| MFA Written Component: Thesis and Non-thesis options | All M.F.A. candidates produce a written component as part of the requirements of the degree. The student’s graduate committee will determine whether the written component is to be a formal thesis or a non-thesis.

The **formal thesis** is a scholarly research project on the objectives, theoretical context, and/or historical and cultural points of reference of the M.F.A. work. Candidates writing a formal thesis must register for six hours of A&D 698 (Research MFA Thesis) in addition to the 60 hours required for the M.F.A. They must also adhere to the Graduate School thesis requirements.

The **non-thesis** written component might be a process paper, a research paper, or other written creative endeavor, such as an artist book. Candidates not required to write a formal thesis are also not required to take research hours in addition to the 60 hours required for the M.F.A.

*The written component (whether thesis or non-thesis) does NOT constitute nor substitute for the exhibition of the final body of work.* |

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**Suggested STRUCTURE and KEY COMPONENTS**

for Department of Art and Design MFA written component, non-thesis option

All decisions regarding content and specific components of your written component are to be determined in discussion with your graduate committee. The following is provided as a possible structure only, not as rules.

| Main criteria | originality of research
| | significance of contribution to knowledge/practice in art & design discipline
| Text Length | Written component, non-thesis option: 9-15 (nine to fifteen) pages
| | 1. Title page
| | 2. Dedication (optional)
| | 3. Acknowledgments
| | 4. Table of Contents
| | 5. List of Tables (if any)
| | 6. List of Figures (if any)
| | 7. Abstract (250 words)
| | 8. **TEXT** (9-15 pages)
| | 9. Bibliography
| | 10. Visual documentation

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**Department of Art and Design approved style formats**

| | [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)
| Chicago | *The Chicago Manual of Style, 16th ed.*
| | [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/02/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/02/)
| MLA | *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed.*
| | [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/ MLA style](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/ MLA style)
**REQUIRED VERSIONS OF THESIS**

**DEADLINE:**
Friday of deadweek

Four versions of the thesis are due by Friday of deadweek. A fifth copy for the candidate is optional.

1-3. Three copies to A&D Visual Resource Library:
   1. Archival-bound copy*
   2. Non-archival spiral-bound copy*
   3. Electronic copy on CD or DVD

4. Archival-bound copy to Chair of Graduate Committee*

5. Optional: Archival-bound copy for candidate

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**Archival and non-archival guidelines**

Archival requirements
- 100% cotton rag paper
- 20# weight, minimum
- Thesis binding (Thesis Binding, similar to a hard cover book, consists of 3 metal screw posts holding the cover, contents, and spine together.)

Non-archival requirements
- Regular office paper
- Coil binding
- Clear plastic cover
- Black plastic back cover

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