**MS Thesis Guidelines**

**Department of Statistical Sciences**

**Wake Forest University**

**Approved 11/2/2023**

**Policies:**

* The thesis committee composition must comply with graduate school guidelines as follows: For students on the Reynolda campus, the committee must have no fewer than 3 members, including the advisor from the program, a second reader from within the program who serves as the committee chair, and a third reader from outside the department or from outside the student’s area of concentration.
* The Chair of the thesis committee must be a tenured member of the Department of Statistical Sciences.
* A 3-4 page single-spaced (6-8 double space) thesis proposal with references will be given to the committee prior to the thesis proposal presentation in STA 791.
* A full draft of the thesis should be given to the advisor at least one month before the defense is planned.
* A full draft of the thesis, approved by the advisor, should be given to the committee at least two weeks before the defense is planned.
* Faculty will work with students to ensure comments are returned within reasonable time, to allow for revision.
* The defense must occur on or before the deadline given by the graduate school.
* The final deadline for submission of the written thesis and all documents as set by the graduate school must be met.
* Students must submit the approved final version of their thesis to the ZSR Library repository. Optional cost-effective binding services for physical copies are available at the ZSR library.

**Important Dates (Assuming a May 2023 Graduation)**

● March 22, 2023 – Deadline for thesis format review

● April 12, 2023 – Final day to defend thesis

● April 19, 2023 – Deadline to (1) submit ETD student-advisor agreement; (2) submit final electronic thesis; (3) submit exit survey to Graduate School office

**Content:**

* The thesis may be new research or may be a substantial exploration of existing research on a specific topic; it is not required to be published or publishable.
* A suggested page length for the thesis is at least 50 pages in the required thesis format, including figures, tables, and references, but NOT appendices. However, the quality and significance of the work is more important than any specific length.
* The written work should contain a good introduction to the problem, or problems; it should contain a good discussion of the theoretical background; it should contain a clear presentation of the main results; and it should contain a conclusion with possible suggestions for future work. This should include substantial exploration of relevant current literature. This exposition must be present regardless of whether the thesis contains published or submitted articles.
* In all cases the student must have written the exposition of the work for the thesis. Appropriate edits may be suggested by the advisor or committee. Particular care should be taken to avoid plagiarism of any sort.
* In the case where the thesis contains already published or submitted manuscripts, the guidelines of the graduate school must be followed, as below.
* If the student has submitted, has had accepted, or published one or more papers pertinent to the subject of the thesis, the paper(s) may be incorporated into the thesis, as long as the student had the major role in the preparation of the manuscript and has the right to include the paper(s). Portions of papers representing work either not done by the student or used as part of another thesis should be identified clearly and, if permissible, placed in an appendix.
* Theses including papers submitted, accepted, or published are subject to the same principles of consistency. However, the form for literature citations, table presentations, references, etc. may conform to the style required by the publishing journal.
* Generally, each paper constitutes a chapter of the thesis. A statement should be included on the title page of the chapter stating that stylistic variations result from the demands of the journal to which the paper was submitted, accepted, or published. In the case of multiple authorship, the student should indicate the portion of the work for which he or she is responsible.
* It is important to clearly state the status of each manuscript submitted, accepted and published. This can be done in the Table of Contents by including a statement that the manuscript has been submitted, accepted or published.
* Theses containing papers already published or accepted for publication must be accompanied by letters of permission or denial of permission concerning copyright, when applicable. Such letters should be included as an appendix to the thesis. Many publishers automatically grant authors the right to include papers as thesis chapters. It is the student’s responsibility to confirm the right to republish prior to inclusion. One example is Academic Press which no longer requires authors to obtain permission in the following cases: 1) to use original figures or tables in future works; 2) to make copies of papers for classroom teaching; and 3) to include papers as part of the thesis. Students are responsible for determining whether additional permission from copyright holders is required.