

# *Guidelines for writing a master thesis at the K.U.Leuven Faculty of Engineering*

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The evaluation of the master thesis depends largely on the quality of the text. Because the master thesis equals 40 % of the marks of the last year, it is important that the presented work is clearly described. But please refrain from repeating the course material. And of course, plagiarism will not be tolerated!

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## 1 Contents of the thesis text

The master thesis text should be complete, meaning that all of your thesis work is covered. However it is not a diary but a synthesis of your work. Therefore you shouldn't make the document needlessly long: you are judged by the contents, not by the number of pages.

The master thesis text is not meant to be read only by your jury; it is a public text. This means that the text must be written in such a way that any engineer with a degree similar to yours must be able to understand it. If some of your work can't be disseminated to the broad public, e.g. because of pending patents, you can leave this information out of the text. But all your results must be communicated to your jury, even the parts which were removed from your text. So if you leave out important results from your text, consult your promotor and program director for the exact guidelines.

The language used to write the text in is usually the same as the master language (viz the official language of the master). Your master program director can allow you to use another text language as a departure from this rule. This is typically the case for students who prepare their thesis abroad, such as Erasmus students. But as indicated below, some items (e.g., the front pages) are always typeset in the master language, even if it differs from the text language.

The following sections describe the elements of the thesis text and the order in which they must appear in the printed thesis. Unless mentioned otherwise, all these sections are mandatory. Additionally the master guidelines must be checked for extra requirements.

## 1.1 Front pages

The front pages consist of the cover page, the title page and the copyright page. All these pages have a fixed layout. You can generate them yourself using LaTeX with the document class `kulemt` [2]. If you are not familiar with LaTeX, consult the guidelines of your master on how to get a printed copy of these pages.

These front pages are always typeset in the master language, except for the title and the subtitle.

**COVER PAGE ('KAFT')** The cover page (Figure 1) contains the necessary logos, an identification of the master degree, the academic year, the title (and if wanted a subtitle), and the names of the students and the promotor(s). The cover page is only necessary for the printed version, not for an electronic version.

The cover page uses color and it must be printed as such. The colors of the banner containing the master degree are defined in §3.2.

**TITLE PAGE** The title page (Figure 2) is the first page of the actual document. It contains the same information as the cover page as well as the complete jury names.

**COPYRIGHT PAGE** The copyright page (Figure 3) contains the necessary copyright statements and contact information. It is printed on the verso side of the title page. If the text language differs from the master language, an additional copyright statement in the text language should be included.

## 1.2 Front matter

The front matter contains introductory material such as a preface, an abstract, and content lists (table of contents, list of tables, list of figures, list of symbols, etc.).

**PREFACE ('VOORWOORD')** The preface page contains personal comments from the author(s). The preface can also be used for general acknowledgments and to express one's thanks. This page is recommended but not required.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS ('INHOUDSOPGAVE')** The table of contents should be a clear representation of the breakdown of the chapters and the respective page numbers. Don't show too many levels here since it will make you loose the reader. So either restrict the table of contents to the chapter and the section level or add the subsection level in an unobstructive way.

# Een nieuwe hybride datastructuur voor efficiëntere iteratieve Krylov-deelruimte methodes voor het oplossen van partiële differentiaalvergelijkingen

De langste titel die voor zover gekend in 2010 gebruikt is

Een Auteur  
Tweede Auteur

Proefschrift voorgedragen tot het  
behalen van de graad van Master  
in de ingenieurswetenschappen:  
elektrotechniek, optie  
Geïntegreerde elektronica

**Promotor:**  
Prof. dr. ir. Weet Beter

Academiejaar 2009 – 2010

**Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: elektrotechniek**

Figure 1: The official cover page layout

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D. Vriend

Academiejaar 2009 – 2010

Figure 2: The official title page layout

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Zonder voorafgaande schriftelijke toestemming van zowel de promotor(en) als de auteur(s) is overnemen, kopiëren, gebruiken of realiseren van deze uitgave of gedeelten ervan verboden. Voor aanvragen tot of informatie i.v.m. het overnemen en/of gebruik en/of realisatie van gedeelten uit deze publicatie, wend u tot Departement Elektrotechniek, Kasteelpark Arenberg 10 postbus 2440, B-3001 Heverlee, +32-16-32 11 30 of via e-mail [info@esat.kuleuven.be](mailto:info@esat.kuleuven.be).

Voorafgaande schriftelijke toestemming van de promotor(en) is eveneens vereist voor het aanwenden van de in deze masterproef beschreven (originele) methoden, producten, schakelingen en programma's voor industrieel of commercieel nut en voor de inzending van deze publicatie ter deelname aan wetenschappelijke prijzen of wedstrijden.

Figure 3: The official copyright page layout

**ABSTRACT ('SAMENVATTING')** The abstract page gives a one page overview of the work emphasizing the results. Try to avoid uncommon terminology, which will only be defined in the main text later on.

If the master language differs from the main text language, a second abstract page is needed, which is written in the master language. This is common practice for Erasmus students, where the main text language is determined by the host institute. However if the master guidelines require a multi-page abstract with figures, it's probably better to put it into an appendix or into an additional chapter in the back matter.

**LIST OF FIGURES ('LIJST VAN FIGUREN')** This list contains for each figure its sequence number, its caption and its page number. Such a list is often of limited use in a master thesis. Therefore it's not required nor recommended unless the master guidelines require or recommend it.

**LIST OF TABLES ('LIJST VAN TABELLEN')** This list contains for each table its sequence number, its caption and its page number. The same remark as for the list of figures is valid here.

**NOMENCLATURE ('LIJST VAN SYMBOLEN')** This list holds the nomenclature of the text. It shows all used symbols and abbreviations and their meaning. Also conventions such as "*vectors are printed in bold*" can be put in this list. This list is not required, but it is recommended if some non-evident symbols or abbreviations are used. It's useless to have a list of symbols indicating that  $\alpha$  means the Greek letter alpha!

### 1.3 Main matter

The main matter forms the heart of the thesis text: it contains the real content. One should be able to read only the main matter to take in the whole story. The main matter is divided into chapters, which are the logical entities of the text. The chapters have a logical sequence, which must be made evident to the reader.

**FIRST CHAPTER** In this general introduction the reader must be informed about the research field of the master thesis, situating it in a broader context. The goals of the thesis, as well as previous work, are described from a technical point of view. The structure of the thesis text is briefly explained.

**OTHER CHAPTERS** Each chapter, except the first and the last one, starts with an introduction to the contents of the chapter. If a reader would only read the introductions, he/she should have an overview of the contents of the master thesis and the relation between the chapters.

Since chapters form a logical unit, it's expected that conclusions can be drawn at the end of each chapter about the work described in it. A concluding section can also help to link a chapter to the next one.

**LAST CHAPTER** The general conclusion summarizes all results, criticizes the methods used, and makes suggestions for further work. It can't contain any new elements.

**APPENDICES ('BIJLAGEN')** The appendices clarify or complete the text but are not an essential part of the work. Extra information which is essential for future work is also included in appendices. Typical examples are: program code and algorithms, detailed

schematics, equipment specifications, mathematical derivations and an exhaustive argumentation.

If the master guidelines gives a page limit for the text, it usually only includes the regular chapters, not the appendices. However appendices can't be used to by-pass this page limit because the evaluation of the thesis is mainly based on the regular chapters.

## 1.4 Back matter

The back matter conveys information ancillary to that in the main matter. Typical examples are a bibliography and a glossary.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** The bibliography lists all referenced material. The format used for the bibliography items is probably determined by the master guidelines or by the promotor. References are needed for all statements that aren't proven in the thesis. However references to courses are superfluous.

**FILING CARD ('FICHE')** Some masters, such as the ones listed in §3.1, require a filing card (Figure 4) at the end of the text. It must contain all administrative information about the thesis: all information from the title page, a translated title, UDC number, keywords, title of the accompanying article, and a very short abstract (not longer than 500 words). This page is typeset in the master language, with the exception of the thesis title and the short abstract. It has a fixed layout, just like the front pages. Therefore it must be generated in the same way as the front pages: either with LaTeX or by getting a printed copy from your master secretary.

## 2 Typography

A good first overall impression is always very important. Therefore typography is a very important part of any masterpiece of text. And isn't your master thesis a masterpiece?

Several good books have been written about typography and book design. A (not so) short overview is found in the memoir design notes [4].

### 2.1 Basic principles

The text must be written in a correct language, used in a consistent way. Spelling mistakes are unacceptable, so at least use a decent spelling checker. When in doubt, consult a dictionary or an official word list (known in Dutch as the 'Groene Boekje' [1]). A consistent spelling implies that either British or American spelling is used when writing an English text.

Consistency is also required for the grammar. Some sources suggest to use a passive voice such as "the results are found ...". Other sources suggest to rather use an active voice such as "we found this result ...". Whatever you use, always try to stick to the same kind of construction.

The master thesis should be written in a very readable way because it is meant to communicate the results and scientific experience of the authors to others. Since a master thesis is a scientific work, official metric units (a.k.a. SI units [3]) must be used. Identical concepts should be described with identical words or identical symbols, as well in the

## Fiche masterproef

*Studenten:* Een Auteur

Tweede Auteur

*Titel:* Een nieuwe hybride datastructuur voor efficiëntere iteratieve Krylov-deelruimte methodes voor het oplossen van partiële differentiaalvergelijkingen*Engelse titel:* The most complex master thesis title ever*UDC:* 621.3*Korte inhoud:*

Hier komt een heel bondig abstract van hooguit 500 woorden.  $\text{\LaTeX}$  commando's mogen hier gebruikt worden. Blanco lijnen (of het commando `\par`) zijn wel niet toegelaten!

Nam dui ligula, fringilla a, euismod sodales, sollicitudin vel, wisi. Morbi auctor lorem non justo. Nam lacus libero, pretium at, lobortis vitae, ultricies et, tellus. Donec aliquet, tortor sed accumsan bibendum, erat ligula aliquet magna, vitae ornare odio metus a mi. Morbi ac orci et nisl hendrerit mollis. Suspendisse ut massa. Cras nec ante. Pellentesque a nulla. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Aliquam tincidunt urna. Nulla ullamcorper vestibulum turpis. Pellentesque cursus luctus mauris.

Thesis voorgedragen tot het behalen van de graad van Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: elektrotechniek, optie Geïntegreerde elektronica

*Promotor:* Prof. dr. ir. Weet Beter*Assessoren:* Ir. W. Eetveel

W. Eetrest

*Begeleiders:* Ir. A. Assistent

D. Vriend

Figure 4: The official filing card layout



body text and equations as in figures and tables. To help the reader, it may be useful to add a list of symbols and abbreviations in the front matter.

One sentence shouldn't contain more than one thought and is therefore short. Ideas that belong together are kept together in one paragraph. Therefore a paragraph usually contains at least two sentences, spanning at least two lines.

## 2.2 Fonts

The body text is typeset using a proportional serif typeface. Well known examples are Times<sup>1</sup> (or Times New Roman), Cambria, Palatino (or Book Antiqua), Garamond, Utopia, Charter, and Minion. The font used in formulas, figures, and tables must be the same as the body text font. Symbols in the text and in formulas must be compatible with the chosen body text font.

A general rule in typography is: *“using fewer typefaces usually means better readability”*. But it makes sense to add one or two extra typefaces for specific types of data to identify them more easily in running text. To represent the name or contents of a file or a screen, one typically uses a fixed width font, such as Courier or Consolas. For non-body text (e.g., titles, headers, footers, captions) a proportional sans serif font is sometimes used. Well known examples are Helvetica (or Arial), Calibri, Univers, and Myriad. Just in case you're curious about it, the fonts used in this document are Utopia, Luxi Mono, and Bera Sans.

A font size of 11 pt or 10 pt with a proper leading<sup>2</sup> must be used for text and symbols. On A4 paper the 11 pt size is preferred. If you don't know the proper leading for your font, choose 2.5 pt for the 11 pt font and 2 pt for the 10 pt font. Headings can be made more attractive and outstanding by typesetting them in a larger font size and/or italics or bold.

## 2.3 Layout

The text is printed on both sides of A4 paper with odd numbered pages on the recto<sup>3</sup> side. This implies that the inner margins (left on recto, right on verso) are smaller than the outer margins. Contrary to printed books, electronic versions are often only read from the screen, one page at a time. In the latter case it makes more sense to have equal left and right margins.

A page contains a one column typeblock and optionally a header and a footer. The typeblock contains the regular text, the tables and figures, and the footnotes. To improve the readability of the text, the width of the typeblock is limited to 14 cm when using an 11 pt font and to 13 cm when using a 10 pt font.

The pages should be numbered consecutively, except for the front pages. It is customary for front matter pages to use lowercase roman numbers and for other pages to use arabic numbers. In this case the page number is reset to 1 on the first page of the main matter.

Only chapters in the main matter are numbered: regular chapters with arabic numbers and appendices with uppercase letters. Chapters in the front and back matter are unnumbered. Numbered chapters normally start on a recto page. Inside a chapter, only sections

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<sup>1</sup> Since the typeface Times was developed for newspapers with small columns, it is not a good typeface for single column texts on A4 paper!

<sup>2</sup> Leading is the vertical space between two lines of text. The line spacing is the font size plus the leading.

<sup>3</sup> The recto page is the right-hand page of a printed book. The left-hand page is called the verso page.

and subsections are numbered, always with arabic numbers. Too many document levels will confuse the reader instead of helping him/her.

One should be able to unambiguously interpret the figures, tables and equations and they should be numbered, preferably by chapter. Each reference to equations, figures, and tables should mention the corresponding number. Each figure should have a caption below it which briefly indicates what is shown. The main text should refer at least once to each figure and its content should be discussed in the text. The author needs to do the interpretation of the figures, not the reader. The same is true for tables, but traditionally the table caption is put above the table.

### 3 Master specific data

This section describes some master specific data as it was known on 27 February 2010.

#### 3.1 Filing card

The following masters are known to require a filing card:

- Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: computerwetenschappen
- Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: wiskundige ingenieurstechnieken

#### 3.2 Master colors

The master colors are shown below for all masters which have colors defined by the Faculty of Engineering. These are the official colors, which means that only the Faculty can change them. If a master wants to have its colors added or changed, it should contact the Faculty secretary.

All colors are defined as coordinates in the CMYK color space which is normally used by printers. White corresponds to (0,0,0,0) and black to (0,0,0,1) in CMYK.

##### **Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: architectuur**

Background color: (0.93,0.52,0.35,0.11)

Text color: (0,0,0,0)

##### **Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: biomedische technologie**

Background color: (0.6,0,0.3,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,1)

##### **Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: bouwkunde**

Background color: (0.2,0.7,1,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,0)

##### **Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: chemische technologie**

Background color: (0.9,0.26,1,0.13)

Text color: (0,0,0,0)

**Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: computerwetenschappen**

Background color: (0,0,1,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,1)

**Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: elektrotechniek**

Background color: (0,0.2,0.7,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,1)

**Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: energie**

Background color: (0.5,0,1,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,1)

**Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: geotechniek en mijnbouwkunde**

Background color: (0.8,0.6,0,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,0)

**Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: materiaalkunde**

Background color: (0.3,0,0.3,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,1)

**Master in de nanowetenschappen en de nanotechnologie**

Background color: (0,0.8,0.7,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,0)

**Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: wiskundige ingenieurstechnieken**

Background color: (0.9,0.94,0.02,0.07)

Text color: (0,0,0,0)

**Master in de ingenieurswetenschappen: werktuigkunde**

Background color: (0.6,0.3,0,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,0)

**Master of Engineering: Chemical Technology (Engineering Rheology)**

Background color: (0.9,0.26,1,0.13)

Text color: (0,0,0,0)

**Master of Engineering: Electrical Engineering**

Background color: (0,0.2,0.7,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,1)

**Master of Engineering: Materials Engineering**

Background color: (0.3,0,0.3,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,1)

## Master of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology

Background color: (0,0.8,0.7,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,0)

## Erasmus Mundus Master of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology

Background color: (0,0.8,0.7,0)

Text color: (0,0,0,0)

### Bibliography

- [1] Nederlandse Taalunie. *Woordenlijst Nederlandse Taal*. Lannoo Uitgeverij, Tielt, 2005.  
Available from: <http://woordenlijst.org/>.
- [2] L. Van Eycken. The kulemt package [online]. Feb. 2010. Available from: <ftp://ftp.esat.kuleuven.be/latex/kulemt/>.
- [3] Wikipedia. International System of Units [online]. Available from: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_System\\_of\\_Units](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_System_of_Units) [cited 2009-12-30].
- [4] P. Wilson. *A Few Notes on Book Design*, Sept. 2009. Available from: <http://mirror.ctan.org/info/memdesign/memdesign.pdf>.