

## MFA in Visual Studies Thesis Guidelines

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## INTRODUCTION

MFA in Visual Studies (from the Art & Design Graduate Handbook)

*The written thesis will serve to document the work within the thesis exhibition and to provide a narrative description of the work's development and theoretical framework, including influences, and its significance within the discipline(s). This document should include substantial visual documentation appropriate to the media.*

All Graduate students must pass the Graduate College's Blackboard course: THESIS-001 before the thesis draft is approved. This course is to ensure that you understand the procedure and requirements for the thesis requirements. Enroll according to these instructions:

[https://graduate.missouristate.edu/assets/graduate/Thesis\\_howtoenrollfinal.pdf](https://graduate.missouristate.edu/assets/graduate/Thesis_howtoenrollfinal.pdf)

MFA students use a separate set of guidelines for their theses and have a separate quiz to complete. This is the only quiz that needs to be completed for MFA students. This quiz ensures that you are familiar with the MFA Thesis Formatting Guidelines. Enroll according to these instructions: <https://blackboard.missouristate.edu/> and click on the Community Tab. Once on the Community page, click on the link: MFA Written Thesis- Department of Art + Design.

The following guidelines conform to a standard, printed exhibition catalog format – which is consistent with the discipline of Visual Studies.

To produce an exhibition catalog documenting the thesis research, utilizing outside self-publishing services is necessary. No single company or service is required, but the following guidelines are required, so investigate services carefully to make sure they can deliver the requirements of the format! Ask the Graduate Coordinator for recommendations, if you are unsure.

## FORMAT

### Printing Requirements

Hard cover is required

Title on cover (title can be artist/design's name)

Image on cover (optional)

Size of book should be complementary to the content (size/shape/number of pages – *to be pre-approved by committee, minimum 8"x 8"*)

For books to be larger than 16"x20", pre-approval is required by the committee, Graduate Coordinator and the Dean of the Library.

Minimum pages = 32 pages, 16 leaves

### Order

1. End papers (design must be considered)
2. Title Page (Title and Artist/Designer Name)  
Location of exhibition  
Date of Exhibition
3. Acknowledgements/copyright (back of title page)  
Could be used for dedications, special thanks but *MUST include the following text:*

Missouri State University  
Art & Design Department  
901 South National Avenue  
Springfield, Missouri 65897  
[artanddesign@missouristate.edu](mailto:artanddesign@missouristate.edu)  
art.missouristate.edu

Publication credits  
Design: Name  
Photographs: Name

© 2016, Artist/Designer Full Name

*The artist assumes responsibility for obtaining and maintaining the necessary rights and releases to legally publish this work, including the informed consent of any subjects identifiable in the photographic work.*

(You are responsible for filing a copy of all consent forms with both the Department Chair of Art and Design and the Graduate Coordinator of the MFA in Visual Studies Program.)

4. Abstract page

5. Approval page

*MUST include the following text, in the described format:*

**TITLE OF THESIS (DOUBLE SPACED, ALL UPPER CASE, BOLD, AND CENTERED)**

By

(Insert name, e.g., Roberta Rodrigues)

A Masters Thesis  
Submitted to the Graduate College  
Of Missouri State University  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of Master of Fine Arts in Visual Studies

(Insert graduation date, e.g., December 2013)

6. Table of contents (optional – use if appropriate to the scale/length of written work)
7. Thesis Text with Images inserted as appropriate to the content of the text
8. Reference list, citations and/or appendix (appendix is optional – use if appropriate to the scale/length of written work)  
Reference Page must follow formatting of the Graduate College. See below for more information.
9. Image list
10. End papers (design must be considered)

Style Format

Image captions are required for all images.

Image list should conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style*  
*Title of work (italicized), date, medium, measurements.*

Page numbers are required on all pages after title page or table of contents *if included*, and must be uniformly placed.

Citations' style must conform to the Chicago Manual of Style and be consistent with each other. This applies to in-text citations and reference list as well.

If you have any questions about style, ask your MFA Thesis Chair for decisions on appropriateness.

Listing References. Each reference cited in the text must be listed in the Literature Cited (Reference) section. The style and sequence or order of arranging elements within a reference will follow the Chicago Manual of Style. Similarly, the order of listing references should conform to that style manual. While an alphabetical listing is the most common method, some disciplines have their own unique approach. As with citing the references in the thesis text, the format used to list the references must be consistent; each reference listed must be in the same format.

## MFA THESIS REVIEW and SUBMISSION SEQUENCE OVERVIEW

1. All Graduate students must pass the Graduate College's Blackboard course: THESIS-001 before the thesis draft is approved. Enroll according to these instructions:  
[https://graduate.missouristate.edu/assets/graduate/Thesis\\_howtoenrollfinal.pdf](https://graduate.missouristate.edu/assets/graduate/Thesis_howtoenrollfinal.pdf)
2. MFA students use a separate set of guidelines for their theses and have a separate quiz to complete. Enroll according to these instructions: <https://blackboard.missouristate.edu/> and click on the Community Tab. Once on the Community page, click on the link: MFA Written Thesis-Department of Art + Design.
3. March 1 - Deadline for the final written thesis text document to Committee
4. Format the thesis electronically in preparation for printing. Add images considering the layout of the book. Consult Thesis Committee about format and style.
5. Save the PDF and distribute to committee. The Thesis Committee will review it for appropriateness of format and style and to check for format conformation.
6. April 1 - Final approval of the printed thesis book design by MFA Thesis Committee.
7. Complete the MFA checklist and present this signed document for the review and signature of the MFA Graduate Coordinator and the Art and Design Department Chair.
8. If utilized, a copy of any necessary consent forms should be submitted to both the Department Head of Art and Design and the Graduate Coordinator of the MFA in Visual Studies Program.
9. Within the THESIS-001 Black Board Course, upload final, archival, print-ready PDF.  
DEADLINE DETERMINED EACH YEAR, consult with the Graduate Coordinator.
10. Submit the three final, professionally-printed copies of the thesis book to the Graduate Coordinator.