

Guidelines for writing your Master thesis

A master thesis should be about 45-40 pages in length (no strict limits; 11 pt font, one and a half-spaced except for abstract which may be single-spaced, font Arial, justified) and the structure should be matching an article from a prominent journal from the relative field research but with a more extensive introduction.

Title Page

title; names of students, research director and co-director if applicable; date; copyright statement.

[The title should be brief, grammatically correct, and accurate enough to stand alone. The title is followed by the names of the authors listed in the order: first, middle initial, and surname; the following copyright statement should be included:

"I hereafter certify that every statement of this report originating from another source than my personal thoughts has been attributed to its legitimate source, and that every statement directly copied from another source is explicitly mentioned between quotes".]

Abstract

one half to one page (single space); a succinct summary of objectives, methods, results and conclusions.

[The purposes of the abstract are (1) to allow the reader to determine the nature and information given and (2) to pinpoint key features for use in indexing and retrieval. State briefly the problem or purpose of the research if it is not adequately conveyed by the title. Indicate theoretical or experimental plan used, accurately summarize the principal findings, and point out major conclusions.]

Table of contents

A table of contents is required. All chapters, sections and subsections heading appearing in the text must appear in The Table of Contents, with appropriate page numbers on the far-right hand side. The only this to be left out of the Table, is the "Title Page", the Abstract and "Table of Contents" itself.

List of Figures and Tables

A separate "List of Figures" and "List of Tables" is to follow the "Table of Contents ». It is recommended that a separate "List of Acronyms/ abbreviations" if you are using a large number of them (more than 15) be included, following the "List of Tables".

Introduction

The introduction should include a statement of objectives and significance and a review of pertinent literature, carefully cited. This section should generally be more detailed than allowed for a journal article.

[The introduction should contain a clear statement of the problem and why you are studying it. Outline what has been done before by citing truly pertinent literature. Indicate the significance, scope and limits of your work.]

Material and Methods

Summarize the methods used; instrumental, synthetic and analytical, as well as computational. Also, description of any compounds synthesized, computer programs written, etc.

[This section should include sufficient detail about the materials and methods that you used so that experienced workers could repeat your work and obtain comparable results.]

Results

A presentation of the data obtained, complete and detailed, with sufficient description to be understood — but without interpretation.

[Summarize the data collected and their statistical treatment; Use equations, figures, and tables where necessary for clarity and conciseness. It is recommended that there be only one figure per page, unless two can fit neatly and not appear crowded. All figures should be numbered sequentially, starting with Figure 1 for the first figure appearing in the text. Do not use chapter numbers as part of the figure number.]

Discussion

This chapter should present your interpretation, analyses and explanations of the results, both positive and negative; what does it all mean? [your results chapter and discussion chapter may be combined into one chapter « Results and discussion ».]

Perspectives and conclusion(s)

A short final wrap-up section should be presented. [Have you resolved the original problem? If not, what exactly have you contributed? Conclusions must be based on evidence presented in the paper. Suggest further study or applications, if appropriate.]

Acknowledgments

the last paragraph of a journal article frequently contains acknowledgements of people places, financing sources, etc.]

Title Page

In the style indicated by your research director. If your research director does not indicate a specific style, use the following.

Book references. Author or editor (last name followed by initials), book title in italics or underlined, publisher, city of publication, year of publication, page number(s).

Ex. : Dodd, J.S., Ed.; The ACS Style Guide, American Chemical Society : Washington, DC, 1986, 108-

Journal references. Author (last name, followed by initials), abbreviated journal title in italics or underlined, year of publication (boldface), volume number in italics or underlined, and initial page of cited article (the complete span is better).

Ex : Fletcher, T.R.; Rosenfeld, R.N. J. Am. Chem. Soc. 1985, 107, 2203-2212.

Appendices

This section should include any extensive tabulations of raw data, additional spectra not needed for illustration of the main text or listings of computer programs written or modified. That is, if there is just too much data to include in the Results Section or if much of the raw data have been abstracted and/or tabulated, these abstracts and/or tables may go in the Results Section along with only representative spectra (or chromatograms, etc.), and the bulk raw data put in Appendices.

Further notes on style:

1. All pages should be numbered consequently.
2. Each table should be on a separate sheet, be consecutively numbered, and have a caption at the top. Columns must be labeled, and all labels should be explained in the captions or in footnotes. Each figure should be carefully drawn on a separate sheet, consecutively numbered and accompanied by a legend. The legend should normally appear below the figure but may be placed on a separate sheet, if necessary. Figures should be carefully prepared using a drawing program such as ChemDraw or ISIS. Graphs are treated as figures, i.e., they should not be labeled as "Graph 1," "Graph 2," etc. Each axis of a graph must be clearly labeled as to the variable represented and its value along the axis. Each curve on a graph should be clearly identified. Raw data displayed in graphs may also appear in separate tables. All symbols and conventions, such as broken lines or dotted lines, should be explained in the legend.
3. Figures which have been obtained from other sources must be cited in the caption using a bracketed citation.
4. Insofar as is practical, mathematical equations, Greek letters, special mathematical symbols, and chemical reaction schemes should be typed in the text.
5. Reprints or preprints of any publications that have already arisen from the research being reported may be appended.

What to do with your thesis after it is written

The following guidelines apply:

- The jury is composed of the members of the Education Committee.
- Give your advisor your final draft one month before you submit your thesis to the jury, e.g. Friday, November 27, 2026.
- Give your advisor-approved final draft in a digital pdf format to the members of your jury by **Monday, January 04, 2027**. Expect the jury to have additional comments at the presentation. Some jury members may need a hard-copy. Please ask them.
- The oral examination will take place around January 30, 2027 (TBD).
- Your thesis is neither archived nor published anywhere. Still the SNE Chemical Biology needs to know the exact title.
- Once you have passed your exam, your thesis advisor should sign an official form addressed to the Secretariat des Etudiants (UNIGE) stating that you passed your examination for your master thesis on date/ title/ grades. The letter will also be signed by the Head of the Evaluation Committee / thesis jury (Prof. Robbie Loewith). The SNE Chemical Biology office provides the template and you are in charge to bring the signed copy to the Secrétariat.