Library Publication Tips and Most Common Errors

The 2 main reference documents to follow for formatting of the dissertation are the Dissertation Publication Manual and the Dissertation Checklist. Links to both documents can be found here: https://www.stu.edu/library/How-To/Publish-Your-Thesis-or-Dissertation/

Please note the following:
*All dissertations must be updated to reflect APA 7 style. The entire dissertation must be in APA 7, including chapters that were previously written in APA 6.

For APA 7 guidelines and MANY helpful resources, please visit https://www.stu.edu/library/How-To/Cite-Sources/.

Here is a summary of the main differences between APA 6 and 7: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_changes_7th_edition.html

Below are the most common errors found in final dissertations when submitted to the library for publication. Some of these issues are specific to STU dissertation requirements while some are APA style errors.

1. Make sure the margins of your document are left 1.5", right 1", top 1", and bottom 1". The foot (where you page numbers should be) needs to be 0.5" top and 0.5" bottom.
2. There is a Dissertation Manual Acknowledgment form (you can find it in the Dissertation Manual linked above) that you must sign and include in the document, between the Library Release Form and the Abstract, in the beginning of the dissertation.
3. Though the Table of Contents (TOC) in the template starts with Acknowledgments, that is just an example. The TOC must include the earlier pages in the document as well, starting with the Copyright Acknowledgment Form. All page numbers before Chapter 1 should be Roman numerals.
4. The TOC SHOULD include dot leaders between the wording on the left and the page numbers to the right, though that is not reflected in the sample TOC in the template.
   a. TIP: The TOC can be done via Microsoft Word. To learn how to create a table of contents using the References function, visit this website: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/format-or-customize-a-table-of-contents-9d85eb9c-0b55-4795-8abb-a49885b3a58d
5. Heading levels need to reflect APA 7. Follow these guidelines: https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/paper-format/headings
6. Use of the "Researcher": Please do not refer to yourself in the third person. Fix all occurrences where you are referring to yourself in this manner. Do not use "I" or "me" as well or "the interviewer" or "the investigator" or any other variation. If you mean researcher in the general sense, leave as is.
   a. Incorrect: Furthermore, the researcher collected data in a nameless electronic form, which was designed to maintain confidentiality.

b. Correct: Furthermore, to maintain the confidentiality, a nameless electronic form was used to collect data.

7. APA 7, Chapter 4 recommends against using gender pronouns. Gender pronouns can lead to gender bias. Unless the participants' genders are important to note in your research, it is recommended you avoid the using he/she. Instead use the singular "they." Visit: https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/grammar/singular-they

8. Format all tables and figures per APA 7 style. To see proper APA 7 guidelines, visit: https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/tables-figures.

9. In-text citations
   a. Remember to use "et al." for three or more authors. In APA 6, if you had 3 to 5 authors, you would mention all authors the first time then use et al. However, APA 7 states that this is no longer the case. Remember there is no comma between the first surname and et al. Visit: https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/basic-principles/author-date
   b. If citing a group, at the first mentioned citation, provide full name with acronym within brackets followed by a comma and the year. Starting your second citation and onward, use only the acronym and year. For guidance, visit: https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/abbreviations/group-authors

Author type	Parenthetical citation	Narrative citation
One author	(Luna, 2020)	Luna (2020)
Two authors	(Salas & D'Agostino, 2020)	Salas and D'Agostino (2020)
Three or more authors	(Martin et al., 2020)	Martin et al. (2020)
Group author with abbreviation First citation [a] Subsequent citations	(National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 2020) (NIMH, 2020)	National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH, 2020) NIMH (2020)
Group author without abbreviation	(Stanford University, 2020)	Stanford University (2020)

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   c.

10. References (**Reciteworks is an excellent resource for fixing errors in your Reference list and in-text citations!**)
    a. Journals - Remember to include the vol, issue number within parentheses, and page range. Italicize journal title and volume.
    b. Books - do not include the publication location. Only the publisher. If chapter within a book, must include editors and page range.
       i. Example: Årlin, C., Börjeson, L., & Östberg, W. (2019). Participatory checking and the temporality of landscapes. In C. Isendahl & D. Stump

(Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of historical ecology and applied archaeology* (pp. 345-350). Oxford University Press.

   c. Use proper sentence case for all titles. Only the first word (and proper nouns) should be capitalized. Everything else lowercase. If there is a subtitle, after the colon, capitalize the first word only, lowercase everything else.
- i. Correct: *Education perspective: A case study.*
- ii. Incorrect: *Education Perspective: A Case Study.*
- iii. Incorrect: *Education perspective: a case study.*

   d. Italicize your titles
- i. For an article, journal titles are italicized
- ii. For a book, the book title is italicized
- iii. For a website, the title of the web entry is italicized (not the web host).
  - 1. note on websites: Provide the direct URL of the web entry used (not the website), but do not hyperlink.
  - 2. Example: Alibeigi, A. (2020). *Towards standard information privacy*. SSRN. https://ssrn.com/abstract=3537974

   e. Be mindful of appropriate placement of commas and periods within the reference citation.

   f. If referring to authors within a narrative, always spell out "and" -- only use the ampersand in the parenthetical citation.

   g. Remove "Statement of Original Work and Signature" as this is the same as the library's Copyright Acknowledgement Form. Update appendices letters. If you mentioned your appendices within your narrative, update those too.

11. In your Appendices, include the following:
- a. IRB approval letter
- b. Informed consent form
- c. Interview or focus group protocol/any instruments developed by researcher
- d. Written permission for figures/graphics if applicable[2]
- e. Field test/expert panel recommendations (Qual studies)
- f. Written permission for use of any instruments developed by other authors
- g. Gpower analysis screenshot (Quant studies)
- h. Pilot test recommendations (Quant studies)

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[2] If adapting or reproducing a table/figure from another author(s), be sure to obtain copyright permission and include a copyright attribution as a note underneath the table/figure. Templates are shown in APA 7, Chapter 12, Section 12.18 (Tables 12.1 & 12.2).