

WISE: Guidelines for Structuring a Master Thesis

Title page:

Latex templates containing correct title pages can be found on the WISE website (under Thesis Templates and Info). Make sure that the name of your program is not translated, also not on the English title page (when the thesis is written in English but you are following a Dutch program).

Preliminary Pages

- Declaration of originality (see below for the text)
- Dedication (optional)
- Acknowledgements (optional)
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables (if any)
- List of Figures (if any)
- List of Abbreviations and Symbols (if any)
- List of Appendices (if any)
- Dutch Abstract (Only required for a Dutch program)
- English Abstract (only for a thesis in English)

Abstract: should state the problem investigated, scope, aims, outline of the methods used to solve the problem, and a summary of the results.

Declaration of originality

I hereby declare that this thesis was entirely my own work and that any additional sources of information have been duly cited.

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, my thesis does not infringe upon anyone's copyright nor violate any proprietary rights and that any ideas, techniques, quotations, or any other material from the work of other people included in my thesis, published or otherwise, are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices. Furthermore, to the extent that I have included copyrighted material, I certify that I have obtained a written permission from the copyright owner(s) to include such material(s) in my thesis and have included copies of such copyright clearances to my appendix.

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other University or Institution.

Mandatory Chapters

1. Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction by explaining the context or background of the thesis, a description of the problem and justification of the problem statement (i.e., why is this a relevant problem?), the research questions or the hypotheses that will be tested (these should be related to the problem), the objectives that you want to reach (these can be subdivided into broad objectives and more specific

objectives) (these need to be related to your research questions or hypotheses), the research method(s) used to test the hypotheses or to reach your objectives (make sure to use an existing well accepted research methodology or a combination of some research methodologies – do not invent your own. Articles describing commonly used research methodologies in Information Systems can be found on the WISE website under Thesis Templates & Info), and the structure of the thesis. A possible (recommended) structure for the Introduction is as follows:
Note that the names of the sections may be slightly different depending on the case.

- 1.1. Background/Context
- 1.2. Problem
- 1.3. Justification
- 1.4. Objectives & Hypotheses/Research Questions
- 1.5. Research Method
- 1.6. Structure of the Thesis

2. Literature Review/Related Work

This chapter reviews previous work done in the domain of the thesis. It should start by indicating what kind of related work has been considered and why. It should end with a conclusion identifying gaps and remaining problems (which actually justify why the problem is relevant to consider). Don't be too broad, but also not too narrow.

3. Background (optional)

A background chapter should only be included when the thesis is about a specialized topic. It should provide the non-specialized reader the necessary information to be able to understand the rest of the thesis. You can assume that the reader has common computer science knowledge.

4. Conclusions

The conclusion should briefly recapitulate the problem statement and the objectives of the thesis. Next, it should describe which objectives have been reached (Contributions) and how. Limitations of the results should be indicated, as well as possible future work.

A possible (recommended) structure for the Conclusions is as follows (note that the names of the sections may be slightly different depending on the case):

- 4.1. Summary
- 4.2. Contributions
- 4.3. Limitations
- 4.4. Future Work

5. References

Make use of the APA referencing style. That means that references in the text should be given with the name(s) of the author(s) and the years, e.g., (De Troyer et al., 2014)

There are different resources on the Web describing this style. Note that they may be slightly different. Follow the rules given in the course Research Methods. Note

that Prof de Boer requires that the editors should be given for proceedings. This is usually not done in standard APA!

Other issues:

- Make sure that you refer in the text to all figures you included
- If you developed software:
 - o Make sure to indicate the methodology used to develop the software;
 - o Give the requirements for the software;
 - o Describe the system architecture;
 - o Give design models (e.g., UML, ORM, ...);
 - o Give implementation aspects;
 - o If a user interface is an important aspect of the software, make sure you used a methodology to design the user interface (e.g., see UI Design course, and/or Next Generation User Interfaces).