

Writing the Thesis

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This guide is designed to give you a procedural outline for working on your thesis. Every thesis project will have special considerations that are not covered here. You should consult with your committee early and frequently to resolve how to handle these special considerations. No one document can cover all the bases. There are two other excellent documents on the Web that you should also read:

[How to Organize Your Thesis](#) by John W. Chinneck, Carleton University

[How to Write a Ph.D. Thesis](#) by Joe Wolfe, University of New South Wales

What is the Thesis?

The culmination of the M.A. is the Master's Thesis. Chinneck ([How to Organize Your Thesis, 1999](#)) asserts that "The distinguishing mark of graduate research is *an original contribution to knowledge*. The thesis is a formal document whose sole purpose is to prove that you have made an original contribution to knowledge. Failure to prove that you have made such a contribution generally leads to failure."

The M.A. thesis is the demonstration of your ability to conduct original research and present the written results. It is not a class that you simply take and get credit for. Nor is it a glorified term paper that you can wait to the "eleventh hour" to finish. Your thesis is a research project that you have spent considerable time in preparatory research (*literature review*), project design (*formulation of a hypothesis*), data collection (*field and or laboratory*), analysis (*statistical examination of the data*), and finally presentation and synthesis (*examination of the statistical results in the context of your hypothesis and literature review*). Each of these individual parts will consume considerable time and effort.

How Long Will it Take?

Chinneck (1999) answers this with: "Longer than you think. Even after the research itself is all done -- models built, calculations complete -- it is wise to allow at least one complete term for writing the thesis. It's not the physical act of typing that takes so long, it's the fact that writing the thesis requires the complete organization of your arguments and results. It's during this formalization of your results into a well-organized thesis document capable of withstanding the scrutiny of expert examiners that you discover weaknesses. It's fixing those weaknesses that takes time."

In general from initial research to final draft, you should allow from **12 to 18 months**. This guideline comes from years of experience, so take it seriously. The following is a breakdown of the phases of analysis and the time you need to allot for each one:

(1) **Literature Review.** The literature review is in many ways the most difficult and time consuming part of the thesis project. It is also the most important. The review of the literature provides the context for your thesis project. You will be building on previous researchers' work so it is important that you be thoroughly familiar with it. The review of the literature provides your hypothesis, your methodology, and your context for analysis and interpretation. Therefore you should spend considerable time on this part of your project. You should initially allot at least **three to six months** for this part of your research. However you should also realize that the literature review will continue for the duration of the project.

(2) **Data Collection.** Depending on where you will be doing your data collection and whether you will be doing it full-time or part-time, the data collection phase of your project will take between **two and six months**. It is very important that you build in enough time to go back and redo some of your data collection. Most researchers find that their expertise changes over the course of data collection and you will need to go back and recheck the data that you initially collected.

(3) **Data Analysis.** Do not underestimate the time you allot here. Learning a statistics package takes time. Researching the appropriate statistics and learning how to use and

apply them to your data takes time. Plan on at least **three months** for this phase of your analysis.

- (4) **Preparation of the Thesis Drafts.** You will be writing in drafts. *You should count on writing at least three to four complete drafts before your thesis is complete.* As a general guideline, from first draft to final draft you should count on at least **six months**. This means that if you plan to graduate in the spring semester you should have your first draft to your committee at least by October of that academic year (e.g., if you plan to graduate in Spring 2009, your thesis committee should have your first draft by October 2008).

Getting Started

Once you have talked with your committee members and established a topic the very first thing to do is start library research. One of your goals from the outset should be to track down and read every reference that you possibly can. Ideally you should start this task in your first year in the MA program. You will be working on this aspect of your thesis right up to the final draft, so get an early start. The way to start this process is to find several recent articles or books that pertain to your study. Read them thoroughly and take notes. Then turn to their literature cited. Cull through and find the references that are pertinent to your research. Get those references, read them, take notes, and mine their references. Continue this process until you have amassed all of the references that you can find.

It is important that you start this process as soon as possible because [interlibrary loan](#) can take a long time in the case of hard to find books or articles.

You should familiarize yourself with the journals that are available through the [electronic resources](#) at the library. This will make the research phase of your project much easier.

The Hypothesis

At this point, you should be ready to formulate a hypothesis that you can (realistically) test. Spend some time carefully crafting this and formulating exactly how (your methodology) you are going to test the hypothesis. Write a few pages regarding this and present it to your committee for feedback. Do this early so that you have adequate time for feedback and revisions.

The Outline

After several weeks of researching and reading the literature you will be ready to construct an outline. This is the roadmap for your thesis. The outline will provide the chapter headings and subheadings for your thesis. Construct the outline with two general guidelines in mind. First, most theses will follow the general sections described below. Secondly, add headings and subheadings based on what you've discovered in your literature review. Once you have an outline, give it to your committee for comments and revisions.

You now have a tangible place to begin writing. For each of your headings and subheadings, write a paragraph or more. This should be very informal at this point. Write down what you plan to cover and why.

Timetable

Make a timetable (see example at end of this document) and plan when you will have each phase of your project finished. This will help you to budget your time. This structure will help you get things done on time. Otherwise, the temptation is to set a date when the final draft is due and turn in the draft at the last minute. Drafts prepared in this manner are generally horribly disorganized and hopelessly incomplete. Handing in this kind of draft will only irritate your committee and seriously prolong the editorial process. So don't do it. A much better

strategy is to turn in drafts of the key parts of your thesis for feedback. The most important initial things that you should show your committee are (1) a discussion of your hypothesis, (2) an outline of chapter headings and subheadings, and (3) a preliminary literature review.

Data Collection

If your thesis involves data collection (measurements, observations, or interviews), you need to build in extra time for this very labor-intensive activity. Data collection is tremendously time consuming. Make sure that you allow enough time. Invariably, measurements have to be redone, statistics recalculated, and interviews followed up on. A general rule is to allow twice as much time as you think you need. One unanticipated challenge that researchers face is how to present their raw data effectively in the final manuscript. You should anticipate this challenge in the construction of your data collection forms so that the transition from the raw forms to the final presentation in an appendix will be as easy as possible.

Mechanics of Writing

Before you begin writing you should get the two essential writing manuals listed below. Get them and read them. Keep them where you write for reference.

Turabian, Kate L. 2007. *A manual for writers of research papers, theses, and dissertations, seventh edition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Strunk Jr., William and E.B. White. 1999. *The elements of style, fourth edition*. London: Longman Publishing.

Begin Writing

Probably the most common mistake that beginning writers make is trying to write from page one. Taking a look at the general sections described below, THE LAST thing that you should write is the abstract. This is the hardest part of the thesis and is largely dependent on the work being done. Save it till last. In general, the easiest things to write are the literature review, materials, and methods sections.

Parts of a Thesis

Abstract

This is the synopsis of your thesis. It should state your hypothesis, your methods (how you went about testing the hypothesis), a brief summary of your findings, and a brief conclusion. This is the LAST thing that you write. Wait until everything else is written before attempting the abstract.

Introduction

The introduction should *introduce* the thesis. This is not a summary of the thesis. It is not a brief version of each chapter. It is an introduction to the topic. Introduce the subject. In ***general*** terms, what does your study address? Why is it important? Where does it fit in the overall field? Be sure to include in the introduction a clear statement of your hypothesis and how you are going to address it. Throughout the introduction you should use citations from the research literature to support your study. These citations should include but not be limited to research presented in the Literature Review. The following are suggested topics that are usually covered in the introduction.

Statement of the Problem. You should succinctly state the problem that your thesis is going to address. You should also present relevant information about why this is an important problem.

Background and Need. You should present relevant literature that supports the need for your project. Research articles, books, educational and government statistics are just a few sources that should be used here. This section can include brief overviews of articles covered in the literature review that support the need for your project

Rationale. You should carefully present the model or theory that underlies the project. The rationale should define the larger problem being investigated, summarize what is

known about the problem, define the gap(s) in the knowledge, and state what needs to be done to address the gap(s).

Purpose of the Project. Based on the above background information, explain the purpose of the study. Explain what you hope the study will accomplish and why you chose to do this particular study. This should be supported with citations and specific information related to the study.

Research Questions/Hypotheses. Given the background above, you carefully state the hypothesis(es) that will be tested in your thesis.

Methods. Briefly (as you will cover this in-depth in a later chapter) describe the methods that were used in your study (i.e., research methods, variables, instrumentation, participants, pilot, analysis of data).

Limitations. Begin this with a summary of the document thus far to provide a background for any limitations to this study. Be very specific, for example the population to which your findings will be limited.

Literature Review

The literature review should discuss ***all*** of the research that has been done on the subject. How you group the discussion will depend on your project, but be sure to come up with a logical organization before you begin writing. This is the discussion and analysis of the library research you've been doing for the past 12 months. How many studies should be included will depend on the topic, but a general baseline is 75 to 100 references (although many topics will appropriately have many more than this).

The literature review should begin with a reiteration of the purpose of your study. This should be followed by a preview of what is to come in the literature review. This lays out the overall organization of specific topics you will cover.

The purpose of the literature review is to concisely demonstrate your level of understanding of the research related to your project. You should not discuss all of the literature in-depth. Rather you should group your literature according to some general topics and only discuss specific studies if they are “landmark” studies for your area of research (there should be 6-10 of these). Each of these specific discussions should include specific information about the group involved in the research project, data, and results reported. Often a review of literature will include several of these in-depth reviews with “mini-reviews” of studies that came to the same or similar conclusions. The literature review should end with a discussion of how the literature relates to your study.

Materials and Methods

This section should provide an in-depth discussion of your materials (e.g., if this is an archaeological thesis, you should discuss the history, etc. of the populations that you are dealing with). The methods portion of this section should carefully and methodically discuss the methods that you are going to use, the precedent for these, and the reasons why you are using them. A general guideline is that you should discuss your methods in sufficient detail that another researcher could take your data and duplicate your results. One of the expectations of performing original research is that someone in the future will do further research on this topic. Such a researcher should be able to use your methodology without having to consult any other source. If you are using statistical analyses, ***explain*** the statistical methods. What do they mean? How are they used? Why are they more applicable here than other similar methods? For some theses, the materials and methods should be discussed in separate sections.

Results

This is a narrative presentation of your findings. This is where you present your statistics, tables, figures, etc. that show what the specific findings of your study are. Present them in detail. Remember that someone should be able to duplicate your study based solely on this document. This requires considerable description.

It is very important not to try and combine this chapter with the next one. You need to carefully present your results first with no further interpretation. Once you have presented the data you are ready to move on to the next section.

Discussion

This chapter should begin with a concise restatement of your study's purpose along with any needed background information. You should restate each of your hypotheses. Now that you have presented the results in the previous section, discuss them in this section. What, specifically, do the results mean? How can they be interpreted? Can they be interpreted in multiple ways? What do the findings tell you about your hypothesis? Do not claim more for your results than the data really shows. Avoid speculation.

Conclusions

This should summarize your results and discussion. You should include a list of the most important findings of your study in descending order of importance. You should also provide a statement about the possibility of future study. What needs to be done and what does this study contribute?

Literature Cited

This is all of the literature that you have ***cited*** in the text, tables, and figures. This is not a bibliography. Do not include works that have not been cited in the body. Keep careful track of

this as you write. When you use a source, add it to this section. Before you begin compiling this section, find out what style you are expected to use. In general, anthropologists should use the style of the journal [Current Anthropology](#). Make a hard copy of the style and tape it above your computer. Carefully adhere to it or you will (deservedly) raise the ire of your committee (this is a pet peeve of most academics).

Appendices

If you have material that is too long to include in a table (raw data, field notes, etc.) or not appropriate to a particular section it should be included as an appendix. Theses should always present the original raw data from which the thesis was written. This frequently takes far longer than one might anticipate because of the challenges of formatting the section. Be sure to build in appropriate time for this and try to anticipate this challenge when you construct your data collection forms. You should under no circumstances publish someone else's data without their express written consent and proper acknowledgement.

Tables and Figures

Tables and figures should appear ***in the text*** after they are first mentioned. Appending them at the end of the thesis is a very awkward arrangement and makes the thesis difficult to read. Material presented in tables and figures should not be duplicated in the text. There are examples of the general format that should be used for tables and figures at the end of this document.

Raw Data

Your raw data should always appear as part of the thesis. This should appear as an appendix at the end of your thesis. Another researcher should be able to duplicate your work with no other documents at their disposal.

The Editorial Process

You need to develop a "thick skin" **now**. Your first draft **will** be returned to you covered in red. Your committee has a vested interest in producing a graduate with professional level research and writing skills. These are a reflection not just on you but also on your committee and department. You should count on **at least** five or six drafts (many of them swimming in red) before the final draft.

Every writer begins the process quite convinced that they are an accomplished writer with little need for improvement. Scientific writing is an art form that must be constantly refined (regardless of your level). Take your committee's criticisms and **learn** from them. Don't set up an epic battle between you and your committee. You are supposed to be learning while completing the thesis. Take each editorial comment and fix the problem. Joe Wolfe ([How to Write a Ph.D. Thesis](#)) offers the following observations in regard to the editorial process:

"As you write your thesis, your scientific writing is almost certain to improve. Even for native speakers of English who write very well in other styles, one notices an enormous improvement in the first drafts from the first to the last chapter written. The process of writing the thesis is like a course in scientific writing, and in that sense each chapter is like an assignment in which you are taught, but not assessed. Remember, only the final draft is assessed: the more comments your adviser adds to first or second draft, the better."

Healthy Paranoia

Joe Wolfe ([How to Write a Ph.D. Thesis](#)) makes the following suggestions regarding maintaining files (computer and paper) while writing your thesis. This is good advice. Follow it and save yourself trouble later.

"It is encouraging and helpful to start a filing system. Open a word-processor file for each chapter *and one for the references*. You can put notes in these, as well as text. While doing something for Chapter n, you will think "Oh I must refer back to/discuss this in Chapter m" and so you put a note to do so in the Chapter m file. Or you may think of something interesting or relevant for

that chapter. When you come to work on that chapter, the more such notes you have accumulated, the easier it will be to write.

Make a back-up of these files and do so every day at least (depending on the reliability of your computer and the age of your disk drive). Never keep the back-up disk close to the computer in case the hypothetical thief who fancies your computer is smart enough to think s/he could use some disks as well. You should also have a rotating master back-up: use two disks, back-up one of them every week, and keep them physically separate from your main computer. That way you always have back-ups that are 1 and 2 weeks old, and if a file becomes corrupted you will have an older version of it available. If you want to be really careful, you could transfer your back-ups to a machine at some geographically remote location (using FTP or an email attachment), without of course telling the system administrator that I suggested this. (For Macintosh files use Binhex to convert the files to ASCII form and FTP in ASCII mode. For Dos/Windows files, transfer using binary mode). A simple way of making a remote back-up is to send it as an email attachment to a (consenting) email correspondent. You could send it to yourself if your server saves your mail (in some email packages like Eudora this is an optional setting). In either case, be careful to dispose of superseded versions so that you don't waste disk space.

You should also have a physical filing system: a collection of folders with chapter numbers on them. This will make you feel good about getting started and also help clean up your desk. Your files will contain not just the plots of results and pages of calculations, but all sorts of old notes, references, calibration curves, suppliers' addresses, specifications, speculations, letters from colleagues etc which will suddenly strike you as relevant to one chapter or other. Stick them in that folder. Then put all the folders in a box or a filing cabinet. As you write bits and pieces of text, stick the hard copy, the figures etc in these folders as well. Touch them and feel their thickness from time to time - ah, the thesis is taking shape.

If any of your data exist only on paper, copy them and keep the copy in a different location. Consider making a copy of your lab book. This has another purpose beyond security: usually the lab book stays in the lab, but you may want a copy for your own future use. Further, scientific ethics require you to keep lab books and original data for at least ten years, and a copy is more likely to be found if two copies exist.

While you are getting organised, you should deal with any university paperwork. Examiners have to be nominated and they have to agree to serve, various forms are required by your department

and by the university administration. Make sure that the rate limiting step is your production of the thesis, and not some minor bureaucratic problem."

MA Thesis Style

An MA thesis is made up of a title page, an abstract, a table of contents (including separate tables for list of tables and list of figures), an introduction, several chapters, a conclusion, references, and, optionally, appendices. Apart from enumeration, each chapter must have a title. The specific structure and contents of each chapter must consistently follow the same style. Most of the guidelines below are the SFSU requirements for thesis format. Follow the style below exactly.

Margins. The left margin should be 1 ½ inches. All other margins should be 1 inch.

Font. The main text and literature cited should be 12 point Times New Roman. Block quotes, appendices, and all secondary material should be 10 point Times New Roman.

Page Numbering. *Preliminary pages* (all pages before the text begins). Use lower case Roman numerals for preliminary pages. Begin the page count with the title page, but do not display numerals on the title, copyright, certification of approval and abstract pages. Display the Roman numerals on the acknowledgement, table of contents and list pages. Roman numerals should be centered, 1 inch from the bottom of the page, and 1 inch from any text.

Main Text. Use Arabic numerals starting with page one of the text. Position the page numbers in the upper right hand corner, 1 inch from the top and 1 inch from the right. The text must be an additional 1 inch away from the page number.

Paragraph. All paragraphs begin with a five-space indent (do not use tabs). All text paragraphs should be double-spaced. All sentences should be separated by two spaces after the period. Do not justify paragraphs.

Headings. Headings throughout the document should follow the format below.

MAIN HEADINGS

Chapters always start on a new page. Chapter titles (including headings for tables of contents, literature cited, and appendices) must be centered, bold, all capitals, 14 point, and followed by two empty lines.

Second Level Headings

Second Level Headings must be left-justified, 12 point, bold, with primary words capitalized (i.e., nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and subordinate conjunctions) Second Level Headings (sections of chapters) are positioned directly above the main text and separated from the following text by one empty line and the text above by two empty lines. *A Second Level Heading cannot directly follow a Main Heading.* In other words, at least one paragraph of text should follow the Main Heading before the first Second Level Heading.

Third Level Headings. Third Level Headings precede the first paragraph of the section, are in 12 point, bold, italicized, with primary words capitalized, and followed by a period.

Short quotes. Short quotes (fewer than 60 words) should be located within the text and enclosed by double quotation marks. Single quotation marks are for quotes within quotes. The source of the quote must be written in parentheses immediately after the closing quotation marks, but still before the main punctuation that closes off the sentence or clause. [Example] “We discard the so called ‘modularity view’ attributed to Chomsky” (Lakoff 1987: 208). When two authors are the source, both must be mentioned, as in: (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 122), and when more than two authors are responsible, the abbreviation “et al.” must follow the first name: (Varela et al. 1983: 156-157). The phrase “et al.” is only used in parentheses. If referring to the authors in the phrase use “and coworkers” or “and others”. If the author(s) wrote more than one

book in the same year, alphabetically-ordered small letters will distinguish, for example: (Lakoff 1976a: 121) (Lakoff 1976b: 82).

Long quotes. Longer quotes must be placed in a text block in 10 point font, with ½ inch indentation on both sides and the paragraph single-spaced. The quote should be set off from the text above and the text below by an extra line (i.e., two empty lines above and two empty lines below). Citation should follow the guidelines above.

Citation. All reference information is provided in a separate part at the end of the MA thesis in a section entitled Literature Cited. Any specific information must be attributed to a source. The format described above under quotations should be followed. The general format in parentheses is the author, followed by the publication date and precise page number(s) if a passage is directly quoted. Only direct quotations include the page number(s). If the author's name is mentioned in the passage, it should be omitted from the parenthetical portion. In the case of long passages of paraphrased material, the citation is provided after the last sentence.

Numbers. Always spell out numbers when they stand as the first word in a sentence or if the number is less than 10 (numbers 10 and greater should use Arabic numerals); do not follow numbers spelled out with abbreviations. Numbers indicating time, weight, and measurements are to be in Arabic numerals when followed by abbreviations (e.g., 2 mm; 1 sec; 3 ml).

Table and Figure Format

Follow the style below for your tables and figures. Tables and figures must be set-off from the text above and below by two blank lines. Tables are preceded by a title which is left justified and consists of the table number followed by a period, two spaces, a title which describes the contents of the table, followed by a period. Tables and figures should be numbered consecutively throughout the thesis. The title is followed by two blank lines, the table headers, a header line, the contents of the table, and a footer line. Columns of numbers within a table are right justified within the column. When a table spans the entire width of the page it is left justified as below. When a table does not span the entire width of the page it is centered as the

second example below. Tables are never split across pages. Titles for figures are placed below the figure and are placed in line with the left-most portion of the figure (figures are always centered). The title consists of the same parts described above for table titles.

Table XX. Title.

Head 1	Head 2	Head 3	Head 4	Head 5	Head 6	Head 7
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Table XX. Title.

Head 1	Head 2	Head 3	Head 4	Head 5
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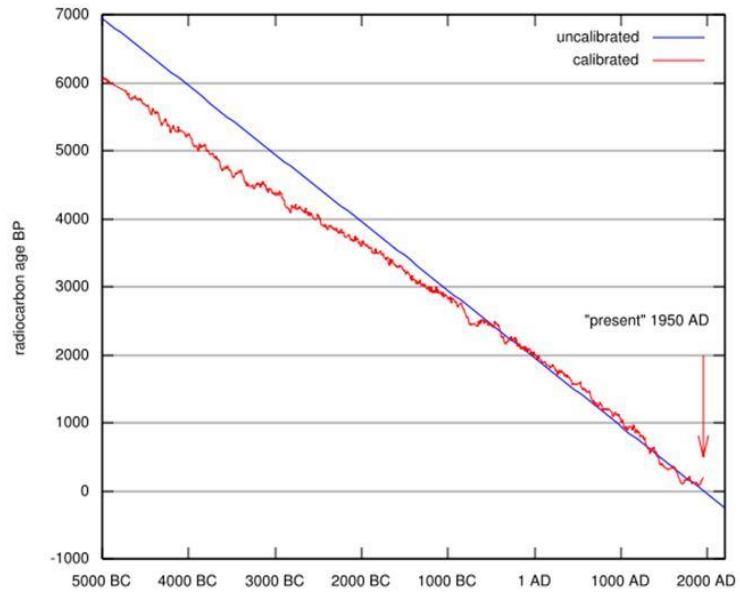


Figure XX. Title.

Example MA Thesis Timeline

January - May 1987	Research into the theoretical basis for dental variation and review of literature
September - December 1987	Familiarization with the Arizona State University Dental Anthropology System
January - March 1988	Design computer forms for data recording (using SCRIPT and SPSSx)
April - September 1988	Pilot study of 120 individuals for selection of appropriate traits for the thesis
October 1988 - January 1989	Collection of data (~300 individuals)
January - May 1989	Analysis of data and write-up

OK, that seems like a pretty reasonable timeline.... so what went wrong? Well, everything went well up to a point. One thing that I did *right* was to start the literature review early. As it turned out, I worked on the literature review right up till the last draft. This, I found out later, is typical. You should therefore plan on it. Another smart thing that I did was build in time to learn about a type of morphological data that I really hadn't spent much time on before (the ASU dental traits). This took **a lot** longer than I really thought it would. In most cases you are going to be learning a new technique, methodology, etc. for your thesis research. You need to factor this in to your time allocation. The last smart things that I did were to take some time to prepare a systematic form to record data and perform a "pilot study" to really learn how to collect the ASU trait information and "hone" my data collection techniques. I was quite pessimistic with my time (notice I gave myself 9 months to do this), but as it turned out, I needed all of that time. I found out about half-way through the pilot study that I was actually collecting the data incorrectly. I had to go back and redo everything that I had done up to that point. I encountered a similar problem during the actual data collection. So instead of finishing data collection in January, I actually finished in early March.

So what else went wrong? The first serious problem was that I didn't build in any time for statistical analysis. I thought that I was pretty well versed in statistics (after all, I aced both my

undergraduate statistics courses... how hard could it be?). After I had collected all of my data, I realized that I had no idea how to work through the statistics. So I threw myself on the mercy of the statistics department. Nine times out of ten, I left the statistics department more confused and frustrated than when I went in. After nearly four months of wrangling with the statistics, I finally got it pretty well ironed out. My major breakthrough came after I wrote to a fellow graduate student at another university that I had met at the physical anthropology meetings. Without his extensive help, I would have been sunk. So instead of finishing this phase in April, I finally got it done in mid-August. Notice I was already three months behind.

The second serious error that I made was not allowing enough time for writing. Writing up the materials section and the results section took a lot of time... a lot longer than I ever could have imagined. When I finally finished the first draft of my thesis, it was already mid-September. I had begun doctoral school before finishing the M.A. against the advice of my committee and was beginning to understand why I had been advised not to do this. And then came the real shock. The first draft came back from my committee drowning in a sea of red. Reanalysis, rewriting, and reworking ensued. One of the stipulations of my admittance to the doctoral program was that I be finished with the M.A. by the beginning of my second semester. So the heat was on. After weeks of eighteen hour days, I did get the second, and third drafts in. And I did get my final draft in with about two days to spare.

The moral of the story....? Plan ahead. You can never build in too much time to complete the thesis. Be very conservative. Build in extra time. Count on having to recollect data, redo interviews, etc. Allow yourself at least six months more than what your most conservative guess is.

Sites with Helpful Information on Writing a Thesis

[How to Organize Your Thesis](#) by John W. Chinneck, Carleton University

[How to Write a Ph.D. Thesis](#) by Joe Wolfe, University of New South Wales

["Writing and presenting your thesis or dissertation"](#) by Joseph Levine at Michigan State University

[How Theses Get Written: Some Cool Tips Online](#) by Steve Easterbrook, University of Toronto.

[Postgraduate Student Resources](#) by University of Canberra

Some Theses Online

[Our Ancestors Talk Among Us: Indigenous Knowledge in International Repatriation](#) by Thomas A. Biron, Michigan State University

[Life and Health in Nineteenth Century Port Hope, Ontario: Isotopic and Dental Evidence of Diet](#) by Karen Blackburn, Trent University

[Maintaining Ethnicity: A Case Study in the Maintenance of Ethnicity Among Chilean Immigrant Students](#) by Stephanie A. Corlett, Carleton University

[Linear and Cortical Bone Dimensions as Indicators of Health Status in Subadults from the Milwaukee County Poor Farm Cemetery](#) by Jessica Lynn Florence, University of Colorado, Denver

[HUJPU-ST: Spatial and Temporal Patterns of Anthropogenic Fire in Yosemite Valley](#) by Linn Gassaway, San Francisco State University

[A Contribution to the Debate Over the Origin and Development of Treponemal Disease: A Case Study from Southern Illinois](#) by Twana Jill Golden, Southern Illinois University

[Dental Variation of Native Populations from Northern Spanish Florida](#) by Mark C. Griffin, Northern Illinois University

[Mythic Implications of Faunal Assemblages from Three Ohlone Sites](#) by Barbara Lee Jones, San Francisco State University

[Anthropology and Creationism: A Cultural Analysis](#) by Sherry A. Norton, California State University, Fullerton

[Using Diffuse Idiopathic Skeletal Hyperostosis to Determine Age at Death](#) by Jennifer E. Riddle, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

[Dirty Pigs: Decomposition of Clothed and Nude Non-human Animal Models in Three Microclimates and Forensic Soil Taphonomy with an Emphasis in Microbial Community Profiling in an Arid Environment](#) by Allison Marie Sharplin, New York University.

[A Test of Non-Metric Ancestry Determination in Forensic Anthropology: Should the Current Categorization of Individuals of European Descent be Reconsidered?](#) by Valerie Nicole Yavornitzky, Michigan State University