

**Guidelines
for the
Preparation and
Submission of
Theses and
Written Creative Works**

San Francisco State University
Graduate Division

Fall 2002

Definition of Thesis and Project

The California Code of Regulations (Title 5, Section 40510) defines a thesis as

... the written product of a systematic study of a significant problem. It identifies the problem, states the major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, sets forth the sources for and methods of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion and recommendation. The finished project (product) evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation.

Introduction

The master's thesis or written creative work is a serious demonstration of a graduate student's ability to explore, develop, and organize materials relating to a certain topic or problem in a field of study. The goal of the master's thesis or written creative work is not only to pursue research and investigation, but also to write an extended scholarly statement clearly, effectively and directly. The thesis or written creative work becomes a visible and permanent record of the quality of the work that a graduate student has accomplished at San Francisco State University. Library records show heavy borrowing of theses, both on campus and through inter-library loan. It is very important to insure that every manuscript represents the highest professional standards.

In conducting research and in writing, students should observe the practices and standards of their particular discipline. Students' work should be their own or, where it is the work of others, the source should be acknowledged carefully and accurately. All quoted or paraphrased material should be referenced according to the footnote, note, or parenthetical referencing practice of a student's department and/or discipline. Extracts and quotations may be used to a limited extent for purposes of illustration and criticism.

Plagiarism is the use of another's ideas without giving proper credit or the use of another's phraseology without: (1) enclosing it in quotation marks, or (2) blocking it by indenting and single spacing. Plagiarism also includes simple mechanical modification of another's writing; for example, replacing a word or dropping or interpolating words here and there, but retaining the essence of the other person's work without acknowledgement.

Because the manuscript will be the student's own scholarly study, it is best not to rely too heavily upon quotations from others. Students should consult a style manual regarding justification for quoting. The penalty for plagiarism could be dismissal from the University.

Guidelines

- I. **Preparation.** The format for the thesis differs from that of the written creative work. The guidelines in this pamphlet are not a style manual. See Paragraph A for acceptable style manuals. The pamphlet will guide students in the preparation and submission of the final document. (See the sample pages in these guidelines.)

- A. **Style and Format.** Different disciplines follow different guidelines for citing bibliographic references and other sources. Examples include:
The American Psychological Association Publication Manual
The Chicago Manual of Style
The CBE [Council of Biology Editors]
The MLA [Modern Language Association] Style Manual
References cited in the thesis must follow the style and format accepted in your discipline and approved by your department.

The writer of a thesis or written creative work is expected to produce a final manuscript. Students are expected to follow the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses and Written Creative Works* rather than styles utilized for submitting manuscripts for publication in a journal.

Regardless of the style manual used, the preliminary pages of all written work must follow the formal requirements provided in these guidelines. Do not use a previously prepared thesis as an example of the approved style or format.

- B. **Page Numbering.** All pages of the work are to be counted. The preliminary pages (i.e. "Title Page through "List of Appendices") preceding the texts are all counted. Numbers are to appear only on those pages identified in these guidelines. When shown, the numbers on preliminary pages must be lower case Roman numeral and centered one inch from the bottom of the page. Each page from the title page through the abstract page is counted, but page numbers do not appear on these pages.

Beginning with the first page of the text, Arabic numerals are to be entered starting with page 1 and continuing consecutively through the remainder of the work including illustrations, bibliography, appendices, etc. The first page of each chapter or section must have the number typed (Arabic numerals) and centered one inch from the bottom of the page. All other pages must have the Arabic numerals typed in the upper right hand corner of the page, one inch down and to the left of the right edge of the page.

- C. **Headers and Footers.** Headers and footers are not allowed.
- D. **Margins.** The left margin must be a minimum of 1-½ inches. The right, top, and bottom margins must be a minimum of one inch. If the page number is one inch from the top or bottom, then the text must be at least two inches. The text should not run into the numbers. Justified margins will only be accepted if the spacing within and between words remains uniform (i.e., no large gaps).
- E. **Spacing.** Double-spacing must be used except in those places where conventional usage calls for single-spacing: e.g., footnotes, bibliography, indented quotations, tables, etc.
- F. **Type Styles.** Theses and projects must use standard type with 10 to 12 characters to the inch. Nonstandard typefaces may not be used. In special cases smaller or larger type may be used in the preparation of tables, figures, appendices, and illustrative materials. It is important to use the same typeface throughout the thesis or project.
- G. **Computers.** The font size must be at least 12 point. Any use of bold face, script, or nonstandard typeface must be approved by the Graduate Division.
- H. **Paper.** The copy of the Library must be on white bond paper which meets the following standards:
1. 25%-100% cotton content (watermark indicated);
 2. 16lb. or 20lb. weight;
 3. 8 ½" x 11" size (unpunched, unlined).

The same paper must be used throughout. Include a blank cover and end sheet.

- I. **Corrections.** All copies should be clean, free of smudges, streaks, random print, and other printing imperfections. All pages must be free from wrinkles or folds. Graphs, tables, charts, diagrams, and figures must be produced with graphic skill.
- J. **Freehand Graphs, etc.** Black permanent ink must be used for freehand accent marks, mathematical formulas, maps, graphs, etc.
- K. **Plates, Figures, Illustrations, Computers Print-Outs, Drawings, Etc.** Materials must be prepared in a form that will permit them to be copied, microfilmed, and bound. This requires special attention to the size of the documents, the contrast of the information presented, and the method and placement of the material in the final work.
- L. **Degree Title and Certification of Approval Page.** The student's official degree title must appear on the "Title" and "Certification" pages. Official degree titles can be found at the end of this document. The title of the thesis/written creative work must match word for word on the "Title," "Certification of Approval," and "Abstract/Annotation" pages.
- M. **Abstract/Annotation Page.** Every thesis/written creative work must include either an "Abstract" or "Annotation" (maximum one page in length and double-spaced). The Abstract of a thesis should include a brief statement concerning the nature of the study, the research methods and design, and the findings or conclusions. The Annotation of a written creative work should be descriptive of the content or theme of the work completed.
- N. **Copyright Page (optional).** If there is a possibility that all or part of the thesis/written work may be published elsewhere, the student is urged to complete this page.

Under present laws, a copyright is secured automatically when the work is created and fixed in a copy form for the first time. This is defined as the date when the written work is approved by the Graduate Division on behalf of the University. While notice of copyright of the written work is not required to have claim to copyright, failure to comply with the requirement can result in loss of certain additional rights otherwise available to the copyright owner. Therefore, students who anticipate publishing the copyright page or using the submitted written work in some way are urged to include the copyright page. (See the sample copyright page for the format.)

Since the written work is submitted in satisfaction of a part of the requirement for an advanced degree, the student automatically conveys to the University a license for limited use including: (1) microfilming, (2) distributions to major departments or libraries, or (3) responses to inquiries regarding research in the subject area of the work.

According to the Copyright Act of 1976, a student has five years from the date of publication to register a copyright.

- O. **Collation Accuracy.** The student is responsible for the proper numerical sequence of pages in the original and all copies. Neither the Graduate Division nor the Library will review page order. Therefore, collation is extremely important.

II. **Submission.**

- A. **Deadline Date.** In order to be assured that a credit grade is filed in time for graduation, the final work must be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Division and filed at the Rapid Copy Center of the Library by the deadline date that is published in the University's *Bulletin* and *Class Schedule*. A list of deadline dates is also available in the Graduate Division.
- B. **Pre-Approval of Thesis/Written Creative Work.** Prior to the completion of the final document, students are encouraged to have the thesis coordinator in the Graduate Division pre-approve the preliminary pages, first two pages of the document, and any charts, graphs, or questionable pages.
- C. **Review and Approval of Final Document.** Students should submit the master copy of the Thesis or Written Creative Work which includes the original signatures of the committee members to the Graduate Division. The Graduate Division will review the thesis/written creative work for format, typeface, quality of paper, and related technical items, not content. If corrections are necessary, the student will be notified when he/she returns to pick up the document. The student is responsible for correcting the document and returning it to the Graduate Division. Once approved, the Graduate Division will issue the "Master's Thesis/Written Creative Work Receipt" form to the student.

It is important that the student provide on the "Master's Thesis/Written Creative Work Receipt" form an address, which can be used for approximately six months from the time the Thesis/Written Creative Work is filed.

- D. **Fee Payment.** The student will submit the master copy and Receipt form to the Rapid Copy Center of the Library where he/she will pay the required processing fees. The first copy fee is \$25.00 and includes microfiching and binding of the original. (Master's Theses/Written Creative Works that exceed 250 pages may require two volumes and an additional binding fee. The Rapid Copy Center will make the final determination.)
- E. **Additional copies.** The student should reproduce additional copies, which the student wishes to have bound, after the original has been reviewed and approved by the Graduate Division. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that any additional copies conform to the master copy. Binding of additional copies for department or personal use costs \$15.00 per copy. This fee is paid at the Rapid Copy Center at the time the master copy is submitted. Students may wish to use the Rapid Copy Center for the reproduction of the additional copies they are making.

**Any questions should be directed to the
Graduate Division- ADM 254
(415) 338-2234**

(At least 1 | ½")

TITLE OF THE THESIS

(At least 1-1/2")

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
San Francisco State University
In partial fulfillment of
The requirements for
The degree

(Single spaced)

(At least ½")

Master of Arts
In
Biology: Conservation Biology

See last page for
correct title)

(Approximately 3-1/2")

by

Mikel Alicia Burke

San Francisco, California

(Double spaced)

May, 2000

(Counted as Roman Numeral i, *but not typed*)

(At least 1 1/2")

TITLE OF THE WRITTEN CREATIVE WORK

(At least 1-1/2")

A written creative work submitted to the faculty of
San Francisco State University
In partial fulfillment of the
requirements for
The degree

(single spaced)

(At least 1/2")

Master of Arts
In
English: Creative Writing

(Approximately 3-1/2")

by

Mikel Alicia Burke

San Francisco, California

(Double spaced)

May, 2000

(Counted as Roman Numeral i, *but not typed*)

(OPTIONAL PAGE)

Copyright by
Mikel Alicia Burke
2000

(Counted as Roman Numeral ii, but not typed)

NOTE: If this page is included, please adjust the numbering sequence of the introductory Roman numeral pages that follow.

(Double space
this page)

(At least 1-1/2")

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

(At least 1/2")

I certify that I have read *Title of Thesis* by Mikel Alicia Burke, and that in my opinion this work meets the criteria for approving a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree: Master of Arts in Biology: Conservation Biology at San Francisco State University

(See last page for
correct title)

(At least 3/4")

John Doe
Professor of Biology

(At least 3/4")

Jane Smith
Professor of Biology

(Counted as Roman Numeral iii [or ii], but not typed)

(Double space
this page)

(At least 1-1/2")

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

(At least 1/2")

I certify that I have read *Title of Written Creative Work* by Mikel Alicia Burke, and that in my opinion this work meets the criteria for approving a written creative work submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree: Master of Arts in English: Creative Writing at San Francisco State University.

(At least 3/4")

John Doe
Professor of Biology

(At least 3/4")

Jane Smith
Professor of Biology

(Counted as Roman Numeral iii [or ii], but not typed)

(At least 1-1/2")

TITLE OF THE THESIS

(At least 1/2")

Mikel Alicia Burke
San Francisco State University
2000

(At least 1/2")

(First line)

(Abstract must be double-spaced)

(Last line)

(At least 1/2")

I certify that the Abstract is a correct representation of the content of this thesis.

Chair, Thesis Committee

Date

(Counted a Roman Numeral iv [or iii], *but not typed*)

(At least 1-1/2")

TITLE OF THE WRITTEN CREATIVE WORK

(At least 1/2")

Mikel Alicia Burke
San Francisco State University
2000

(At least 1/2")

(First line)

(Annotation must be double-spaced)

(Last line)

(At least 1/2")

I certify that the Annotation above is a correct representation of the content of this written creative work.

Chair, Written Creative Work Committee

Date

(Counted a Roman Numeral iv [or iii], but not typed)
(OPTIONAL PAGE)

(At least 1-1/2")

PREFACE AND/OR ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

(At least 1/2")

Normally the preface and/or acknowledgments gives the student the opportunity to thank those to whom they are indebted for assistance in the project. This should be done briefly and in good taste. Some students also wish to use this opportunity to state why and under what circumstances the work was written.

(Counted as Roman Numeral v [or iv], and typed)

(At least 1-1/2")

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(At least 1/2")

(Example of the format to be used)

List of Tablesvii
List of Figures	viii
List of Appendices	ix
Introduction	1
Include	3
Sub-headings/chapters	4
as appropriate	5
Method	9
Include	10
Sub-headings/chapters	15
As appropriate	18
Results	22
Include	23
sub-headings/chapters	24
as appropriate.	28
Discussion	33
References	35
Appendices	40

NOTE: Sections that precede the Table of Contents should not appear on the Table of Contents page.

(Counted as Roman Numeral vi [or v], and typed)

(At least 1-1/2")

LIST OF TABLES

(At least 1/2")

Table	Page
1. Title of table1
2. Title of table22
3. Title of table35
4. Title of table60
5. Title of table 71

(Counted as Roman Numeral vi [or v], and typed)

(At least 1-1/2")

LIST OF FIGURES

(At least 1/2")

Table	Page
1. Title of figure	1
2. Title of figure	17
3. Title of figure	33

(Counted as Roman Numeral vi [or v], and typed)

(At least 1-1/2")

LIST OF APPENDICES

(At least ½")

Appendix	Page
1. Title of appendix	41
2. Title of appendix	44
3. Title of appendix	47

(Counted as Roman Numeral vi [or v], and typed)