



TRAC-UW

Report Production for PIs and Project Managers

This guide is intended to ease your task of producing a research report or other document.

These guidelines have been developed from years of experience in working with UW researchers. While you 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.

TYPES OF REPORTS

WSDOT Reports

Over half of TRAC's projects are sponsored by WSDOT. WSDOT may require two kinds of reports from its researchers:

- Research Report (draft and final)
- Technical Report (draft and final)

Your project's contract specifies the kind and amount of reporting that is required. Consult with your WSDOT Project Manager if you are uncertain.

Research Reports

All WSDOT research projects require a Research Report. Consult the [WSDOT Research Report Guidelines](#). The purpose of these reports is to provide a short (30-50 pages) final report that can be easily read by busy administrators and others who want the gist of the research without all the technical details.

These reports are sent to WSDOT, FHWA, state DOTs, universities, libraries, the National Technical Information Service, and other interested researchers.

Technical Reports

The purpose of these reports is to fully document all aspects of the project. They may be as long as needed; however, most of their length may be in technical appendices. They are usually not requested for WSDOT research projects.

They are printed in limited quantities and distributed to the WSDOT library, WSDOT specialists, FHWA, and other researchers upon request.

Other Reports for Other Agencies

Other agencies (e.g., FHWA, NCHRP, SHRP or local agencies such as Metro) have different report requirements. If they have no requirements, we usually follow WSDOT's format.

Papers (TRB and Others)

TRAC routinely produces papers for TRB (first drafts are due each August). We have also produced papers for professional organizations such as ITE and ASCE.

Theses

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

Graduate students should know before they begin whether their theses will be converted from a project report and how the requirements of the two documents will differ. That way they can plan the organization of both documents so that their theses will require as little reorganization or rewriting as possible.

Remind students to 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

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 Citation Guides and Management](#) 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 consistent formatting simpler 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

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Working with Us

Time

- Please help us plan ahead.
- Keep us posted, tell us your plans.
- More time than you may 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!