

Types of Theses

Students have the option of writing their Master's theses in one of two formats:

1. **A traditional thesis** which is a coherent document that provides a complete and systematic account of your research.
2. **A manuscript-based thesis** which is constructed around one or more related manuscripts.

Consult with your supervisory committee early in your degree program to determine which thesis format is best suited to your work.

Both thesis types should include the following preliminary pages:

1. Title Page
2. Signature Page
3. Abstract (must be page iii)
4. Acknowledgements or Dedication
5. Table of Contents (includes everything after the Table of Contents)
6. List of Figures (mandatory if thesis has figures)
7. List of Tables (mandatory if thesis has tables)
8. List of Illustrations (mandatory if thesis has illustrations)
9. Lists of Symbols, abbreviations or other (advisable if applicable)

1. Traditional Thesis

A traditional thesis is a coherent document that provides a complete and systematic account of your research.

Specifications:

Traditional theses contain the following components (as outlined in the graduate handbook:

<http://graduatestudies.concordia.ca/documents/publications/graduatehandbooks/thesispreparationguide.pdf>

Preliminary Pages (see above)

Body of Thesis (not all sections may apply)

1. Introduction
2. Main body
3. Notes (optional)
4. Footnotes (optional)
5. Bibliography (mandatory)
6. Appendices (optional)

2. Manuscript-based Thesis

If your research has produced one or more manuscripts suitable for journal publication, your thesis may best be presented in manuscript-based format. A manuscript-based thesis is constructed around one or more related manuscripts and can include additional results chapters. You can be either the sole author or a senior co-author of the manuscripts.

Important: Manuscripts must be included as published or as submitted. **Partial papers or combinations of papers are not acceptable.** If you wish to change or re-write the material in the manuscript chapters, you must incorporate them into a traditional thesis format.

Content Requirements

Chapter 1

The introductory chapter of a manuscript-based thesis is an over-arching, unifying introduction to the thesis as a whole. The introductory chapter should contain:

- Introduction
- Literature review, the extent of which will depend on the comprehensiveness of the literature reviews provided within the manuscript chapter(s)
- Information enabling a trained researcher reading the chapter to develop sufficient understanding of the field to understand the theme and hypotheses of the thesis
- Thesis theme and objectives/hypotheses to be tested

Chapter 2 and subsequent manuscript chapters

Each chapter consists of the content of a manuscript which has been published, is in-press, has been submitted for publication, or which is nearly ready to be submitted for publication in a refereed academic journal. The format of the manuscript chapter(s) should be consistent with the rest of the thesis and the references for each chapter should be integrated and presented as one final bibliography at the end of the thesis. Beyond these formatting adjustments, manuscript chapters do not need to be (and should not be) significantly altered from the published or intended-to-be-published version.

Additional results chapters

Additional research results that have not been written up for publication in a refereed academic journal can be included as a separate chapter or chapters following the format of a more traditional thesis. Please note that the inclusion of any additional result chapters may require adjustments to the contents of Chapter 1, such as the inclusion of a methods section.

Concluding chapter

The concluding chapter forms a significant part of the thesis. It must **not** be merely a summary of the manuscript chapters.

The concluding chapter should contain:

- A full analysis of the material in the manuscript chapters in light of current research in the field, unless this is already covered in the manuscript chapters

- Discussion and conclusions relating the manuscript chapters to each other (as well as to other results chapters) and to the overall field of study
- Comments on strengths and weaknesses of the thesis research
- Evaluation of current knowledge and proposals for new ideas related to the field of study
- Discussion of the overall significance and contribution of the thesis research to the field of study
- Discussion of any potential applications of the research findings

Appendices

Appendices should include materials that normally do not appear in refereed journal manuscripts but which are sufficiently important to record in the thesis. Examples:

- Detailed methodologies that would enable a reader to repeat the studies
- Details of experimental data not presented within the manuscript chapters
- Diagrams of specialized equipment developed
- Samples of questionnaires or survey