

Thesis Paper Issues

The page you are reading right now and the next page are not part of the thesis paper proper. They are simply explanatory remarks and a description of some formatting issues.

I have provided here on my Pratt website **template files** that you may follow for your Thesis paper. for These files are:

SampleThesisPaper_FrontMatterA.doc

SampleThesisPaper_FrontMatterB.doc

SampleThesisPaper_Body.doc

These files are Microsoft Word files. NOTE: if you open them with another program, the formatting may no longer be correct. (Open Office software seems to preserve the formatting OK.) I advise you to open each file, change the text as necessary, and save your own copy. This will preserve the formatting.

The paper is divided into three files because the page numbering changes for each of these three sections. (I don't know how to change page numbering within a single document).

The file **SampleThesisPaper_all.pdf** is a non-editable PDF version of the three template files all composited together into a single document. If the formatting of the .doc files looks wrong on your system, look at the pdf file to see the correct formatting.

Throughout your thesis paper, pay very careful attention to the formatting, which should follow the sample you are about to read very closely. You do not need to use exactly the same **font** I use here, but whatever font you choose, you must use it consistently throughout your paper. The text of the body of your document must be **double-spaced**.

Pays special attention also to **margins**. The sample files I have put online have correct margins. See the Library Thesis Guidelines for more detailed information.

Left margin must be a minimum of 1.5". Other margins should be 1". Margins are critical; if you do not leave wide enough margins, the Pratt Library will reject your paper.

Pay special attention to the formatting of **quotations** and references. There are very specific formats for this, and you must follow those formats exactly. See the examples in my template. There is one format for a long quotation, and a different format for a short quotation. If you format these incorrectly, the Pratt Library will reject your paper.

Always be extremely careful to avoid **plagiarism**, of course. This includes taking material from the web. See the Course Description on the DDA-660 page of my website for the Institute's statement about plagiarism.

Use lots of **illustrations** – your readers are as visually oriented as you yourself are.

Page numbering: The first three sheets – that is, the ones that have Title of Your Thesis at the top – do not get numbered at all. (See the ...FrontMatterA.doc sample file.) The pages from Acknowledgment up through the end of Table of Contents are numbered with lower-case Roman numerals –i, ii, iii, iv, etc. (See the ...FrontMatterB.doc sample file.) Normal numbering (1,2,3...) begins on the first page of Chapter 1 – that is, on the first page of the Introduction section – and continues from there to the end of the paper. (See the ...Body.doc sample file.)

The **titles** of books and films should be italicized, not put in quotations. For example:

The film, *Star Wars*, was heavily influenced by the book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, by Joseph Cambell.

When developing your **Table of Contents**, you do not need to exactly follow the structure I list below. You may use any structure that works for your project. The sample structure I list below is a good structure, however, and you may feel free to use it if you choose. However you choose to structure your paper, it should be clear, easy to follow, and thorough.

For the **Reference List** (also sometimes called a Bibliography) at the end of your paper, pay special attention to the formatting. Again, you may refer to my template file. For more complete details about formatting references, see the Library Guidelines.

All external material – pictures, websites, books, articles, quotations – must be referenced.

Also, note that **wikipedia.org** is not considered a valid research-paper source.

Finally, think of your paper as a way for you to organize and clarify your thoughts. If you think of it this way, writing the paper can be a very rewarding experience.