



Sam Houston State University Graduate & Professional School

Theses & Dissertations – Submission Process and Requirements

Overview

The Graduate and Professional School (GPS) at SHSU oversees and implements the thesis/dissertation policies, guidelines and submission process. GPS has numerous resources to assist graduate students during the thesis/dissertation writing process as well as professional development workshops. GPS is committed to assisting graduate students during their thesis/dissertation research journey. Students can view these resources under the Events and Resources tab on The Graduate and Professional School webpage.

For questions regarding initiation sheets, embargo requests, 1st drafts and final draft review submissions, formatting, and updates on Vireo submissions and Route Sheets, email tgsthesis@shsu.edu.

NOTE: Students should submit graduate school requirements in the semester in which they intend to graduate. GPS does not require the submission of proposals or prospectuses.

NOTE: GPS requirements are university-wide and separate from internal department/college requirements. Students must ensure they are completing requirements for both their program/department and GPS. Failure to fulfill all requirements can delay graduation.

Order of Events

Below is a detailed timetable of tasks that need to be completed in order to graduate.

1. Initiation Sheet: The Initiation Sheet should be submitted once the graduate student completes coursework, registered for thesis/dissertation writing courses (ABD/ABT) and formed their thesis/dissertation committee.
2. If a member is not employed by SHSU, a Non-SHSU Employee Committee Request Form must be submitted to The Graduate and Professional School for the individual to serve on a thesis/dissertation committee. Make sure all applicable signatures are on the request form and attach the non-SHSU committee member's Vita to the email along with the request form. **Students can only have one non-SHSU faculty on their committee. Refer to academic policy [#950601](#) for more information regarding this requirement.
3. First Draft Review: Graduate students must submit all required sections (i.e., title page, approval page, abstract, table of contents, list of tables/figures, references, vita, etc.) plus

a minimum of **THREE CHAPTERS** of their thesis/dissertation. Students must have an acceptable draft to submit for review; there should be no major deviations from the SHSU guidelines and students must have a basic understanding of how to format their chapters based on the style manual/guide they have chosen (i.e., in-text citations, heading levels, tables/figures, references, etc.). After the draft is reviewed, you will receive a draft review checklist that will list all corrections that need to be made. Note: It is the graduate student's responsibility to ensure their thesis/dissertation meets all SHSU and ADA requirements. If you need to delay your graduation, you must **resubmit** your 1st draft for the semester you intend on graduating.

4. Public Defense: A public defense of your thesis/dissertation should be completed by the deadline stated in the academic calendar. Students can also find this deadline in the 'Deadlines' accordion below. Coordinate with your Chair, committee members and department to schedule your defense.
5. Route Sheet: Graduate students must submit a GPS Route Sheet immediately after successfully defending their thesis/dissertation. Read the instructions carefully and fill out the form correctly. This information will be sent to the Registrar's Office for degree conferment and graduation purposes.
6. Embargo Request: Graduate students who are seeking a one-year, two-year or permanent embargo must submit an Embargo Request Form by the deadline. **Note to Faculty and Graduate Students:** Faculty can submit an embargo request form on behalf of a student by filling out the applicable fields on the form. Please be aware that failure to submit an embargo request by the deadline is ultimately the student's responsibility. An embargo allows a thesis/dissertation to be withheld from being published digitally via SHSU's institutional repository either temporarily or permanently providing students an opportunity to have their research published in an academic journal, as a novel or to acquire a patent. Students must submit all requirements listed in this section regardless of an embargo approval.
7. Final Draft Review: The final draft review must be submitted after successfully defending and revising all formatting issues listed in the 1st Draft Review Checklist as well as all approved edits by their committee. The draft should be completed in its entirety, and Route Sheet must be received by the Thesis/Dissertation Specialist in order to proceed with the review and approval process. **THIS IS THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF YOUR DOCUMENT. THOROUGHLY PROOFREAD YOUR FINAL DRAFT FOR GRAMMAR AND FORMATTING ISSUES.** Once your final draft has been approved, it cannot be changed.
8. Vireo and Embargo Submission: The Thesis/Dissertation Specialist will email a final pdf version of your approved thesis/dissertation document and instructions on how to submit through [Vireo](#) (No additional edits can be made to your approved document). Follow the instructions, fill in all sections correctly and upload the approved pdf file. If you were granted a one-year or two-year embargo, fill in all sections that apply. Graduate students who have been approved for a permanent embargo **do not** submit their final document through Vireo; students should follow the Permanent Embargo Instructions to submit their document to the Newton Gresham Library. Note: It is important that embargo requests and Vireo submissions be completed in a timely manner. Failure to do so can delay final Route Sheet approvals which need to be confirmed by the Registrar's Office.

Thesis/Dissertation Public Defense via Zoom

***ATTENTION: If you're planning to defend your thesis/dissertation via Zoom, please follow the tips below to safeguard against Zoom-bombing:

- Do not use your Personal Meeting ID. Set-up an ID that will generate automatically when creating the meeting.
- Require a meeting password. Do not overshare your password. Only give it to those who will be attending the meeting.
- When creating the meeting, check the 'Enable Waiting Room' and 'Mute Participants on Entry' in the Advanced Options section.
- To prevent harassment of other participants, inappropriate images and GIFs in the chat, disable file transfer and private chat. Go to settings in the Zoom web app. Select Personal, then Settings and click In Meeting. Go to File Transfer and Private Chat to disable (Note: The gray button indicates when the Private Chat is disabled).
- Once the meeting has started, select the arrow next to the green Share Screen button, then Advanced Sharing Options and select 'One participant can share at a time' and 'Only Host' in the designated sections. Assign your Chair and one other committee member as co-hosts. If you experience a Zoom bomb during your defense, go to Participants List, scroll down to More and click Lock Meeting. Have one of your co-hosts go to Participants List, scroll to the bottom and click Mute All Controls to cut the hacker's microphone/audio.

Formatting & Submission

SHSU has established formatting guidelines that graduate students must adhere to when submitting their thesis/dissertation. Detailed instructions on formatting can be found in the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Manual. Students can also use the Thesis-Dissertation Draft Review Checklist to review formatting requirements.

ETD and Vireo Submission Manuals

The Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Manual (ETD) encompasses everything from formatting copyright, and submission process to assist graduate students for with properly formatting their thesis/dissertation.

Templates

SHSU has created pre-formatted templates to simplify the formatting process for graduate students. These Microsoft Word templates can be used by PC and Mac users. It is recommended that graduate students use the template as it adheres to SHSU format guidelines. If students choose not to use the template, the ETD Manual has instructions for creating a thesis/dissertation document. For graduate students using a different style manual, headings can be changed from the home menu in Microsoft Word. Always use the most recent edition of your designated style manual guide.

- [Traditional Thesis/Dissertation Template](#): This template provides a basic format for creating a thesis or dissertation. Download the file and save it to your computer. This document has been updated to APA 7th ed.
- [Journal Model Template](#): This is a modified template that includes designation pages for journal articles. The template is meant for students who have published or are in the process of publishing portions of their thesis or dissertation to academic journals. The template is pre-set to APA 7; however, each chapter article must adhere to the formatting requirements of the targeted academic journal that the article has been, or will be, submitted to. As a result, each chapter article will be a standalone manuscript with different formatting layouts.

See below the requirements to use the Journal-Model template:

1. Doctoral Dissertation Requirement: Students must have **A MINIMUM OF THREE** journal articles that are either already published or intended to be published in an academic journal(s).
2. Master's Thesis Requirement: Students must have **A MINIMUM OF TWO** journal articles that are either already published or intended to be published in an academic journal(s).

NOTE: The Journal-Model is a type of formatting. It is not greater in value or quality than the traditional thesis/dissertation format. Students must select this format with intent. The intent being that the student has (1) already published parts of their thesis/dissertation in an academic journal, (2) have submitted manuscripts for review, or (3) are submitting to academic journals in the near future. If the requirements for the Journal-Model are not met, students must restructure their document to SHSU's traditional thesis/dissertation formatting.

- Creative Thesis Template: [Version 1](#) or [Version 2](#). The Creative Thesis Templates are non-tradition templates for creative works. Version 1 is without chapters and Version 2 has chapters.

NOTE: The Creative Thesis templates are reserved for students (i.e., MFA English) completing works of art such as poetry, novels, etc. Please refer to the traditional template if your research does not fall within this category.

- IEEE LaTeX Template: LaTeX template that incorporates SHSU thesis/dissertation requirements and adheres to the IEEE Editorial Style Manual. This template is ideal for graduate students in the Computer Science Department. [IEEE LaTeX Template File](#)

If you have questions or concerns about the IEEE LaTeX template file, contact the College of Science and Engineering Technology.

- [Common Mistakes](#): This document provides examples of common mistakes seen in thesis/dissertation documents.

****Graduate students should follow the most recent style guide/manual specified by their department; however, SHSU formatting guidelines supersede any style manual.**

Style Manuals

The following style manuals have been accepted by the SHSU Graduate Council and align with the preferences of SHSU thesis-track and doctoral programs. Students must use one of the style guides listed below and should select the standard/preferred style manual for their field of study (Examples: English = MLA, Computer Science = IEEE, Criminal Justice = APA, Psychology = APA, etc.); Students should consult with their thesis/dissertation committee chair to determine which style manual is required by their department. The **most recent edition** of these manuals must always be followed.

NOTE: The only exception to this requirement is students whose thesis or dissertation qualifies as a journal-model.

1. [ASC Guide to Scholarly Communication \(Online\)](#)
2. [The AP Stylebook, 57th Edition \(Online and Book\)](#)
3. [Chicago Manual of Style, 18th Edition \(Online and Book\)](#)
4. [AMS Style Guide \(Online\)](#)
5. [MLA Handbook, 9th Edition \(Online and Book\)](#)
6. [Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th Edition \(Online and Book\)](#)
7. [Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers, 9th Edition \(Online and Book\)](#)
8. [Style Manual for Political Science, 2018 Edition \(APSA\) \(Online and Book\)](#)
9. [ASHS Publications Style Manual \(Online Only\)](#) or [ASHS Author Information](#)
10. [Journal of Animal Science \(Online Only\)](#)
11. [AMA Manual of Style, 11th Edition \(Online and Book\)](#)
12. [ASA Style Guide, 7th Edition \(Online and Book\)](#)
13. [IEEE Editorial Style Manual, 2025](#) or [Reference Guide, 2023](#)
14. [International Journal of Legal Medicine](#)