

COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY

**CULMINATING ACTIVITIES FOR GRADUATE DEGREES: GENERAL WRITING
GUIDELINES**



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I. INTRODUCTION

To earn a graduate degree from Colorado Mesa University (CMU), students must complete a culminating activity. The type of culminating activity (e.g.: dissertation, thesis, capstone presentation, clinical competency) is set by each academic program. Students must work with their program to receive approval for their specific activity.

II. MINIMUM GUIDELINES

This manual provides approved general guidelines for written culminating activities. While students should follow these guidelines, academic programs are allowed to make modifications as needed. As such, students must familiarize themselves with this document and any additional requirements enforced by their academic program.

III. PURPOSE

The university maintains some minimum requirements to assure uniformity and aesthetic consistency across graduate programs. Programs are allowed to modify these requirements to meet discipline-specific practices. In practice, all manuscripts should conform to these university minimum guidelines and programmatic guidelines.

IV. MANUSCRIPT STYLE

Graduate programs use different styles for manuscript formatting, citations, and references. Students should follow the style approved by their program. Approved styles are listed below, and manuals can be found in the Tomlinson Library.

Departments	Programs	Manual Style
Biological Sciences	Forensic Science	APA
Business	Business Administration	APA
Health Sciences	Nursing	APA
Kinesiology	Athletic Training Occupational Therapy Physical Therapy Physician Assistant Studies Sport Management	AMA or APA
Social & Behavioral Sciences	Criminal Justice Social Work	APA
Teacher Education	Education	APA

V. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Students must read and follow CMU's research requirements. This includes policies regulating research using human subjects and animals, definitions of research misconduct, and understanding the role of the Office of Sponsored Programs. These requirements can be found in the CMU Catalog:
<https://catalog.coloradomesa.edu/graduate-information-programs/research-activities/>.

To learn more about the approval process to conduct research with people (e.g., surveys interviews) or animals (e.g., observation, behavioral intervention), or to learn more about applying for grants, visit the OSP website:
<https://www.coloradomesa.edu/sponsored-programs/index.html>.

VI. WRITTEN PERMISSION FOR COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

Title 17, Section 102(a) of the *United States Code* states: "Copyright protection subsists, in accordance with this title, in original works of authorship fixed in any tangible medium of expression, now known or later developed, from which they can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated, either directly or with an aid of a machine or device" (17 USCS §102[a]). This means the Copyright Act protects a thesis, dissertation, or scholarly project as soon as the author creates it. In any work, copyright implicitly devolves to the author of that work, whether or not it is so stated. Copyright arises automatically when a work is first fixed in a tangible medium such as a computer file or e-mail. Registration of copyright is not required to protect the work against unrestricted distribution of the manuscripts or significant portions thereof but may be beneficial if going to court over copyright infringement issues. Students must obtain written permission from the author and/or copyright owner if using copyrighted materials beyond the "fair use" guidance from the U.S. Copyright Office. In submitting the manuscript, the student will be granting to Colorado Mesa University and its agents the non-exclusive license to archive and make accessible the manuscript in whole or in part as specified by the Reproduction & Use Authorization form. However, the student retains all other ownership rights to the copyright of the work, including the right to use in future works (e.g., articles or books) all or part of the work. Further, the student is free to register the copyright to their culminating activity. By submitting a culminating activity to Colorado Mesa University, the student attests that:

1. All material contained therein is the original work of the student.
2. Proper scholarly attribution has been given to all outside sources.
3. All necessary copyright permissions have been obtained for any third-party-copyrighted material included in the manuscript.

VII. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty policies can be found in CMU's Catalog (<https://catalog.coloradomesa.edu/graduate-information-programs/general-admissions-policies-procedures/>) and in the Maverick Guide (<https://www.coloradomesa.edu/student-services/documents/maverick-guide.pdf#page=17>). These policies will be enforced for graduate students conducting culminating activities.

VIII. PROPRIETARY CONTENT

In certain circumstances, the culminating activity may contain information of a proprietary nature. The Director of Graduate Studies will honor requests to hold the manuscript for six months with possible renewal for another six months prior to releasing it for archiving in the Tomlinson Library. A written request must be presented to the Director of Graduate Studies that specifies substantive reasons why the manuscript should be held. This request should be endorsed by the student's advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

IX. REPRODUCTION & USE AUTHORIZATION

If permitted by the author(s), written culminating activities could be made available to the public and/or reproduced for scholarly purposes. Publication rights belong to the author, subject to the provisions of research contracts, federal grant stipulations, or other agreements made by the author to the University. The Tomlinson Library

occasionally receives requests for permission to reproduce culminating activities for scholarly purposes. Difficulties may arise in locating the author to secure permission to reproduce. In the interest of extending access to appropriate parties, all theses, dissertations, and scholarly projects must include a *Reproduction and Use Authorization* form. The form should be completed to either grant or deny permission to reproduce the manuscript for scholarly purposes. A sample of this form appears as Appendix B.

X. TIMELINE

1. The student begins discussions with their advisor about culminating activity requirements for their academic program.
2. The student works with their advisor to form an Advisory Committee consistent with programmatic requirements. The Committee Chair must have a terminal degree in the student's field of study.
3. The student submits a proposal for approval.
4. To use the library or other campus facilities, the student must be enrolled every semester that involves work on the culminating activity (including fulfilling any defense requirements). In consultation with the advisor, the number of credits per semester will be determined based on the work being done up to the maximum credits in the program.
5. The student consults with their advisor about whether the proposed activity involves human subjects research or animal research. If applicable, the student works with the advisor to submit a research protocol to the Institutional Review Board or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. The proposed research cannot start before all approvals are in place.
6. In consultation with the advisor, the student develops the manuscript and periodically submits drafts for critique. To ensure sufficient time to complete reviews (and fulfill any defense requirements), the final draft of the manuscript should be submitted prior to the end of the intended semester of graduation and at a deadline determined by each graduate program.
7. When required, the student and advisor schedule the defense/presentation. Notification should be sent to the Academic Department Head and the Director of Graduate Studies. This must be done at least four (4) weeks prior to the date of the defense. The student and advisor need to notify the Director of Graduate Studies of the date, time, place, and title of the defense/presentation. The advisor should advertise the defense/presentation.
8. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the required signatures on the Committee Approval Page (see Appendix F). Signatures include the Advisory Committee Chair and the members of the Advisory Committee, the Academic Department Head, and the Director of Graduate Studies.
9. Once all signatures are collected, the Director of Graduate Studies will deliver the culminating activity to the Tomlinson Library (see section VI (C)).

XI. FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

A. Format Requirements by Academic Program

1. Approved programmatic style manuals are listed in this manual (see section II (B)). Format requirements include, but are not limited to font style, margins, pagination, spacing, indentation, and other typical formatting choices.

- a. Unless otherwise noted, students should follow the style manual approved by their program. Any questions about format should be directed to the student's advisor.

XII. ORGANIZATION

Every written culminating activity will contain at least three components: (1) required documents, (2) manuscript, and (3) supplementaries. An ordered list appears below.

A. Required Documents

1. All written culminating activities are required to contain the following, unless otherwise noted as "if indicated." This list is also located in Appendix C.
 - a. Non-plagiarism Affirmation (required)
 - b. Reproduction & Use Authorization Form (required)
 - c. Title page (required)
 - d. Copyright page (required)
 - e. Committee Approval page (required)
 - f. Abstract (required)
 - g. Clearance letter from Sponsored Programs for human and animal research (if indicated)
2. To maintain consistency across programs, all required documents must adhere to university formatting requirements listed below. If university requirements differ from a program's style manual, students are required to follow university guidelines.
3. Format Requirements for Required Documents
 - a. Required Documents must be included at the front of the culminating activity in the order listed in Section V (A,1) of this document.
 - b. Headings for all required documents must be centered, in all capital letters, and not in bold font.
 - c. Required documents are numbered with lower case roman numerals – i,ii,iii, etc.
 - i. Placement of page numbers on required documents should be consistent with programmatic style manual.
4. Non-plagiarism affirmation
 - a. A sample Non-plagiarism Affirmation page appears as Appendix A.
 - b. This form is required but not included in the Table of Contents.
5. Reproduction and Use Authorization
 - a. A sample Reproduction & Use Authorization page appears as Appendix B.
 - b. This form is required but is not included in the Table of Contents.
6. Title page (required)
 - a. A sample title page appears as Appendix D.
 - b. This is required but is not included in the Table of Contents.
 - c. Bold type is not used.
 - d. No abbreviations or punctuation should be used.
 - e. The title is in all capital letters and centered at the top of the page.
 - f. A title more than 4½" is divided into multiple lines, double-spaced and in inverted pyramid form.
 - g. "Submitted by" block contains the word "by" on one line and the student's name on the second line. It is centered on the page approximately 8 double-spaced lines from the first line of title and is double-spaced.

- h. “Degree and graduating term” block is approximately 7 double-spaced lines from the student’s name. It contains the following 7 lines:
 - ii. A thesis/dissertation/culminating activity submitted in partial fulfillment
 - iii. of the requirements for the degree of
 - iv. [name of degree] in the Department of [name department]
 - v. Colorado Mesa University
 - vi. Grand Junction, Colorado
 - vii. [graduating term and year]
- 7. Copyright page (required)
 - a. A sample copyright page appears as Appendix E.
 - b. This is required but is not included in the Table of Contents.
 - c. A copyright page is included in the manuscript immediately after the title page.
 - d. Copyright page is neither assigned a number nor counted.
 - e. Text is double-spaced and centered vertically and horizontally.
 - f. Elements of the text:
 - i. “Copyright” word and the symbol ©
 - ii. Year the thesis/dissertation/scholarly project is approved, or degree granted
 - iii. The author’s name as it appears on the title page
 - iv. The words: ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
- 8. Committee Approval page (required)
 - a. A sample Committee Approval page appears as Appendix F.
 - b. This form is required but is not included in the Table of Contents.
 - c. Titles before and after the names of advisor and committee members are *not* permitted (examples – Dr., Professor, Ph.D.).
 - d. Elements of the page:
 - i. Title of the thesis/dissertation
 - 1. Centered
 - 2. All capital letters
 - 3. Single-spaced as it appears on the title page
 - ii. Name of the student as it appears on the title page
 - iii. Required statement
 - iv. Approval signatures and printed names of committee chair, committee members, program director, academic department head, and director of graduate studies with dates approved
- 9. Abstract (required)
 - a. Sample abstract page appears as Appendix G.
 - b. This form is required but is not included in the Table of Contents.
 - c. The abstract is a summary of the manuscript’s contents.
 - d. The acceptable length for the abstract is 150-300 words.
 - e. Bold print is not used.
 - f. The heading “ABSTRACT” is in all capital letters
 - g. Elements of the page:
 - i. Three blank lines single-spaced must be between the heading and the title
 - ii. The title must be in all capital letters and centered
 - iii. The title must match the title on the Title Page
 - iv. Three blank lines single-spaced must be between the title and the text
 - v. The text of the abstract must be double-spaced with paragraph indentions

10. Clearance letter from Sponsored Programs for human and animal research
 - a. If indicated but is not included in the Table of Contents.

B. Manuscript

1. Manuscript (required)
 - a. The student should follow their approved style manual, and any additional requirements enforced by their academic program, when writing the manuscript.
 - i. Each approved style manual should provide guidance on topics such as headings, subheadings, tables, figures, and organization.
 - b. Questions about manuscript requirements/formatting/style manual guidelines should be directed to the student's advisor.

C. Supplementaries

1. References (required)
 - a. The student should follow their approved manual in addition to any requirements enforced by the academic program.
2. Appendices (if indicated)
 - a. The student should follow their approved style manual in addition to any requirements enforced by the academic program.

XIII. FINAL MANUSCRIPT

The student must submit a complete copy of their finished and approved culminating activity. Copies will be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies in both printed and electronic forms.

A. Printed Copy

1. The printed copy, submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies, must be a clean copy without visible corrections on any pages.
 - a. Any page requiring corrections must be reprinted before submission.
 - b. This copy will be delivered to the library for archiving.

B. Electronic Copy

1. A complete copy of the culminating activity must be converted to PDF format.
 - a. This copy will be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies.
 - b. This copy will be delivered to the library for archiving.

C. Library Requirements

1. A record of the culminating activity will be submitted to the CMU Archives at Tomlinson Library by the Director of Graduate Studies.
2. Minimum Archival Requirements:
 - a. Title page
 - b. Committee Approval page
 - c. Abstract
 - d. Bibliography of references consulted
 - e. IRB/IACUC letter (if necessary)

D. APPENDICES TO THIS DOCUMENT

- a. Non-Plagiarism Affirmation
- b. Reproduction & Use Authorization
- c. Culminating Activity: Ordering of Sections
- d. Sample Title Page
- e. Sample Copyright Page
- f. Sample Committee Approval Page
- g. Sample Abstract Page



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GRADUATE STUDIES

Appendix A: Non-Plagiarism Affirmation

NON-PLAGIARISM AFFIRMATION

EACH GRADUATE STUDENT MUST SIGN THE STATEMENT BELOW AFFIRMING THAT HE OR SHE HAS NOT BEEN GUILTY OF PLAGIARISM IN PREPARING HIS OR HER CULMINATING ACTIVITY.

Plagiarism is the act of appropriating the written, artistic, or musical composition of another, or portions thereof; or the ideas, language, or symbols of same and passing them off as the product of one's own mind. Plagiarism includes not only the exact duplication of another's work but also the lifting of substantial or essential portion thereof.

I understand that if plagiarism is subsequently discovered in the preparation of this document, Colorado Mesa University, may, after a hearing, take appropriate action against me including possible revocation of my graduate degree. Academic Dishonesty sanctions are outlined in *The Maverick Guide*, located at <https://www.coloradomesa.edu/student-services/documents/maverick-guide.pdf#page=17>

I, _____, a candidate for the degree of _____, affirm that I have NOT engaged in plagiarism.

PRINT NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____



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GRADUATE STUDIES

Appendix B: Reproduction & Use Authorization

REPRODUCTION AND USE AUTHORIZATION

PUBLIC INTEREST:

In presenting this culminating activity in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at Colorado Mesa University, I agree that CMU Tomlinson Library shall make it freely available for inspection.

REPRODUCTION PERMISSION GRANTED:

I authorize the Library Director, Department Head of my academic department, or Director of Graduate Studies to act as my agent to grant permission for the reproduction of my work for scholarly purposes. It is understood that any copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

REPRODUCTION PERMISSION DENIED:

I do not authorize the Library Director, Department Head of my academic department or Director of Graduate Studies to act as my agent to grant permission for the reproduction of my work for scholarly purposes. Reproduction of this work shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Culminating Activity: Ordering of Sections

- A. Required Documents
 - 1. Non-Plagiarism Affirmation (required, but not included in the Table of Contents)
 - 2. Reproduction & Use Authorization (required but not included in the Table of Contents)
 - 3. Title page (required but not included in the Table of Contents)
 - 4. Copyright page (required but not included in the Table of Contents)
 - 5. Committee Approval page (required but not included in the Table of Contents)
 - 6. Abstract (required but not included in the Table of Contents)
 - 7. Clearance letter from Sponsored Programs for human and animal research (if indicated and not included in the Table of Contents)
- B. Manuscript (required)
- C. Supplementaries
 - 1. References (required)
 - 2. Appendices (if indicated)

Appendix D: Sample Title Page

[TITLE] [ALL CAPS]

By

[name of student]

A [thesis/dissertation/culminating activity]

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

[name of degree] in the Department of [name of department]

Colorado Mesa University

Grand Junction, Colorado

[Term, Year]

Appendix E: Sample Copyright Page

Copyright or ©[insert year]

[student name] (as it appears on the Title Page)

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Appendix F: Sample Committee Approval Page

[TITLE OF THESIS/DISSERTATION/
CULMINATING ACTIVITY] [ALL CAPS]

[student's name as it appears on the title page]

The final copy of this thesis/dissertation/culminating activity has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the Department of [name of department]. It has, therefore, been approved as meeting the requirements for the Degree of [name of degree].

APPROVED:

Committee Chair/Advisor (Required):

[Name, Department]

[Signature]

[Date]

Committee Members (if applicable):

[Name, Dept]

[Signature]

[Date]

[Name, Dept]

[Signature]

[Date]

[Name, Dept]

[Signature]

[Date]

Program Director (Required):

[Name, Dept]

[Signature]

[Date]

ACCEPTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF (required):

[Name, Title]

[Signature]

[Date]

ACCEPTED BY THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES (required)

[Name, Title]

[Signature]

[Date]

Appendix G: Sample Abstract Page

ABSTRACT

TITLE IN CAPITAL LETTERS, CENTERED AND DOUBLE-SPACED

IF MORE THAN ONE LINE

The title of the abstract must match the title on the title page exactly. Letters must be capitalized and, if more than 4½" in inverted pyramid form.

The abstract is a summary of the research and includes the purpose of the project, pertinent findings, and significance of the paper. As a brief overview, an abstract gives the reader concise information that conveys the importance of the research.

The word "ABSTRACT" is centered 2" from the top of the page above the title. The body of the abstract is double-spaced. There are three single spaces between the heading and the title, and between the title and the body of the abstract.