

Guidelines: SOM dissertations and theses

Students in all Ph.D. programs and all Master's programs requiring a thesis must perform directed research toward generation of dissertations or theses.

Formatting: The School of Medicine has no specific formatting guidelines for dissertations and theses. Students and advisors should follow the guidelines from the VCU Graduate School. In practice, advisors and students often also review several recently released dissertations or theses from students in the same graduate program (available in [Scholars Compass](#)) to familiarize themselves with formatting conventions.

Scope and content: Students must coordinate with their advisors, graduate advisory committees (GAC) and graduate program guidelines regarding the overall scope and content of their dissertations and theses.

All theses and dissertations must contain the following sections:

- Title page
- Partial fulfillment statement
- Copyright statement
- Abstract
- Vita

Program guidelines for the sections within dissertations and theses supersede the SOM guidelines below. If no program guidelines exist, dissertations and theses should at the minimum include the following sections in the indicated order:

- Title page
- Partial fulfillment statement
- Copyright statement
- Acknowledgements
- Table of contents
- List of tables
- List of figures
- List of abbreviations
- Statement of contributions
- Abstract
- Introduction chapter
- Methods, data or analysis chapter(s) including appropriate figures and tables
- Conclusions chapter
- References cited
- Vita

Inclusion of appendices for additional information such as protocols, small projects, etc. is optional.

Students can, with approval from their advisors and GACs, expand the above to accommodate unique features of dissertation and thesis research projects.

Approved by SOM Graduate Programs Committee: 2024.01