Washington State Transportation Center

TRAC-UW

Report Production for Graduate Students

This guide is intended to ease your task of producing a research report and thesis.

These guidelines have been developed from years of experience in working with UW graduate students. While you and your advisors work to make your research relevant, accurate, and timely, we'll help you communicate it to others comprehensibly and attractively.

BASIC PRODUCTION PROCESS

- Talk to Amy about report requirements and production.
- Talk to Shirley about the project's budget, especially if you think that funds may be low.
- Submit your material to TRAC. We can handle very large reports more easily if we receive a few chapters at a time.
- WSDOT requires that all its reports be edited. TRAC requires that all reports for other contracting agencies also be edited. You can work with Amy to determine the appropriate level of edit based on the needs of the contracting agency, the needs of the material, and the remaining budget and time.

WRITING FOR REPORT AND THESIS

If your thesis will be converted from a research report, plan their organization together so that your thesis will require as little reorganization or rewriting as possible. This makes everyone's work easier.

If the production of a thesis is associated with a funded project, please be warned that because we are using project funds to produce the thesis, we must produce the project report first, the thesis second.

For thesis information, consult the UW Graduate School's thesis policies and requirements.

TEXT

Organization

Most TRAC reports are WSDOT Research Reports. They must be organized as follows (see the WSDOT Research Report Guidelines):

Research Report

- Executive Summary
- Introduction or Background
- Review of Previous Work
- Research Approach/Procedures
- Findings/Discussion
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Application/Implementation
- Acknowledgments
- References
- Appendices

STYLE GUIDES

The office relies on Words Into Type and the Chicago Manual of Style.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

Use of footnotes is discouraged.

Use an alphabetical reference list at the end of your report to indicate only documents cited in the text. Denote references at the appropriate place in the text by the author's name and publication date in parentheses. Example: (Reed 1993).

Bibliographies may be used in addition to a reference list to document sources you have consulted but not directly cited. A bibliography should be alphabetical by author's name.

If you have many references, consider using a bibliographic software package. Consult the UW Library's Citations page.

TEXT PROCESSING

Formulas

For mathematical formulas, use MS Word's built-in equation editor or MathType. Do not save formulas as graphic files and paste them into a Word document, as they cannot be edited.

Text Processing Do's

- Assign and use styles to format paragraphs, headings, and other special text such as figure captions. This makes formatting consistent and easier to edit.
- Break up large document files, or those with many graphics, into smaller (chapter) files, rather than providing us with one electronically unwieldy file.
- Provide us with the separate source files embedded in your Word file, including those for graphics, tables, and references.
- Keep your formatting as simple as possible.
- Feel free to ask questions.

TABLES

Consider using spreadsheets to enter large amounts of tabular information. Spreadsheet data can be easily converted to text later.

Use Word's Table features, rather than creating tables solely with tabs or spaces.

SUPPORT STAFF

Who We Are, What We Do

Amy O'Brien
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Report requirements, editing, page layout and formatting, report submission.

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Project budgets, files.

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Budget tracking.

Working with Us

Time

- Help us to plan ahead.
- Keep us posted, tell us your plans.
- More time than you think may be necessary for editing, text processing, formatting, reproduction, and report submittal.

Questions

If you have any questions, we're glad to answer them!