

# Thesis/Dissertation Workshop

## Tips and Reminders

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### Purpose of Theses/Dissertations

- Learn to communicate and ‘speak the language’ of your field.
- Produce knowledge instead of reproducing it.
- Fill a gap in the literature or introduce a new viewpoint.
- Display topic mastery.

### Research Focus

- Narrow and specify your interest areas.
- Communicate with committee members to help you find an acceptable niche.
- What have you written about previously and are familiar with? What problems and solutions would you like to explore?
- Regularly meet or connect with your advisor/committee chair.

### Plan Ahead

- Choose a topic that is practical and something you are passionate about.
- Create small sustainable habits for studying and writing; this is a key variable in setting yourself up for success.
- Set aside specific time blocks to write weekly.
- Explore the university’s resources before you need them, such as the library and writing supports.

### Thesis/Dissertation Management

- Format your document from the beginning.
- Make an outline with the sections you want to include in your paper.
- Make a checklist and write one section of the paper at a time.
- Break every section down into manageable pieces.

### Unique Challenges

- Don’t treat it as a normal writing assignment. It’s an entirely different process.
- This is a long term project, you will need to stay on track.
- Use the available university resources.
- Editing is a continuous process as you learn and refine your ideas.

### Choosing your Committee

- Select members with the requisite expertise and connections to help you.
- Will they be involved or distant in the writing process?
- Ask other students and faculty you trust about potential candidates for the committee.
- Select committee members who are excited about your work.

### Writing Setting

- Ask yourself what setting you write best in. Is it a coffee shop, the library, or at school?
- Set up a home office or dedicated space for writing.
- Minimize distractions to your writing.
- Write during the time of day you are most productive and create a habit.

### Living with the Task

- Control the stress, don’t allow it to control you.
- The cure for stress is structure. Make a plan, an outline, and a schedule. Stick to it!
- Make time for self-care and a personal life.
- Consider forming an accountability writing group if you struggle with procrastination.
- Asking for help is okay and in your best interest!