



Discussion on:

M.Sc. Thesis Preparation and Defense

M.Sc. Thesis Defense Committee

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Outline

- About M.Sc. thesis
- Supervisor's role
- Format and content of the thesis
- Thesis defense seminar



What is a M.Sc. Thesis?

- Writing a M.Sc. thesis is one way of conducting scientific research
- Requires considerable reflection, reading, planning, organizing and communication skills
- Writing a thesis is not about writing all you know about a certain subject



M.Sc. Thesis

- Should be based on **original** investigation
- Must demonstrate a student's ability to formulate a research objective
- Critical judgment and familiarity with research methods and relevant literature in the subject area of the thesis
- Plan and present research results concisely and in a scholarly form
- **Is expected to warrant publication in whole or part of the thesis**



Need of M.Sc. Thesis Format

- For maintaining uniformity in terms of
 - Typeface and quality, spacing, margins, page numbering, title page, and abstract
 - Order and presentation of materials and the formatting of chapter headings, preparing and numbering tables and figures, style of references, placement of notes, headings, etc
 - Follow American Psychological Association (APA) style. <http://www.apastyle.org/manual/index.aspx>
 - to ensure that the thesis adheres to the approved thesis format guidelines.



Supervisor's Role

Main advisor

- Guide the student in pursuit of knowledge.
- Provide constructive criticism in support of professional development.
- Be accessible and meet regularly with the student for consultation and discussion on progress of the research.
- Give guidance about literature, its sources and sources of funding.
- Ensure that the student employs a research method that is appropriate to the research question and can be carried out within the available time and resources.



Supervisor's ...

Main advisor

- Advice the student in establishing a reasonable timetable and provide continued supervision until the thesis is successfully completed.
- Encourage the student to present seminars of research results to outside professional bodies and academicians.
- Participate in the evaluation of the thesis and thesis defense seminar.
- Advise the student on the preparation of manuscript for publication in journals.
- Upon approval of the thesis, sign the approval pages of each thesis copy.



Supervisor's ...

Co- advisor(s)

- Provide suggestions and constructive criticism of the student's ideas and methods and in the final preparation of the thesis.
- Give feedback to written work in timely manner.
- Be accessible to the student for consultation and discussion and provide regular assessment of the student's progress.
- Participate in the evaluation of the thesis and thesis defense seminar.
- Suggest sources of information to the student.



Thesis Acceptance

- The student should be allowed to print required number of copies of the thesis only after its acceptance
- Each copy should be signed by the student and the supervisor(s)
- Electronic submission is also required for all M.Sc. theses along with properly bound printed copies.



Standard Common Format

Each student must follow and adhere to the following **Common Elements of M.Sc. Theses and APA formatting** for headings, tables/figures, and references for uniformity and consistency.



Components of M.Sc. Theses

- **Title Page** (required)
- **Letter of acceptance** (required)
- **Declaration (Required)**
- **Dedication** (optional)
- **Acknowledgements** (required)
- **Abstract** (Nepali and English)
- **Table of Contents** (required)
- **List of Tables** (required)
- **List of Figures** (required)
- **Abbreviations** (Symbols, Glossary etc.)
- **Chapter 1:** Introduction
- **Chapter 2:** Review of the Literature
- **Chapter 3:** (Materials) and Methods
- **Chapter 4:** Results and Discussion
- **Chapter 5:** Conclusions and Recommendations
- **References** (required)
- **Appendices** (optional)



Components... : Title Page

Title:

- This should be brief and self-explanatory. It should relate directly to the main objective of the research.
- A more specific and descriptive sub-title can be added if necessary
- The title must be representative of the contents of the thesis.
- This page is not numbered, but it is counted as the first page (i) of the opening component. The contents of the title page are as follows



Title Page: Elements

- **Title:** This must be the full official title with meaningful description of the content of the thesis. TU logo should be kept below title
- **Candidate's name:** Full name is preferable than the initials. Whatever form is selected, use it consistently throughout the thesis.
- **Degree:** Write out the full name of the degree. Candidates must be very sure that they use the precise degree name.
- **Date:** This is determined by the month and year in which the candidate qualify for graduation.



Components...

- All major **section headings** (e.g., Acknowledgements, Table of Contents, Abstract, major chapter headings) should be written in capital letters, centered between the left and right margins, and begin two inches from the top of the page.
- Make certain that the **Table of Contents** and **Lists of Tables and Figures** correctly list the exact headings, titles, and page numbers in the body of the thesis.
- The listing begins at the **left-hand margin four spaces** below the heading.



Layout of the Chapters

- All **chapter headings** should be written in **capital letters**, **centered** between the left and rights margins, and begin **two inches** from the top of the page, bold , 14 point.
- Do not use period (e.g., **Introduction.**)
- Do not use colon (e.g., **Introduction:**)
- Do not use more than three-digit index number (e.g., "2.1.3 Role of Women")

Page Setup

- A4 (not "A4 Small")

Page margin (?)

- Top and bottom: 3 cm (1.25 inch), left 3 cm (1.25 inch) and right: 2.5 cm (1 inch)

Font

- Times or Times New Roman (First headings 13 point bold, heading 2 and 3; 12 point bold, and text with 12 point, 1.5 line space)



Layout of Each Chapters

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION (5-8 pages, heading-13 point bold, subheadings-12 point bold, body text-12 point not bold, 1.5 line spacing)

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW (8-15 pages, heading-13 point bold, subheadings- 12 point bold, body text-12 point not bold, 1.5 line spacing)

CHAPTER 3: (MATERIALS AND) METHOD (8-15 pages, heading-13 point bold, subheadings- 12 point bold, body text-12 point not bold, 1.5 line spacing)

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION (15-25 pages, heading-13 point bold, subheadings- 12 point bold, body text-12 point not bold, 1.5 line spacing)

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS (2 pages, heading-13 point bold, body text-12 point not bold, 1.5 line spacing)

REFERENCES: (5-10 pages, heading-13 point bold, body text-12 point not bold, 1.5 line spacing)

APPENDIX (Max 30 pages, heading-13 point bold, body text-12 point not bold, 1.5 line spacing)



Letter of Acceptance

- The letter of acceptance page must contain a heading of the thesis (wording and punctuation to agree exactly with the Title Page), the candidate's names as it appears on the title page and the name of the degree.
- This page should be printed in the letter head of the institution (college) accepting the degree and should be signed by the supervisor(s)



Declaration

It include the brief statement of declaration, copyright statement and the way to site the thesis.

Dedication

It should be brief and centered on its own page. No heading is necessary.

Acknowledgments

Include a brief statement of appreciation or recognition of special assistance. If you intend to include them, place them with the heading, **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**, in capital letters, centered, without punctuation.



Abstract

Abstract is a ...

- Summary of **entire thesis** (introduction, objectives, materials and methods, and a condensed summary of findings and conclusion)
- Must **only** contain information that is presented in the paper
- Commonly **350-500** words
- No literature review or references
- The last **thing you write**
- Four to six keywords should be given immediately below the abstract.



Table of Contents

- Provides an overview of the thesis' structure and an index for selective reading of the thesis.
- All materials following the **Table of Contents** are listed in it.
- The **titles of parts, sections, or chapters, and their principal subdivisions** should be listed in the Table of Contents and must be worded exactly as they appear in the body of the thesis.

List of Tables and Figures

- List any tables or figures used in the thesis on a separate page.



Abbreviations

If needed in your thesis, place these lists after the Lists of Tables and Figures in the Preliminaries. Follow a form acceptable to your field of study.



Introduction

Introduction to what?

- The issue
- Present knowledge (briefly)
- Remaining questions
- Your work (objectives)

Literature Review



Should have been written as part of your thesis

- Also include the conceptual and theoretical framework
- Contains **ONLY published information**
- Not a single word about your own
- Move from the global to the local; from the general to the specific
- Describe what is known about the topic you have studied; what have people found elsewhere?
- Common mistakes:
 - Too general
 - Lack international perspectives
 - Plagiarism



(Materials and) Methods

Purpose: To let people **know how you did it**

- Why? Others must be able to do it over again and check your results

Quality:

- Short and concise; use references if possible.
- No **discussion** of methods, only **description** of method and possibly reason for choice
- Write in past tense

Common mistakes

- Insufficient details
- Irrelevant information included
- Unused survey data



Results and Discussion

Results

- Present your observations **objectively**
- Do **not interpret** data at this stage
- Use a writing style that underscores the impression of **observation**
- Use **past tense**

Discussion

- Interpretation, comparison, implication and conclusion



Results and ...

Common mistakes

- Presenting results from other studies (what is old, what is new?)
- Discussing issues that are not included in your title or objectives (out of scope)
- Describing facts that you already know but not supported by the present data
- Using results to verify textbook knowledge (common problem among beginners)



Conclusion

- Gives a precise and summarizing statement of the results. The section should begin with a clear statement of the principal findings.
- **Putting your conclusions in context**
 - Your findings might appear important and significant to you but you need to prove to the reader and the scientific community



Recommendations

- The **implications** of your findings
 - Should be discussed within a realistic framework.
 - Don't **exaggerate** the importance of your results.
 - Be **honest**
 - Don't be afraid to discuss the potential implications
- **Future perspective** on the work.



References

- All the cited literature must be included in the in the reference list
- Make sure all the listings in the references conform to the style or format of APA. Some examples of APA format are:

Journal article

Jones, A. B. (2003). On the importance of curriculum: A postmodern perspective. *Curriculum Studies*, 23(3), 139-153.

Book

Jones, A. B., & Smith, C. D. (2005). *Curriculum and instruction: A primer*. New York: Academic Press.

Book chapter

Smith, C. (2001). Understanding the role of instruction in the curricular context. In E. F. Johnson & G. H. Wise (Eds.), *Conversations about curriculum* (pp. 210-230). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum Associates.

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Length of the Thesis

- **In total**, the thesis should be of **60 to 100 pages**
- **The body of the thesis**
 - It includes from Chapter 1 to Chapter 5, and should be comprises of 40 to 60 pages (12 point, Times Roman New, 1.5 Spacing)
- **Others**
 - It counts from title page to the pages before introduction, References, and the Appendices (data collection instruments and the photo plates).
 - It should not **exceed 40 pages**.
- **Binding**
 - Green hard cover with golden text





Word of Advice:

Don't believe all what you read!

Many **errors are printed,**
many **mistakes repeated**
(particularly by students)

Go to the original source—get it right!



Thesis Defense Seminar

- Student must present the M. Sc. Thesis Defense Seminar at the end of fourth semester and secure minimum of 40% marks in order to pass
- The purpose is to demonstrate a complete understanding of the student study.
- He/she should make presentation effectively without relying too heavily on notes or looking at the screen.



Thesis Defense Seminar

The student after his/ her presentation may be questioned on any aspect of the thesis arising from

- The literature review,
- The research plan,
- Approaches and methods,
- Issues of reliability,
- Validity and/or trustworthiness,
- Applicability of study findings in the related fields,
- Limitations, significant results and implications and recommendation for further study.



Arrangement of the Seminar

- It is the responsibility of the Seminar Organizing Committee (in co-ordination with campus administration) to arrange the seminar
- As far as practicable, seminar will be scheduled at an appropriate time of the main and co- advisors.
- The seminar coordinator should ensure that the defense is conducted in a professional manner
- No questioner takes unnecessary longer time in asking redundant questions, with a motif of harassing the student
- The verbal feedback received in the seminar must be incorporated in the preparation of the final written thesis.



Slide Preparation Guideline

- **Time for each presentation:**
 - 15 minutes presentation and 5 minutes discussion
- **Title slide with author and advisors' names**
- **Number of slides: (18-25)**
 - (Including all: the title, acknowledgement and also the photo plates)
- **Font size in the slides:**
 - Title: Not less than 32 point
 - Body text: not less than 24 point



Slide Preparation...

- Title page – 1 slide
- Introduction – (3 – 4) slides
- Objectives – 1 slide
- (Materials and) Methods – (5 - 7) slides
- Results and Discussion – (6 - 8) slides
- Conclusion and Recommendations – (1-2) slide
- Acknowledgement – 1 slide
- Photo plates – (1- 3) slides



Thesis Defense Seminar Evaluation

- The evaluation of the thesis defense seminar (**marks given for the seminar II**) will be based on:
 - The thesis defense evaluation will be done according to the marking scheme shown in the evaluation form.
- In general, it depends on:
 - The **quality** of the oral presentation and
 - How well the student answered questions pertaining to the thesis and faced the audience in giving answers to questions.



Marking Scheme

S.N.	Evaluation criteria	Full mark (%)	Marks obtained (%)
1	Presentation skill	20	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye contact, gesticulation, voice/speech etc. • Texts, slides, visual aids, Language and readability etc. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management 		
2	Scientific contents	70	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abstract 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction (problem statement and gap identification) 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research methods, design, and materials 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research results and discussion 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusions/ contribution of research 			
3	Discussion-handling the queries and responses	10	
4	Total	100	