are made available under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License: It's the most restrictive option allowing users to read and cite your thesis but not allowing them to use it for any commercial purposes or take your data and transform it any way. Users are free to share - to copy, distribute and transmit the work.

For more information concerning Creative Commons Licenses check:

<http://creativecommons.org/>

D. Academic Integrity

There are many types of violations of academic integrity, the most important are:

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of taking the ideas and/or expressions of another and representing them as one's own. Therefore, it is your responsibility to document all the work that is not your own by proper citation of sources. Offering the work of another as one's own, even unintentionally, is a serious offense, and is problematic in a research document, which purports to be original work. If you are using information that you have previously published under your own name, you should still, nonetheless, cite yourself in your document.

For Plagiarism policy statement, refer to the Forms section.

To avoid plagiarism, you are requested to use Turnitin Software.

Turnitin

Turnitin a web-based checking service that is used by many universities worldwide. When a student work is submitted to Turnitin it is matched against millions of internet pages, electronic journals, books, and a database of all previously and concurrently submitted assignments. Turnitin then generates an originality report providing a summary of

matching or similar text found in the submitted paper. The student should insure that, irrespective of the results of Turnitin originality report, all copyright requirements as well as the University's standard on avoiding plagiarism are met.

Third Party Copyright Materials

Third party copyright materials were included, traditionally, in a print thesis without requesting permission. This is no more the case if the thesis is going to be Open Access. Such materials may include graphs, figures, photographs, artworks, musical passages etc. If it is not possible to clear third party copyright materials for any reasons this means that, you will not be able to make your thesis freely available online. You nevertheless, do not need to seek permission to include:

- ✓ Work, which is out of copyright, an author copyright lasts 70 years after the author's death.
- ✓ A short extract of a work in order to critique or review it.
- ✓ A short quotation from a published work.
- ✓ Material which is licensed for your intend use, e.g., under Creative Commons License.

How to seek permission?

To seek permission, you have to contact the rights holder, it could be the author of the work, the publisher, the illustrator, the photographer, etc.

Use The [Third Party Copyright Materials Approval Form](#) available in the Forms section, asking the right holder the permission to include the material in the electronic version of your thesis. If you get permission, the form must be added to your thesis in the Appendices. You will not be able to make the full version of your thesis publicly available online if the permission is not granted.

Involving Human Subjects in research

All research involving human subjects under the jurisdiction of the Lebanese American University and its affiliates (LAUMC-RH and LAUMC-SJH), or by its students at off-site locations must be submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for review and approval prior to initiation. <https://gsr.lau.edu.lb/irb>

IRB approval is contingent upon the subjects' voluntary participation in your research project whereby they are being appropriately informed and protected from risk. This includes protecting the participants' rights, safety and welfare as well as protecting the privacy and the confidentiality of the data collected, and ensuring anonymity of their identity. The approval includes continued monitoring of your research study by the board to assure that the subjects are being adequately and properly protected from such risks. If at any time a subject becomes injured or complains of any form of injury, you must notify your advisor and the IRB immediately.

Injury includes but is not limited to bodily harm, psychological trauma, and also extends to legal and/or economic harm, such as release of privately identifiable personal information.

The approval from the IRB for any human subject component of your project is in effect from the date on the IRB approval letter; data collection beyond the expiry date requires an extension request and approval from the board.

Please also be advised that all subjects need to be fully informed and aware that their participation in your research project is voluntary, and that he or she may withdraw from the project at any time. A subject's participation, refusal to participate, or withdrawal will not affect any services that the subject is receiving or will receive at the institution in which the research is being conducted.

The research thesis is conducted under the supervision of the thesis advisor. LAU will not be financially or otherwise liable for any cost incurred because of this research project.

You can find the list of meetings and deadlines for presenting your applications at the below link: <https://gsr.lau.edu.lb/irb/meeting.php>

All submission requirements, applications, forms and supporting documents are found under this link: <https://gsr.lau.edu.lb/irb/submission-requirements.php>

To know if your research involves participation of human subjects and must be submitted to the board or if you have more questions about human subjects in research check the following link: <https://gsr.lau.edu.lb/irb/faq.php>

The approval letter **signed** by the **IRB** chair must be added, in **full-color**, to your submission.

N.B. IRB approvals require time, as such you are encouraged to plan ahead and give enough time for IRB review of your project within your specific timeline and deadline.

In case of research involving animals, the research project must pass through the approval of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). The approval from the IACUC must be included in the thesis.

E. Submission and Embargo Period

Submitting Theses

Thesis students must provide the Archives Unit with their thesis for verification and correction two weeks prior to the submission of their final grades. eSubmission should be through EDMS (<https://edms.lau.edu.lb/Forms>). Once approved, the Archives Unit will use the final submitted PDF for verification and archiving. The copy should include the three completed and signed forms: [Thesis Approval Form](#), [Plagiarism Policy Compliance Statement](#) and [Thesis Copyright Release Form](#).

The Archives Unit will issue a Library Clearance once the EDMS processing is done and the format is approved. The process of format approval may require uploading subsequent, corrected versions of the thesis that include the three signed forms. When the final copy is approved, the student will be notified and the clearance will be released at the end of the finals exam period in the semester when the thesis was submitted. Once the student submits their thesis, it will be available as follows:

- ✓ The full-text will be openly available in LAUR, the library's digital repository at a unique permanent URL.
- ✓ A description will appear in the library catalog with a link to the full-text in LAUR.

Restricting access to your thesis known as “embargo period”

While Open Access is the default, you have several options for restricting public access to your thesis. A period of embargo may apply to theses that contain material that is confidential or sensitive, or if the student anticipates that immediate publication will have an adverse effect on subsequent publication opportunities. The length of the embargo should be limited to a maximum of 3 years, after that period the thesis will be automatically open access to the public. Any request to delay publication must be well justified and made before you submit your thesis to LAUR. You will need to obtain permission to embargo or restrict the dissemination of your thesis. You will need to validate the reason for your request and receive approval from the required persons/authorities. During the embargo period if someone wants to view the thesis, they can request access through the library. You will be notified by email. You can then grant access to your thesis or not, as you chose.

Applications for embargoes are to be made through the thesis advisor to the Dean of the School using the [Embargo Form](#). (Refer to the [Forms](#) section).

You can place an embargo on your e-thesis if any of the following apply:

- ✓ Commercial Contract: The contract with your sponsor states that the research must remain confidential for a given number of years.
- ✓ Patent Pending: The University or your sponsor has lodged a patent application on your behalf relating to a discovery/novel method in your thesis.

- ✓ Publication Pending: Publishers often request that you do not make your thesis widely available before papers or books based on your thesis are published.
- ✓ Ethical Confidentiality: This is usually considered when the Institutional Review Board reviews your proposal. A thesis with human subjects may be embargoed for one or two years in order to further protect their identities or if its wide publication could endanger the physical or mental health or the safety of an individual.
- ✓ Third Party Copyright: If you have not been able to clear copyright or move unclear material.

For any thesis submission or other further assistance, you may contact us at thesis@lau.edu.lb

F. Forms

[Embargo Form](#)

[Plagiarism Policy Compliance Statement](#)

[Thesis Approval Form](#)

[Thesis Copyright Release Form](#)

[Third Party Copyright Materials Approval Form](#)