

DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

University of Wisconsin—Whitewater

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INTRODUCTION

The School of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education welcomes the opportunity to assist doctoral graduates who will become leaders in their fields. Our mission is to recruit, train, and mentor high-quality Doctoral students in a supporting and collaborative research environment. We expect all Doctoral students to immerse themselves into the rigorous research environment of their programs and closely work with their faculty advisor to tackle cutting-edge disciplinary and interdisciplinary research.

Successful production and defense of a dissertation is the culminating event of the student's doctoral program. The purpose of this guide is to provide faculty and doctoral candidates at the University of Wisconsin—Whitewater with procedures and models for preparing a dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the doctoral degree. The student's dissertation committee is responsible for facilitating thoughtful and scholarly development of dissertation content.

Academic policies related to the doctoral program are published in the [Graduate Catalog](#). Each student is expected to consult with the specific dissertation guidelines established by their academic program in order to produce an appropriately formatted dissertation in accordance with university regulations. The signatures of the student's dissertation committee members on the signature page signify their assurance that the final document and the student's defense of that document meet the program and university standards for excellence and scholarship.

THE DISSERTATION

The Dissertation

The culminating product of a student's doctoral program—the dissertation—is a substantial work of research that contributes significantly to the student's field of study. A student can take justifiable pride in the work required of this capstone experience of professional progress. Developed through disciplined inquiry, the dissertation is the student's original contribution to knowledge in his or her field. Additionally, each dissertation must demonstrate the student's

- expertise in his or her field of study and the student's ability to identify a significant research problem within his or her field of study,
- ability to design and implement inquiry appropriate to the identified problem,
- ability to present and synthesize the results of his or her inquiry,
- ability to draw informed conclusions from the synthesis of inquiry results, and
- understanding of the relevance of his or her conclusions to his or her field of study and implications for future inquiry.

Additionally, the student must orally defend his or her dissertation to his or her committee as well as to the public. The main purpose of the defense is to allow an opportunity for the faculty of the college and members of the UW-Whitewater and wider community to comment on the quality of the investigation and to judge the student's ability to defend his or her conclusions.

The Dissertation Committee

Doctoral students in good standing may proceed to establish a dissertation committee, typically after completing a year of full-time coursework in their program. Doctoral students should consult with their academic advisor in selecting the members of the dissertation committee. Doctoral students are responsible for submitting the *Dissertation Committee Form*.

The dissertation committee must have a minimum of three members:

1. At least two of the dissertation committee members must hold Level I graduate faculty membership, as defined by the UW-Whitewater Constitution of the Graduate Faculty.
2. The chair of the dissertation committee must be a full-time faculty member in the doctoral student's academic department and hold Level I graduate faculty membership. The chair of the dissertation committee is responsible for directing the research and guiding the preparation, submission and defense of the dissertation.
3. Doctoral students may also select a third dissertation committee member from another university or an individual who can be granted an exception for Level I graduate faculty membership.

An exception for Level I graduate faculty membership must be approved by tenured faculty in the graduate program, by the college dean, and by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education. The chair of the dissertation committee should complete the

Departmental Approval of Graduate Status Approval Form, which will include the submission of a current academic vita and justification for approving the proposed third dissertation committee member. These materials should be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education. Current submission policies may be found in the [UW-Whitewater Constitution of the Graduate Faculty](#).

The Dissertation Proposal

Doctoral students in good standing may schedule a dissertation proposal defense once all academic coursework has been completed. Doctoral students should consult with their dissertation committee to develop the dissertation proposal defense and determine when the doctoral student is prepared for the dissertation proposal defense. The chair of the dissertation committee will submit the *Dissertation Defense Form* to the Graduate Studies office upon the completion of the dissertation proposal defense. If necessary, obtain IRB or IACUC approval.

Once the dissertation proposal has been approved, students may enroll in the appropriate thesis research course. Doctoral students are required to enroll in the dissertation research course each semester they are engaged in dissertation research and writing in order to maintain their status in the program. This requirement includes enrolling in the dissertation research course during the semester of their dissertation defense. Students will receive a grade of Satisfactory (S), No Credit (NC), or Incomplete (I) for each dissertation research course in which they enroll. A doctoral student must receive a grade of S to register for the next thesis writing course(s). Doctoral students, at the discretion of the dissertation committee chair, may continue the dissertation research after receiving a grade of I.

The Dissertation Defense

The dissertation research will be supervised by the dissertation committee. Once the dissertation has been completed to the satisfaction of the dissertation committee, doctoral students may schedule their dissertation defense. The doctoral student will prepare and distribute complete copies of the dissertation to the dissertation committee and the doctoral program chair at least three weeks prior to the scheduled dissertation defense. The dissertation defense is oral and open to the public.

The decision of the dissertation committee for approval or disapproval is determined by the majority of the committee members. Doctoral students may pass the oral defense but still be required to revise their dissertation. It is the responsibility of the dissertation committee chair to review and approve revisions to the dissertation. Dissertation committee signatures on the dissertation title page constitute recommendation for conferral of the doctoral degree on the candidate. An electronic copy of the dissertation, an unsigned dissertation title page, and the original signed title page must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education.

All approved UW-Whitewater dissertations will be deposited in the UW-Whitewater Andersen Library and in the University of Wisconsin System's permanent digital repository, Minds@UW ([see DBA collection at UW-W here](#)). It will also be submitted electronically via ProQuest's

Electronic Theses & Dissertations Administrator website ([directions here](#)). If you would like to request printed/bound copies of your dissertation, you may order that through ProQuest as well, or the library recommends [Grimm Bindery](#) in Madison.

Doctoral students have a maximum of seven years from the date of their enrollment in their program to successfully defend their doctoral dissertation.

FORMAT

Style

Doctoral students should prepare their dissertations according to the format guidelines specified by the American Psychological Association's 7th edition *Publication Manual*. This section provides information on common formatting errors made when utilizing APA style in the dissertation writing process. Additional resources for APA guidance include the [Andersen Library APA Citation Guide](#), the [APA Style & Grammar Guidelines](#), and [Purdue OWL](#).

Your dissertation will be reviewed and edited according to the standards set forth by the seventh edition of the *APA Publication Manual*. Please pay careful attention to these guidelines as you begin the process of crafting your dissertation. If a doctoral program requires other specific guidelines, these will take precedence over the APA's.

Basics

All APA papers require use of the following:

- One of the following fonts: 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, 10-point Lucinda Sans Unicode, or 11-point Georgia (font size may vary in tables);
- Double spacing between lines (exceptions may be made for tables);
- One-inch margins;
- Half-inch indentations for paragraphs (this can be achieved by pressing the Tab button on your keyboard one time);
- Five levels of headings;
- One space between sentences; and
- Serial or Oxford commas.

The following paragraphs clarify the aforementioned items as needed. There is also information on correctly applying bolding and italics to text, presenting equations in the text of the paper, correct tense usage, and use of abbreviations.

Running Heads

A running head is a shortened version of your paper's title (or if your title is short, it can be your entire title). It should be in ALL CAPS, no longer than 50 characters, including spaces, and it appears in the header section of every page of your paper, left-aligned, opposite the page number which is right-aligned. The [APA Style Blog contains information on running heads](#), with examples and information about setting up the running head using Microsoft Word. You can also find information on this in the *Publication Manual* in Section 2.8.

Headings

APA utilizes five levels of headings throughout papers. Not all papers require the use of all five levels. The heading levels are as follows, as outlined in the seventh edition of the *APA Publication Manual* (Chapter 2, Section 2.27):

Level 1 Heading: Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

Text begins here.

Level 2 Heading: Flush Left, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

Text begins here.

Level 3 Heading: Flush Left, Boldface, Italics, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

Text begins here.

Level 4 Heading: Indented, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading, Ending with a Period. Text begins on the same line.

Level 5 Heading: Indented, Boldface, Italics, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading, Ending with a Period. Text begins on the same line.

Note that your paper begins with your paper's title centered at the top of the first page, in bold. There is no Introduction heading in APA. After your title, simply begin the text of your paper. APA does not allow for the numbering of sections or headings (such as 2.0 Literature Review).

Serial Commas

The serial comma is the final comma used in a list of three or more. APA has determined that the serial comma increases clarity and reduces confusion and should thus be used in writing (Section 6.3). One example often used is the following: To my parents, Ayn Rand and God. This sentence gives the impression that the individual's parents are Ayn Rand and God, which is certainly not the case. The use of the serial comma removes the likelihood of leaving that impression: To my parents, Ayn Rand, and God.

Bolding and Italics

When using APA style, there are other formatting rules to be aware of. For instance, bolding and italics have specific purposes and should never be used for emphasis in a paper. Both are

primarily used for headings (as indicated previously). Italics may also be used to introduce a technical or key term (section 6.22 of the *APA Publication Manual*, seventh edition). These are terms that the paper defines in a unique way or are essential to understanding the paper. For instance, if the term *hybrid organization* appears in a paper and has a unique or particularly important definition, the term should be italicized the first time it appears in the paper. Following that first appearance, the term will not be italicized but will be presented as plain text.

Italics are also used for variable names. Section 6.22 in the *APA Publication Manual*, seventh edition presents a list of some of the most common mathematical variables that should be italicized. For instance:

- R^2
- Sample size: N (full sample); n (partial sample)
- t value
- p value
- Standard deviation: SD

Variable names used in equations created by the author should also be italicized. This is particularly important if variable names and abbreviations are used interchangeably. For instance, one may use the phrase “earnings before interest and taxes” and abbreviate it EBIT. If EBIT is also used as a variable name in equations, when referring to the variable and the equation, *EBIT* should appear in italics.

Equations

When equations appear in the text of a paper, short and simple equations should appear in the line of the text (see section 6.46). If equations are complex, or would project above or below the normal double-spaced lines of text, then they should be displayed on their own line of text, with the number appearing in parentheses flush right on the same line as the equation (see section 6.47 for examples). When referring to equations in the text, refer to Equation 1 (or whichever number is relevant).

If the equation is multiple lines long, break before a plus or minus sign. Equations should not be broken up between two pages. Define any symbols or variables used in equations, unless they are commonly used in APA (such as those found in Table 6.4 and 6.5 of the *APA Publication Manual*, seventh edition).

Tense

When referring to the findings or methodology of your study, use past tense. For instance, “The results showed that x was true.” When referring to the findings or methodology of another specific study, use past tense. For instance, “Jones (2017) found....” When referring to the findings or methodology of a group of studies, use present perfect tense. For instance, “Studies

have found x to be true (Allan, 2015; Cary, 1998; Norman, 2006).” Refer to section 4.12 of the *APA Publication Manual*, seventh edition for more information.

Voice

Both active and passive voice are permitted in APA, but many writers overuse passive voice. Use active voice when it is important to emphasize who performed the action. Passive voice may be used when the author wants to emphasize the object or the recipient of the action rather than the actor.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations are used in APA but should be used sparingly and only when their use improves readability and does not distract. All abbreviations should be used at least three times within the text; if an abbreviation is not used at least three times, spell out the phrase each instance instead. Abbreviations must be introduced the first time the phrase appears in the text. For example, “This study focused on multinational corporations (MNCs). . . .” After an abbreviation is introduced, it must be used each time the phrase would appear thereafter; do not jump back and forth between the abbreviation and the full phrase. Avoid abbreviations in titles and headings. Even if an abbreviation has been introduced and used in the text of the paper, any abbreviations used in tables and figures must be defined again as tables and figures should be understandable without having to refer to the paper itself. Section 6.24 of the seventh edition of the *APA Publication Manual* addresses abbreviations.

Tables and Figures

In accordance with APA 7th edition, all tables and figures are to be placed within the body of your paper (approximately where the reader would refer to each table) rather than at the end of the paper following the Reference list. Wrap text above and below each table or figure.

Each table and figure must have a specific and necessary reason for being present in a paper. Not everything can be a table or figure; some information may need to be placed in the appendix instead. For instance, the survey instrument used should not be forced into table format but should be in the appendix for readers. Further, if a table contains only one or two rows of data (not including column headings), consider putting the information in the text instead. All tables and figures must be referred to in the text of the paper, highlighting the most important features and letting the reader explore the rest. All tables and figures should be meaningful without having to read the paper itself; therefore, all abbreviations and variable names must be defined, symbols must be explained, and rows and columns must have descriptive headings.

Tables

The following is an example of a properly formatted table in APA. There are other types of tables that may be used, but this general format still applies. See Chapter 7 of the *APA Publication Manual*, seventh edition for more information and additional table examples.

Table 1

Title of Table

Column Head	Column Head	Column Head	Column Head	Column Head
Row 1 ^a	345**	421	0.5	0.3
Row 2	276	353*	0.2	0.2
Row 3	444***	336	0.3	0.4

Note. Provide any additional information about the data in a general note, such as the source if data is secondary, or define abbreviations, variable names or symbols.

^a Use of a superscript is for specific notes, when the writer needs to identify something about that particular column, row, or entry. ^b Subsequent specific notes would follow in the same paragraph.

* Probability (p value) notes are here in a separate paragraph. $p < .05$, two-tailed. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed. *** $p < .001$, two-tailed.

In the example table, notice that the use of lines or rules between rows and columns is minimal. Use white space or indentations to distinguish between rows and columns. The general table note immediately follows the table and is identified by *Note*. Specific notes are identified by superscript letters and always begin with the letter a. Asterisks are reserved for probability notes. Do not use shading, bolding, italics, or color to distinguish items in the table.

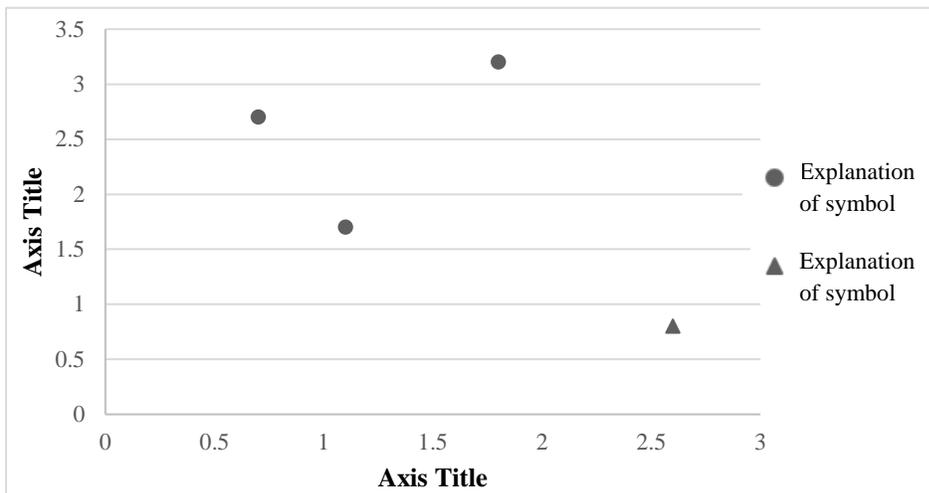
Tables should be kept to one page in length whenever possible. Landscape or portrait orientation is acceptable, and font size and line spacing can be decreased (within reason) to help facilitate keeping data on a single page. If a table simply will not fit on a single page, refer to these guidelines from section 7.18 and the example Table 7.4 in the *APA Publication Manual*: repeat the top heading and continue the left-hand column (the one with the row headings) on subsequent pages. Do not carry over the table number and the title. At the bottom of the first page, you can include '(continued)' at the bottom right corner. At the top left corner of the next page, you can include '(continued)'.

Figures

Figures are used for presenting graphs (such as scatter plots, pie charts, bar graphs, etc.), charts, or drawings or photographs. As in tables, figures should not rely on color to convey meaning. Use shades of gray or different symbols as necessary, being sure to define all symbols in the figure caption. Be sure that figures, like tables, are really necessary to clarify or add substantially to the readers' understanding of the text. What follows is an example of a properly formatted figure.

Figure 1

Title of Figure



Note. As with Tables, you may include general, specific, and probability notes as needed. (See section 7.28). General notes go in this space. General notes should include any acknowledgement, including copyright acknowledgement and full APA citation, if your figure comes from another source. (See section 7.7).

^a Specific notes to explain any particular point in the figure go here. ^b Subsequent specific notes would follow in the same paragraph.

* Probability (*p* value) notes are here in a separate paragraph.

Legends may be used to define symbols and abbreviations, or that information may be included in the caption following the figure title. Avoid the use of gridlines unless they will “substantially aid readers in understanding the content” (APA *Publication Manual*, section 7.26). Do not use color to differentiate figure content unless absolutely necessary – it is better to use grayscale, with variation in lines or shading (e.g., a dotted, solid, or dashed line).

Citations

APA requires the use of in-text citations and a reference list at the end of the paper (before the Appendices). This section highlights some features of both in-text citations and the reference list. While the use of a citation manager (such as Mendeley, [Endnote](#), [Zotero](#), etc.) can be immensely helpful in getting started with citations, these programs rarely present citations perfectly. Even when a citation manager is used, all citations should be checked for accuracy. Chapter 8 of the *APA Publication Manual*, seventh edition provides guiding principles on crediting sources in-text, Chapter 9 contains guiding principles for the References list, and Chapter 10 provides citation examples.

In-Text Citations

In-text citations are used to cite any information that is not common knowledge found in another source. This is true for direct quotations and paraphrased material.

In-text citations for paraphrased material (including study methods and results) should include the author name(s) followed by the date. This can be done as part of the sentence (narrative form) or at the end of the sentence (parenthetical form). For instance,

According to Smith (1994),

One study found... (Smith, 1994).

In-text citations for direct quotations must also include a page number (or paragraph number if the cited material does not have pages). For example,

Smith (1994) stated, "Here is a direct quote from the paper" (p. 201).

The study found "another direct quote from the paper" (Smith, 1994, p. 201).

When direct quotations are longer than 40 words, they must be formatted as a block quote. This means the quote begins on a new line, indented half an inch (as a new paragraph), with the full quote being indented rather than just the first line. There are no quotation marks, and the citation follows the last punctuation mark. For example,

This is a direct quote that is more than forty words long. Therefore, I have formatted it differently and it stands apart from the text. Note that the direct quote starts on its own line and is not contained by quotation marks. (Smith, 1994, p. 209)

In your writing, each sentence that contains information gleaned from another source must contain a citation, even if the previous sentence referred to the same work. However, if you are repeating narrative citations to one work within a paragraph, you can use the author and date in the first use, then in the following sentences, only use the author's name (see section 8.16 of the

APA *Publication Manual*). Consider how to combine sentences to improve readability and decrease the number of repeating citations when possible.

When multiple works are cited in the same sentence, the citations are to be presented in alphabetical order as they appear in the reference list.

Reference List

The reference list is one of the last items in an APA-style dissertation, preceding only the appendices and the vita. It should have the heading References, centered at the top of the page, boldface. All sources cited within the paper should be included in the reference list; do not include sources not cited in the paper. The reference list should be double-spaced with the first line of each reference flush left and any subsequent lines of the reference indented half an inch (referred to as a hanging indent). The references must appear in alphabetical order.

There are a few common mistakes made when constructing reference lists. For instance, if the same author or set of authors are cited multiple times, order the references in chronological order, from earliest to most recent. Related, if there are multiple references for the same author(s) and the same year, these are referred to as reference twins. They should be ordered alphabetically according to the article title (excluding words like a, an, the). Then the dates must be lettered (1994a and 1994b, for example). The dates will be lettered in the in-text citations, as well.

What follows is a sample reference list. This is simply meant to convey the basic formatting and includes a few commonly used source-types. Other examples can be found in Chapter 10 of the seventh edition of the APA *Publication Manual*.

References

Albrecht, S. L., Bakker, A. B., Gruman, J. A., Macey, W. H., & Saks, A. M. (2015). Employee engagement, human resource management practices and competitive advantage: An integrated approach. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, 2(1), 7–35. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-08-2014-0042>

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. <https://doi.org/10.1037.0000165-000>

Idris, A., & Che Soh, S. N. (2014). The relative effects of logistics, coordination and human resource on humanitarian aid and disaster relief mission performance. *South East Asian*

Journal of Management, 8(2), 87-103.

<https://doaj.org/article/002e097d17dc46e586eed59036b3db00>

Noe, R. A., Hollenbeck, J. R., Gerhart, B., & Wright, P. M. (2017). *Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage*. McGraw-Hill Education.

Note that the Albrecht and Idris references offered as examples are articles, and the APA and Noe examples are books. If an article or book has a DOI assigned, the DOI must be included, formatted as in the Albrecht and APA examples – even if you only looked at the print version of the content. If there is no DOI available, but there is a publicly-available, non-subscription retrieval URL (as in the Idris example), then use that. If there is no DOI or publicly-available URL (as in the Noe example), then include no URL at all. [This PDF](#) from the APA Style Blog contains more information on the use of DOIs and other identifiers for articles. See more citation examples in the [Andersen Library APA guide here](#), including UWW’s preferred format for citing unusual business databases, which are not addressed directly in the *Publication Manual*.

Checklist

In the order specified, please include the following pages in your final submission:

Copyright Page—*no page number*
 Approval Page—*no page number*
 Title Page—*Arabic number 1*
 Dedication Page—*optional, if applicable, lowercase Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc...)*
 Acknowledgements—*lowercase Roman numerals*
 Abstract—*lowercase Roman numerals*
 Table of Contents—*lowercase Roman numerals*
 List of Tables—*if applicable, lowercase Roman numerals*
 List of Figures—*if applicable, lowercase Roman numerals*
 List of Illustrations—*if applicable, lowercase Roman numerals*
 Text—*Arabic numbers, beginning with 2*
 Reference List
 Appendices
 Vita—*required, last numbered page*

In addition, please make sure you have submitted the following forms:

Dissertation Committee Form
Departmental Approval of Graduate Status Approval Form (if required)
Dissertation Defense Form

APPENDIX

Sample Pages

Copyright Page

Approval Page

Title Page

Acknowledgements

Abstract

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Vita

Sample Copyright Page

Sample Approval Page

The undersigned, approved by the Doctoral Dissertation Committee, have examined the dissertation entitled

DOES VENTURE CAPITALIST QUALITY AFFECT CORPORATE GOVERNANCE?
(title must be in caps & centered)

presented by Lionel A. Messi

a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration
and hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

Cristiano Ronaldo, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Accounting
Committee Chair

SIGNATURE: _____

Luis Suarez, Ph.D.
Professor of Finance
Second Committee Member

SIGNATURE: _____

Gareth Bale, DBA
Professor of Marketing
Reader

SIGNATURE: _____

(3 – 5 lines based on the number of committee members)

(This page does not get a page number, nor is it counted.)

Sample Title Page

DOES VENTURE CAPITALIST QUALITY AFFECT
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE?
(must be caps)

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty of

The University of Wisconsin -- Whitewater

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Business Administration

By

LIONEL A. MESSI

(must be caps)

Dr. Cristiano Ronaldo, Dissertation Chair

MAY 2015

(must be caps, use month of graduation)

*Sample Acknowledgements Page***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS***
(must be in caps)

This is the page where you can thank all of the people who supported you during your efforts to produce this incredible volume and your doctoral degree.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS must be at least seven lines from the top of page. Leave three lines, then start the body of the Acknowledgements, double-spaced. There is no length restriction.*

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Sample Abstract Page

DOES VENTURE CAPITALIST QUALITY AFFECT
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE?

(must be caps)

LIONEL A. MESSI

Dr. Monica Shah, Dissertation Chair

ABSTRACT

(must be caps)

The abstract is not to exceed a page and a half in length. The abstract must be double-spaced.
For your dissertation, you indent all new paragraphs in your abstract.

iii
Sample Table of Contents Page

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Do not use the heading “page” above the page numbers on this page.

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Sample List of Tables/List of Figures/List of Illustrations

LIST OF TABLES

(must be caps)

Table	Page
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2. Predictors of Corporate Governance Impact.....	54
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Title should be all caps and centered about 2 inches from the top of page. Single-space within items and indent runover 3 spaces. Double-space between items. Item numbers should align on periods; item page numbers should align at right margin.

(align center, 1 inch from bottom)

vi

Sample Vita Page

VITA*

(must be caps)

Lionel A. Messi was born August 13, 1969, in Dublin, Michigan. He completed his undergraduate work at Albion College in Albion, Michigan where he received a B.A. in Liberal Arts with an English concentration (1990). His Master of Theology degree was awarded by Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa (1992). He completed his M.B.A. at Michigan State University in 1999. Lionel has recently accepted a position at Academia University where he is teaching business writing and business ethics.

**VITA must be at least seven lines from the top of page. Leave three lines, then start the body of the Vita, double-spaced. There is no length restriction.*