

# Reflecting on my thesis

University of Maryland  
Fall 2023  
Caroline Berger





# Why did I do a thesis?

## Caroline's Goals

G1 Teach with you

G2 Improve writing

G3 Improve at conducting research

G4 Improve at reporting research

G5 Publish research at CHI

G6 Work towards becoming a professor

*From an early email with my advisor*



# Courses

- Advanced usability testing
- Both research methods classes
- Practical Skills in HCI; Mastering Master's Thesis
- Personal Health Informatics & Visualization
- Greek study abroad - Civil Engineering
- Indonesian study abroad - Public Policy

# Writing

The screenshot shows the Overleaf LaTeX editor interface. On the left, the code editor displays a LaTeX document with various sections and citations. A context menu is open over a section of text, showing options like 'Deleted instantly' and 'Added very nice'. The right side shows a preview of the document, which includes a title page, an introduction section with a quote from Adams' Hitchhiker's Guide, and a conclusion section. There is also a figure titled 'The Universe' with a small galaxy image.

```
1 \documentclass{article}
2 \usepackage[utf8]{inputenc}
3 
4 \title{Example}
5 \author{John Hammersley}
6 \date{April 2018}
7 
8 \usepackage{natbib}
9 \usepackage{graphicx}
10 
11 \begin{document}
12 
13 \maketitle
14 
15 \section{Introduction}
16 There is a theory which states that if ever anyone discovers exactly what the Universe is for and why it is here, it will \textit{disappear} and be replaced by something even more bizarre and inexplicable.
17 There is another \textit{very nice} theory which states that this has already happened.
18 
19 \begin{figure}[h!]
20 \centering
21 \includegraphics[scale=1.7]{universe}
22 \caption{The Universe}
23 \label{fig:universe}
24 \end{figure}
25 
26 \section{Conclusion}
27 I always thought something was fundamentally wrong with the universe''
28 \citet{adams1995hitchhiker}
29 
30 \bibliographystyle{plain}
31 \bibliography{references}
32 \end{document}
```

Example

Everyone You Guests

Deleted instantly Apr 18, 2018 5:24 PM • You

Accepted

Added very nice Apr 18, 2018 5:24 PM • You

Accepted

You: Nice quote :)

Apr 18, 2018 5:25 PM • Edit

Hit Enter to reply

Resolve Reply

Recompile

Review Share History Chat

Example

John Hammersley April 2018

## 1 Introduction

There is a theory which states that if ever anyone discovers exactly what the Universe is for and why it is here, it will instantly disappear and be replaced by something even more bizarre and inexplicable. There is another theory which states that this has already happened.



Figure 1: The Universe

## 2 Conclusion

I always thought something was fundamentally wrong with the universe'' [1]

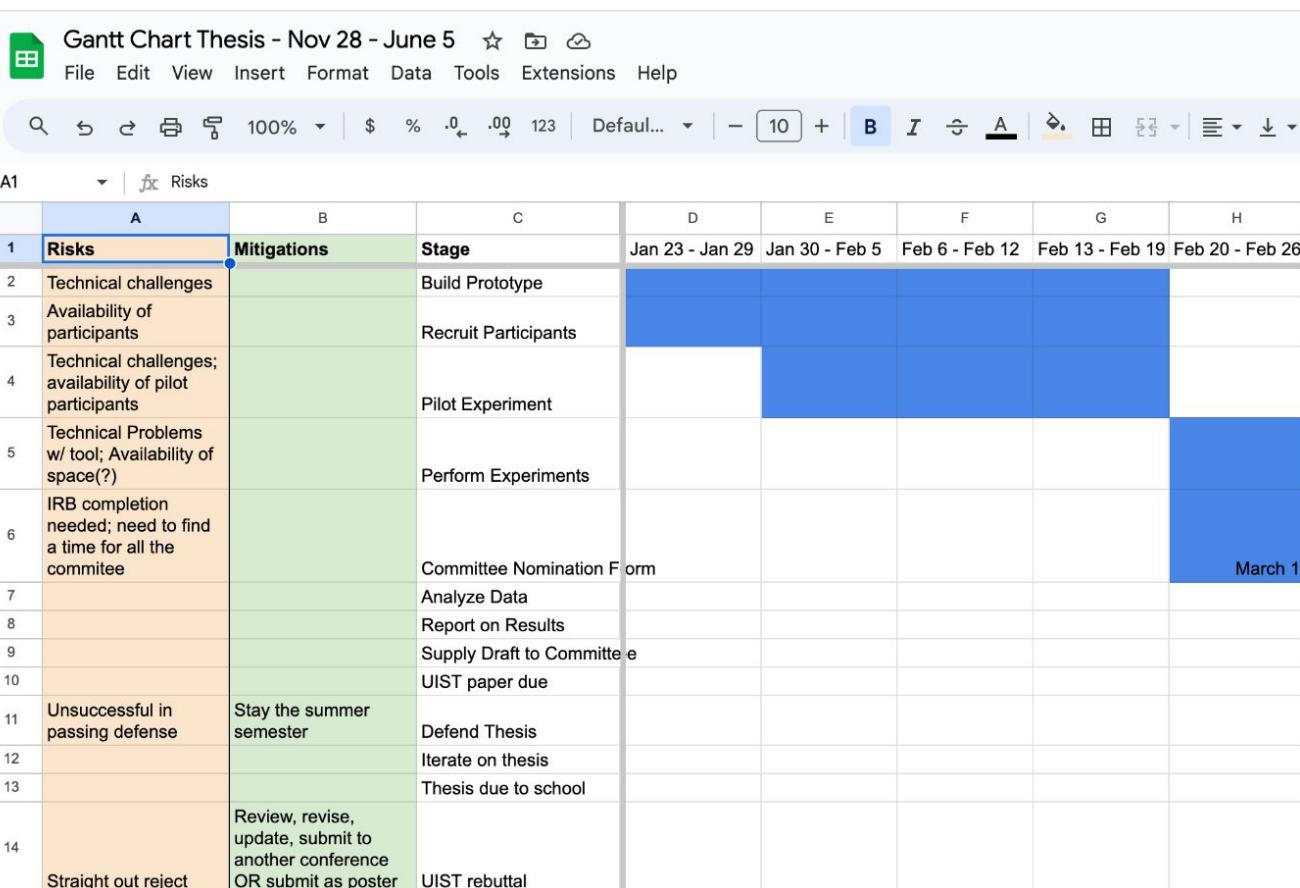
## References

[1] D. Adams. *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. San Val, 1995.



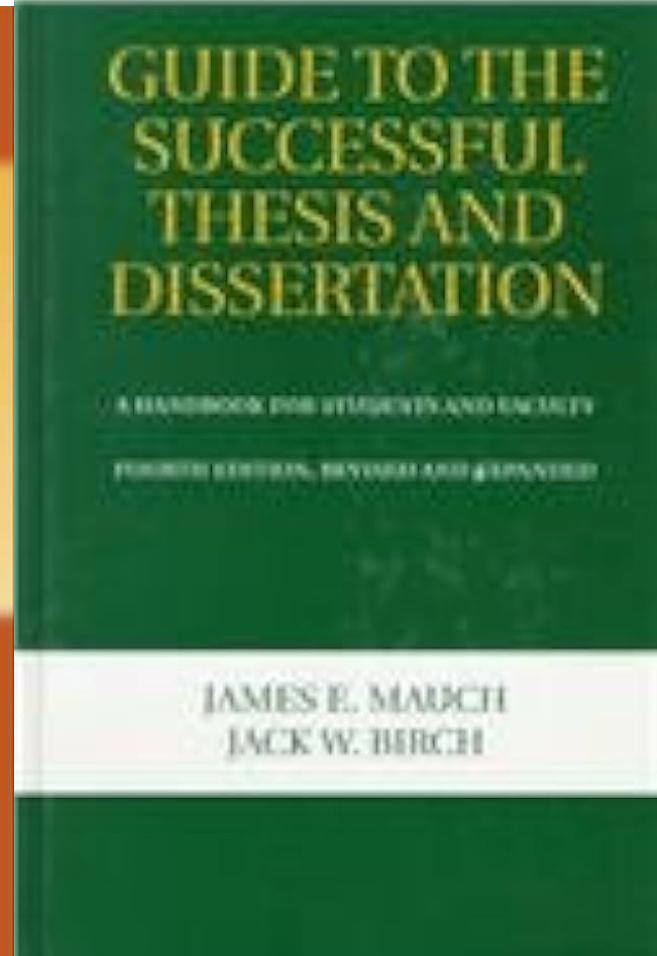
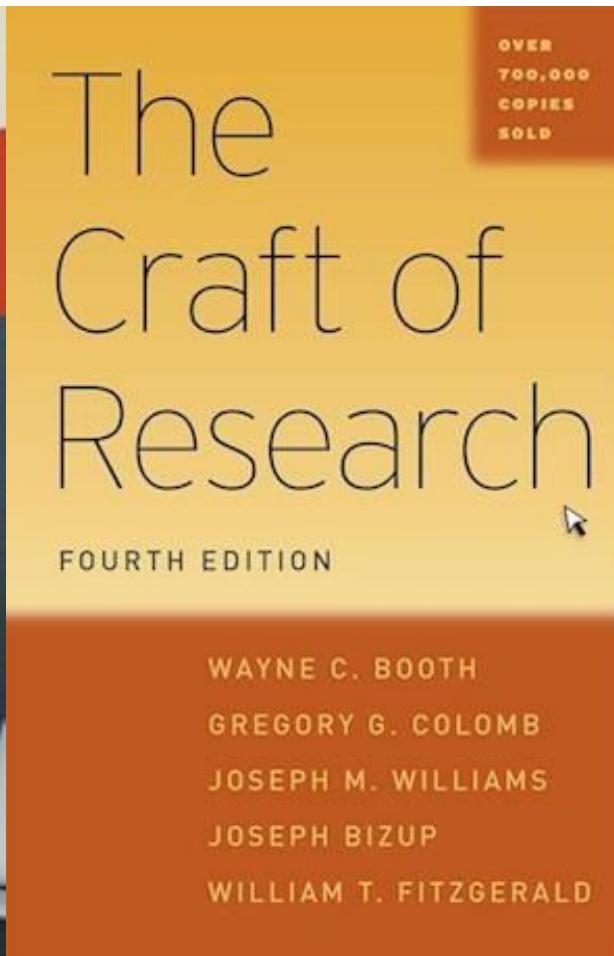
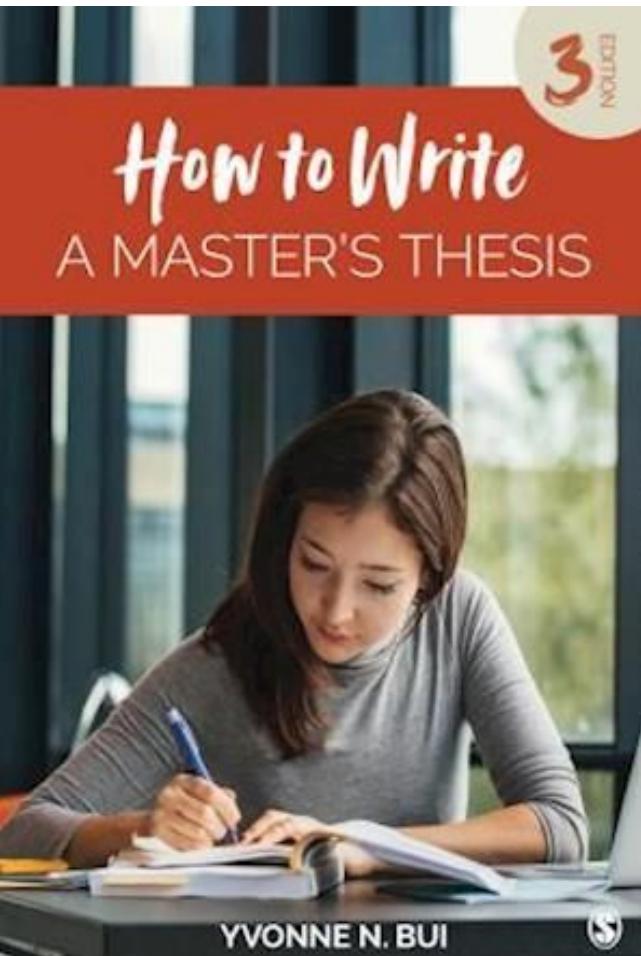
I've copied my thesis so you are free to use it as a template. This is based off of UMD's latex template. Be sure to check with UMD's library style guide.  
[overleaf.com/read/hskcnqyqwbfgw](https://overleaf.com/read/hskcnqyqwbfgw)

# Timeline & Planning - Milestones & Activities

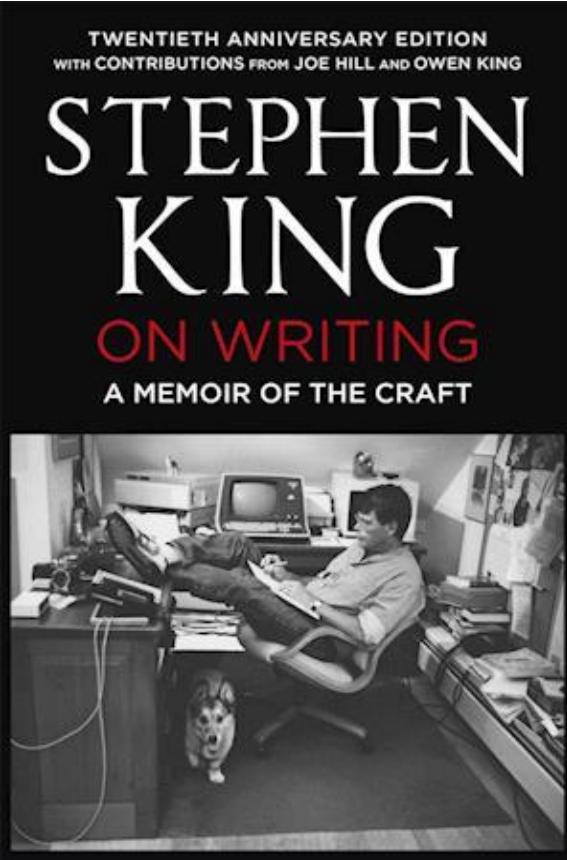
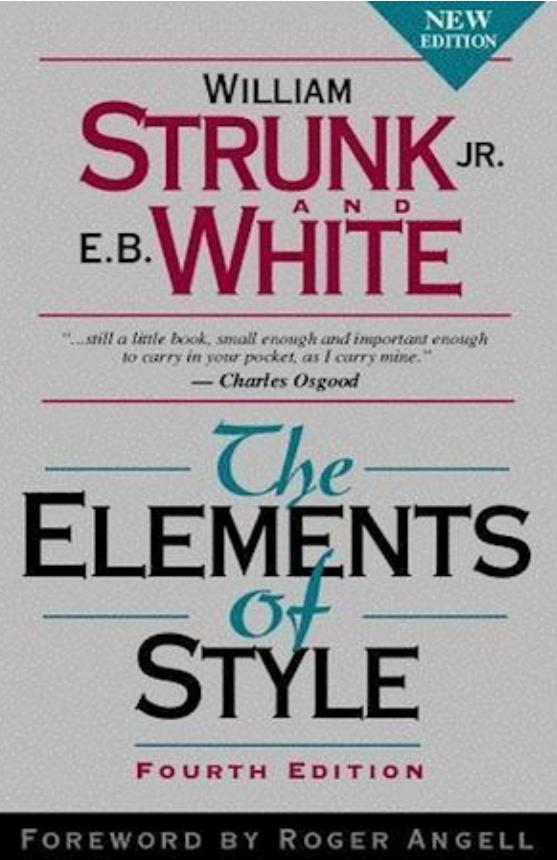
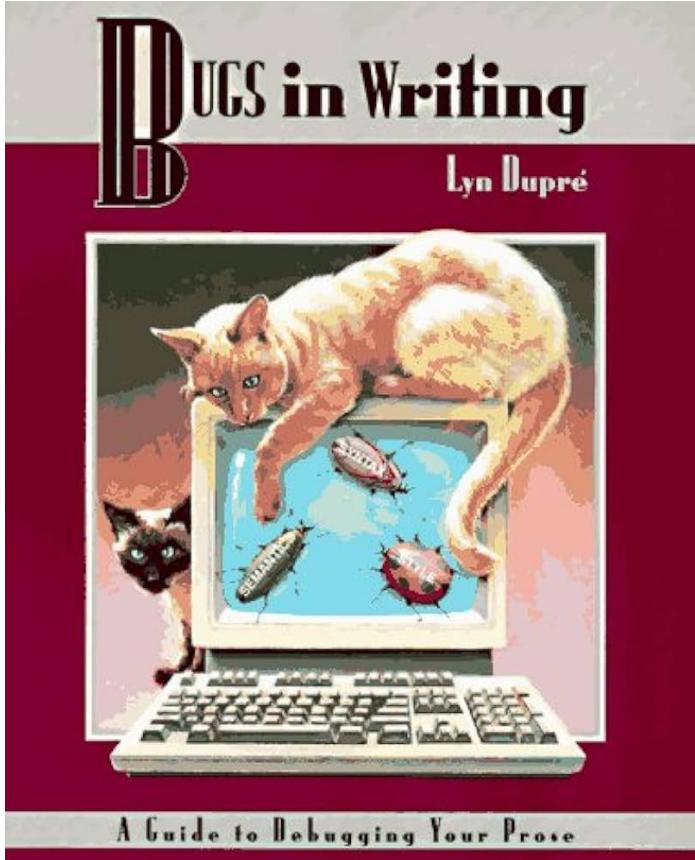


I've copied my gantt chart, feel free to use.  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1julK6vm6L1WSVxFYs0oaQDap4lcaJV2Sxvqze44TLp8/edit?usp=sharing>

# Books that helped me to research



# Books that helped me to write



# What else helped?

Draft in Caroline Berger

## Title

(+) Tell your story...

Writing in my free time



My support network:  
Christina, my  
sister/room mate  
Ben, my fiance



Reading for fun



Getting outside



Working out at Eppley



Librarians at UMD & their  
workshops:  
[lib.umd.edu/about/events](http://lib.umd.edu/about/events)

# Habits that helped me

Writing early and often



Meeting with my advisor  
1 hr / week

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
28	29	30	1	2

Live Coding 2 - 3pm

Meeting Ca 3pm, Your c Meeting wit

End of the semester get together 5 - 8pm

Indo Pre-departure Class #2 7 - 9:30pm Room 0102 at the

Sending a weekly update to my advisor 24 hr before we meet

Weekly Update Nov. 17, 2022



Caroline Palma Berger <cberger2@umd.edu>

to Niklas ▾

Fri, Nov 18, 2022, 1:20 AM



Hi Professor Elmquist,

Thanks a bunch for submitting UW, UMD, and UCSD recommendation letters, will definitely let you know the results of the applications.

#### Questions

1. Should we build personas or journey maps representing the as-is state?
2. Should we recruit participants that are non-CS students taking a programming course? Rationale being conversational programming/CS for All is a hot topic right now

#### Summary of work performed

1. [Gantt chart week by week stage-based timeline with risks and mitigations](#)
2. [Drafted methodology](#).
3. Drafted list of requirements user stories backed by literature see [chapter 4 of the draft of my thesis](#), I'm pulling in some best practices on foreign language learning as there's overlap between acquisition of a second language and programming  
Aside: if only we could speak to our computers aloud and get rid of all the prescriptive rules and writing requirements of the programming languages du jour, I think we'd see a lot more people using programming to make their lives easier

#### Updates

1. I found a few fellowships that I'd be eligible for in case that changes anything re:funding & pursuing a PhD under your supervision; there is the MITRE funding option, but that has many strings attached

#### Plan for next week

1. Principally taking a break for thanksgiving
2. Going to the Tufts library while I'm in Boston to read a book that's there "Professional Development for In-Service Teachers: Cambridge Handbook of Multimedia Learning"...

Getting to know my labmates



# Key Administrative Tasks

- IRB approval
- Committee nomination form
- Scheduling defense
- Sending document to advisor for revisions
- Sending document to committee
- Defending thesis
- Revising
- Submitting to library



**You** are the project manager of your thesis

# Challenges

- Deciding what to research
- Imposter syndrome
- IRB application revisions
- Aligning expectations - committee involvement
- Running studies
- Formatting



**You** are the project manager of your thesis

So, would I do it again?

**YES!**

### Caroline's Goals

- ✓ Teach with ~~you~~ Information Org. (TA)
- ✓ Improve writing
- ✓ Improve at conducting research
- ✓ Improve at reporting research
- ? Publish research at CHI
- ✓ Work towards becoming a professor



# Remember enjoy the ride

- Brown Bag luncheons
- Prof. Choe's classes
- Greek and Indonesian study abroad
- Sports events
- Bike rides around Artemesia lake
- Access to DC (Embassy Events, Concerts, Kennedy Center, DC Bike Party)
- Pottery at STAMP

