

CLASS Companion Guide: Preparing your Document

Front Matter

Why This Guide Exists

The UH Graduate School has provided a document for the front matter and formatting of Electronic Thesis Documents (called the ETD Template). This template shares UH standards for the format of the title page and initial pages and covers some of the federal standards for accessible documents that must be followed by all submitted theses and dissertations.

This companion guide is not a substitute for the UH Graduate School ETD Template. However, based on questions students have raised in the past, we have identified some places where more guidance may be needed. This guide tries to make formatting expectations explicit, practical, and process-focused to help you avoid unnecessary revisions at the final stage. These directions are written for those using MS Word, but most of the information presented in this document apply whatever word processing platform you are using (such as LaTeX).

1. Required Workflow (Read This First)

Follow this sequence exactly:

1. Write and format your document in MS Word using the **UH ETD Template**
2. Complete accessibility work in MS Word (headings, figures, tables)
3. Export to PDF in the "correct" fashion
4. Run the Adobe Accessibility Checker
5. Correct any issues that emerge until you get a passing report
6. Submit to CLASS

 **Do not submit to the library (Vireo) before receiving CLASS approval.**

2. Capitalization and Text Formatting in Front Matter

Title Page and Front Matter

- Use **Title Case** (capitalize the first letter of major words)
- Do **not** use ALL CAPS anywhere in the front matter document
- Do not use italics or bold on the title page

✅ *Correct:*

A Study of Migration and Memory in Contemporary Fiction

❌ *Incorrect:*

A STUDY OF MIGRATION AND MEMORY IN CONTEMPORARY FICTION

Degree Names

- Use the official UH degree name
- Use Title Case, not ALL CAPS

✅ *Correct:*

Master of Arts

Doctor of Philosophy

❌ *Incorrect (even if shown in some template examples):*

MASTER OF ARTS

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

CLASS Title Page Fillable Form (optional)

💡 **TIP!** The CLASS Thesis and Dissertation Web Site has a pre-formatted title page that incorporates all these rules. Using this will save time and may ensure that you don't have to correct this page later!!

Required Components (Correct Order)

⚠️ Review the UH ETD Template to ensure that all required components are included and appear in the correct order. One commonly missed item is the **copyright page**.

1. Title Page
2. Copyright Page

3. Dedication (optional)
4. Acknowledgments (optional)
5. Abstract
6. Table of Contents
7. List of Tables (if applicable)
8. List of Figures (if applicable)
9. Main Text (Introduction/Chapter 1 through Conclusion)
10. Bibliography/References
11. Appendices

✅ Using the UH ETD Template and the CLASS Title Page Fillable Form helps prevent many of the most common front-matter revision requests.

3. Dedication or Epigraph (Not Both)

You may include **either** a Dedication **or** an Epigraph.

Do not include both.

Formatting rules:

- Maximum length: 1 page
- Indentation and layout must match other front-matter sections
- Body text should not be centered or justified

4. Page Numbers (Front Matter)

- Pages before Chapter 1 use **lowercase Roman numerals** (i, ii, iii, iv...), centered at the bottom
- Arabic numbering (1, 2, 3...) begins at the Introduction (if there is one) or Chapter 1
- Page numbers must appear on all required pages
- Page numbers in the body of the text may appear at the top or bottom of the page, according to whatever style guide you are following.

💡 MS Word Support offers [these](#) helpful instructions.

5. Headings and Table of Contents (Critical)

Built-in Headings (Required)

You must use MS Word's built-in heading styles:

- Heading 1 → Chapter titles
- Heading 2 → Section headings
- Heading 3 → Subsections

Do not format headings manually using bold, spacing, or font size.

💡 Find MS Word Support [here](#), with clear instructions for both Windows and macOS.

Having built-in headings in your document will allow you to auto-generate the Table of Contents, which is required!

Auto-Generated Table of Contents (Required)

The Table of Contents (TOCs) must be **auto-generated in MS Word**.

Manual TOCs are not accessibility-compliant and thus will not be accepted.

Auto-generated TOCs are clickable, accessible. Be sure to update the Table of Contents before submitting your document.

💡 Find MS Word Support [here](#), with clear instructions for TOCs in both Windows and macOS.

Auto-Generated Lists of Tables and Figures (Required)

- Generate automatically using **References** → **Insert Table of Figures**
- Include only items from main chapters
- Do not include appendix figures or tables
- Use 1.0–1.15 spacing

6. Other Topics in the Graduate School ETD Document

This document reviews many other topics related to formatting documents to meet federal accessibility requirements. These requirements are non-negotiable. Documents that do not meet federal accessibility requirements will not be accepted.

Tips on how to format for accessibility, and especially how to format tables and figures, can be found in a separate document on this website: labelled **CLASS Accessibility Formatting Guide**.

? Questions? After reviewing the materials and documents available on the CLASS Thesis and Dissertation website, please contact CLASSgrad@central.uh.edu if you need additional assistance. We are happy to help.