

Formatting for Creative Writing Theses

Most creative writing works are markedly different in content, style, and structure from a traditional empirical study. Students should consult with their committee chair and members regarding any genre-specific commonalities or requirements to ensure the creative work meets programmatic and disciplinary expectations commensurate with the degree awarded.

All submissions, including those in Creative Writing, must follow the UTRGV Thesis Formatting Guide*, including all standard Preliminary and Supplementary Pages, as found in the formatting guide.

Creative works should include a minimum of two sections, although most programs and committees require a third section, or additional sections or appendices, as follows:

- First Section: Critical Introduction and/or Methodology (titled as appropriate to the content)

The first section should include an introduction to the work, which typically includes a statement of purpose, *raison d'être*, background information, and an overview of the subject matter or content. This section may also include a description of the relationship of the thesis to other works, and any rationale or material needed to effectively situate or contextualize the work. This section may also include a discussion or review of any relevant theoretical constructs relevant to the work.

- Second Section: The Central Creative Work(s) (titled and organized as appropriate to the content).

This is the central component of the thesis and typically consists of an original creative piece or pieces such as short stories, poems, a novel or significant excerpt, screenplay, or any other form of creative writing. The length and format of these works can vary depending on the requirements of the program, but common page length requirements by genre are as follows:

- Fiction/short stories: ~120 pages.
- Poetry: 60 to 90 pages.
- Screenplay: ~90 pages.

Subsections should be clearly identified with titles or headings. For example, a novel may have chapters, a chronology, or themes, while plays or scripts may be divided into acts. If multiple different works are presented in this section, such as poems or short stories, they also should be clearly identified with appropriate titles or headings and may also be further organized chronologically or thematically using sub headers if desired.

Most programs or committees require a third section, or additional sections or appendices.

- Third Section: Critical Analysis or Reflection (titled as appropriate to the content)

Some programs require a critical analysis or reflection component in which the author discusses their creative process, influences, themes, techniques, and any other relevant aspects of their work. This section, if included, should provide insight into the thought process behind the creative piece(s) and demonstrates a deeper understanding of the craft. A conclusion that summarizes the main points

discussed in the thesis may also be included and may offer final reflections on the creative work(s) presented.

- Appendices (optional; to be placed after “References” [see below])

Additional materials such as drafts, outlines, character sketches, or any other supplementary documents that provide context or support for the creative work(s) presented.

Formatting a Thesis in a Language Other than English

For a thesis written in a language other than English or a dual-language thesis, the formatting requirements remain the same. The following exceptions should be noted:

- The abstract *must* be written in English, or in dual language, even if the entirety of the thesis is a foreign language.
- For a thesis written in *both* English and a foreign language, major Headers should be in English.
- For a thesis written *entirely* in a foreign language, the major Headers are more appropriately written in that foreign language.

***Standard Formatting Content**

All Creative Writing theses should include standard Preliminary and Supplementary Pages, as found in the formatting guide. These pages (Headers) include:

Preliminary Pages

- TITLE Page
- COMMITTEE Page
- COPYRIGHT Page
- ABSTRACT
- DEDICATION (optional)
- ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (optional)
- TABLE OF CONTENTS
- LIST OF TABLES – only required if using more than one Table.
- LIST OF FIGURES – only required if using more than one Figure.

SECTIONS (creative works)

Supplementary Pages

- REFERENCES (Works Cited)

- APPENDIX (optional)
- VITA

The entirety of the thesis should be Times New Roman, 12-point font, black, with minimum boldface (boldface should be limited to Headings). Pagination and margins should follow standard thesis formatting guides, as should the formatting of Tables and Figures.