

AN EXAMPLE THESIS TITLE IN ALL CAPS, STYLED
INTO AN INVERTED PYRAMID FORMAT AND
CENTERED ON THE PAGE

by

[Your Name Here], [Most Recently Earned Degree]

A ["thesis"/"dissertation"] submitted to the Graduate Council of
Texas State University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
[Degree Type]
with a Major in [Major]
[Month] [Year]

Committee Members:

Advisor Name, Chair

Committee Member One

Committee Member Two

Committee Member Three

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by

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[Year]

DEDICATION

The dedication page is optional. If used, it should have a one-inch margin all around. The word “DEDICATION” is the heading and should be in all CAPS and centered. The page will not be numbered but will count in the overall numbering of the document.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The acknowledgments page is optional. Consult your committee if an acknowledgments page should be included. If included, it should have a one-inch margin all around. The word “ACKNOWLEDGMENTS” is the heading and must be centered in all CAPS. Many students use this section to thank their committee members, fellow students, family members, or any person they feel has contributed significantly to their document

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
ETD	Electronic Thesis and Dissertation
TXST	Texas State University

ABSTRACT

Write your abstract on this page.

1. TEMPLATE OVERVIEW

This chapter provides an example of a manuscript generated using the Texas State University (TXST) LaTeX template for Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) preparation. It serves as a practical guide for navigating the document structure and utilizing the template's built-in features.

The following sections detail the organization of the template files, including the structure and behavior of structural files and instructions on how to include content in the main matter. This template is written to meet the formatting requirements set forth by the Graduate College. It is the author's responsibility to ensure that the final ETD is compliant with all formatting requirements.

1.1. Environment Setup

This template has been verified exclusively for use with the LuaLaTeX compiler within the TeX Live 2025 distribution. Proper PDF tagging and UA-2 accessibility compliance depend on specific programming hooks that are only available in these modern TeX engines. Older compilers, such as pdfLaTeX or XeLaTeX, lack the necessary infrastructure to communicate with the document's metadata sockets and will fail to generate a valid structural map. Therefore, it is recommended that authors use the **LuaLaTeX compiler** and **TeX Live 2025** distribution or later.

To ensure the integrity of the document's accessibility layer, authors should verify their local or cloud-based LaTeX distribution before beginning the submission process. Compilation with an unsupported or outdated environment will result in the loss of mandatory structural metadata, rendering the final dissertation non-compliant with institutional and federal accessibility mandates. It is recommended that authors verify that this template compiles without errors before modifying its content.

1.2. System Files

The `system/` folder contains the core formatting logic and style definitions. These files are static, pre-configured, and pre-formatted to meet Graduate College formatting requirements, and should generally not be edited by authors.

1.2.1. The Style File

The style file (`txst-etd-style.sty`) contains the core formatting logic and global design specifications. It contains the formatting logic that controls various aspects of the document, including margin dimensions, pagination, heading styles, the Table of Contents structure, and general text styling.

The style file includes many useful packages (such as `amsmath`, `graphicx`, and `tocbasic`), and authors are encouraged to review the style file to understand which packages are supported by default. However, to maintain the integrity of the template, authors should not edit the style file directly. If additional packages are required, they should be loaded in the `config.tex` file.

1.2.2. Title Page and Copyright Page

The Title and Copyright pages are generated automatically using variables defined in `config`. These pages are pre-formatted to meet Graduate College requirements and should not be modified directly by the author. Instead, authors will provide `config.tex` with the appropriate information, and the template populates the corresponding fields on these protected pages.

To meet institutional formatting standards, the title of the work must be manually styled into an inverted pyramid shape within the `myFormattedTitle` variable (located in `config.tex`). This is achieved by inserting manual line breaks (“\\”) to ensure each subsequent line of the title is shorter than the one above it.

1.2.3. Table of Contents

The Table of Contents is generated automatically based on the sectioning commands used throughout the manuscript. Any title defined within a `chapter`, `section`, or `subsection` command is captured and exported to this list with its corresponding page number. Authors should not use `part` within their manuscript, as the template uses it to designate front and back matter. For more information on using these commands, see Section 2.1.

By default, the template provides formatting support for double-digit numbering for all levels ranging from chapters down to subsections. If the author wants to change the number of headings included in the Table of Contents, these settings can be adjusted by adding the appropriate formatting commands to `config.tex`.

It is the author's responsibility to verify that the Table of Contents matches the headings in the main matter exactly, and that the titles are formatted according to the Graduate College formatting requirements. Authors must, for example, write their chapter titles in ALL CAPS in their manuscript to comply with the formatting requirements.

1.2.4. Lists of Content

The List of Tables, List of Figures, and List of Abbreviations pages are generated automatically from the content in the main matter. The corresponding files located in the Front Matter folder are pre-configured to handle formatting and logic automatically. Authors should not modify these files.

If an entry in a list appears incorrect, the change should be made at the source within the `caption` in the main matter or abbreviation definition. It is the author's responsibility to verify that every figure, table, and abbreviation is accurately reflected in these lists.

1.2.4.1. List of Tables This template uses the built-in `\listoftables` command to generate this list based on the captions provided within your table environments. See Section 2.3 for more information on creating tables.

1.2.4.2. List of Figures This template uses the built-in `\listoffigures` command to generate this list from the captions within your figure environments. See Section 2.2 for more information on creating figures.

1.2.4.3. List of Abbreviations This template uses the `glossaries` package to automatically generate the list of abbreviations that are used in the main matter. See Section 2.5 for more information on how abbreviations are managed.

1.3. The Configuration File

The configuration file (`config.tex`) contains all user-defined variables and document customizations. Authors can define custom commands within this file to modify the document's content and behavior without altering the underlying style.

1.3.1. Built-in Variables and Metadata

This file includes variables for authorship, degree type, graduation date, and committee members. When these variables are defined in `config.tex`, the template automatically populates the Title Page, Copyright Page, and PDF metadata.

Authors should define the following variables within `config.tex`:

- `myTitle` - the title of the ETD, written in plain text
- `myFormattedTitle` - the title styled as an inverted pyramid
- `myAuthorName` - the author's name
- `myDocumentType` - “dissertation” or “thesis”
- `myDegree` - “Master’s” or “Doctor of Philosophy”
- `myMajor` - Biology, Computer Science, etc.
- `myMonth` and `myYear` - month and year of graduation

- `committeemembers` - the author’s committee
- `bibttitle` - The preferred title for the bibliography (set to “BIBLIOGRAPHY” by default)

1.3.2. Adding Custom Content

The configuration file is the designated location for loading supplemental packages or defining custom commands. Authors are encouraged to include packages and commands that support the best practices of their specific discipline. LaTeX offers an extensive library for such needs, including:

- Algorithms: `algorithmicx` for pseudocode.
- Chemistry: `mhchem` for chemical equations.
- Mathematics: `amsmath` or `mathtools` for complex formulas.

Authors may also declare abbreviations in `config.tex` for automatic processing via the `glossaries` package. See Section 2.5 for details on how to work with automatic abbreviation processing.

1.3.2.1. A Note on Command Overrides Because the configuration file is loaded after the style file, commands defined in `config.tex` take precedence. If a formatting command from the style file must be modified to meet departmental requirements, the author should redefine that specific command within `config.tex` instead of modifying that command directly. This method ensures the original style file remains unchanged while applying the necessary local overrides. All custom commands and additional packages must comply with Graduate College formatting guidelines.

1.4. Content Files

The `content/` folder is the primary workspace for ETD content. All content that requires the author's input (e.g., chapters, the abstract, and acknowledgments) are included in their respective `.tex` files within this directory. Authors should add the content of their ETD to the files in this directory.

1.4.1. Front Matter

1.4.1.1. *Dedication Page and Acknowledgments Page* The Dedication and Acknowledgments pages are optional components of the front matter. Authors should edit the content within these files to reflect their personal contributions. Authors should consult with their committee to determine if these pages are necessary.

1.4.1.2. *Abstract* The Abstract page is a component of the manuscript that provides a concise summary of the research. Authors should edit the content within the Abstract file.

1.4.2. Main Matter

The Main Matter constitutes the core of the ETD and consists of content written by the author. To maintain a manageable workflow for extensive documents, it is recommended that authors store each chapter as an individual `.tex` file within the `content/chapters/` directory. These files can then be integrated into the document using the `\include` command within `main.tex`.

While the template automates many formatting requirements, certain formatting requirements must be handled manually by the author. Detailed instructions for addressing such requirements are provided in Chapter 2. The author is responsible for ensuring all main matter content adheres to Graduate College formatting guidelines; authors should consult the most recent formatting checklist when preparing their ETDs.

1.4.3. Back Matter

1.4.3.1. *Appendix Section* The optional Appendix Section is reserved for supplementary material that is too extensive for the primary text. Content for this section must be input directly into the designated file: `Back-Matter/Appendix.tex`.

The Appendix utilizes specialized formatting that differs from the main matter. For specific implementation details and examples of this formatting, refer to the Appendix of this guide.

1.4.3.2. *Bibliography* The bibliography is managed via the BibTeX system, which automates reference formatting and the generation of the final reference list. Authors must provide citation data in the standard `.bib` format. By default, the template is configured to retrieve citation data from the file located at `bibliography/references.bib`.

To generate the reference list, the author must specify the required citation style (e.g., APA, IEEE, or MLA) within the `\bibliographystyle` command located in `main.tex`. The system subsequently performs the sorting, numbering, and formatting of all entries based on the chosen style.

The author is responsible for providing accurate and complete metadata for every cited source. Furthermore, the author must ensure that the selected citation style complies with the standard practices of their specific research field and meets the requirements of the Graduate College.

2. GENERAL LATEX ADVICE

While the template automates many formatting requirements, certain elements must be handled manually by the author. This chapter provides guidance that will help authors meet specific Graduate College formatting standards not handled automatically by the template. This guide assumes that the author has a working knowledge of LaTeX.

2.1. Headings

LaTeX provides a logical structure for documents by supporting several levels of hierarchical headings. This template includes standard formatting for `\chapter`, `\section`, `\subsection`, and `\subsubsection`.

If a manuscript requires specialized formatting for additional heading levels, the definitions must be placed within `config.tex`. Modifying core formatting commands in the primary style file is not recommended. If adjustments are necessary for departmental requirements, authors may override these commands in `config.tex` to preserve the original style file.

Authors should utilize native sectioning commands rather, and refrain from applying manual styling (e.g., bolding or font size adjustments) to standard text. These commands automatically populate the Table of Contents and ensure document accessibility. Screen readers and navigation tools rely on this underlying structure to permit users to skip between sections. Using the built-in sectioning commands ensures that the document is navigable for all readers.

2.1.1. A Note on Sectioning Commands

To maintain the accessibility and formatting of this dissertation, authors should:

- Use `\chapter` as the highest level of organization. Avoid using the `\part` command.
- Type chapter titles in ALL CAPS to comply with formatting requirements.

2.2. Figures

In LaTeX, the `figure` environment functions as a “float,” allowing the system to determine the optimal placement (top, bottom, or on a dedicated page) to maintain text flow. The `graphicx` package supports multiple image formats. High-resolution, scalable formats such as PDF are recommended to ensure visual quality across different viewing scales.

2.2.1. Basic Figure Template

Figure 2.1 is an example of a figure that incorporates both short captions and alt text, as required by the Graduate College formatting requirements. Authors are encouraged to model the syntax of their figures after this example to ensure that all figures include both structured captions and accessibility metadata.

For convenience, Figure 2.2 is provided as a template for authors. It includes several features that are required for correctly formatting an ETD, including short captions and alt text.



Figure 2.1: A tree frog of the *Agalychnis annae* species. This frog is known as both the blue-sided leaf frog and the orange-eyed leaf frog.

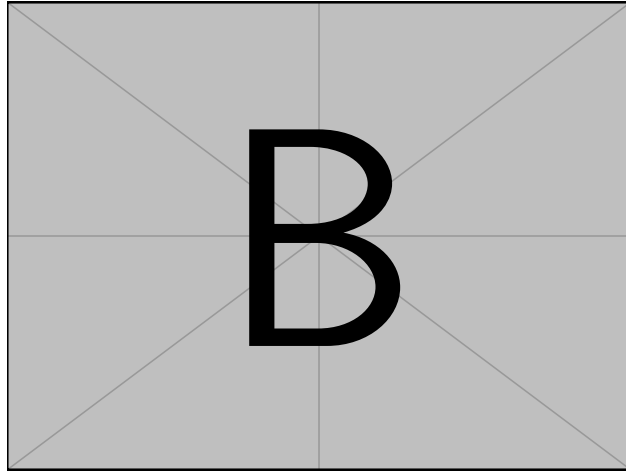


Figure 2.2: Insert full caption here. Remember that the short caption is, at most, an exact copy of the first sentence of the long caption.

2.2.2. Short Captions and the List of Figures

Graduate College guidelines require only the first sentence of a caption to appear in the List of Figures. Authors should include only the first sentence in the optional brackets [] of the `\caption` command. The full caption must follow in the standard curly braces .

2.2.3. Alternative Text for Accessibility

The author is responsible for creating accessible figures by providing alt text within the `figure` environment. Alt text for screen readers is defined using the `alt=...` key within the optional argument brackets of the `\includegraphics` command.

2.3. Tables

Similar to figures, tables in LaTeX are “floats” that the system positions for optimal page flow. This template provides support for the `booktabs` package for professional academic table design. However, authors may use any table style that complies with the Graduate College’s formatting requirements.

2.3.1. Basic Table Template

Table 2.1 demonstrates a table utilizing `booktabs` commands (`\toprule`, `\midrule`, and `\bottomrule`). Per Graduate College guidelines, the caption must be positioned above the table. Authors are encouraged to model the syntax of their tables after this example to ensure that all tables include both proper formatting and accessibility features.

Table 2.1: A Booktabs table with headings. This table shows the stats for two sports teams.

Team Name	Wins	Losses
Tigers	8	4
Wildcats	6	5

2.3.2. Short Captions and the List of Tables

Tables are automatically added to the List of Tables in the front matter. To create short captions for the List of Tables, use the optional argument in square brackets “[]” within the `caption` command. By placing only the first sentence in the brackets, the List of Tables remains clean and navigable.

2.3.3. Header Rows and Accessibility

This template uses the `\tagpdfsetup` command to define the structure of the table for PDF accessibility (see the command in Table 2.1). To ensure that the tables are accessible to all readers, including those using assistive technologies, authors should include this command explicitly designate header rows. This allows screen readers to correctly associate data cells with their corresponding categories. Avoid overly complex nested structures or excessive vertical lines, which can hinder readability and break accessibility compliance.

2.3.4. Handling Overfull Warnings

Authors should review their document for “Overfull hbox” warnings, which indicate that content exceeds the defined margins. This happens most commonly when tables are too

wide, but may also appear when images are too big or specially formatted words are too long. These should be corrected (e.g., by hyphenating words, resizing images, or rephrasing sentences) to ensure that all content is contained within the four margins. The ETD may be returned for corrections if content bleeds into the margins.

2.4. Equations

Authors in technical disciplines should ensure mathematical expressions are properly enclosed in math mode. This ensures that equations are correctly tagged for accessibility. Inline math should use math mode (e.g., $x + y = z$), while standalone equations should use the `equation` environment. Equation 2.1 contains an example of a standalone equation.

$$x + y = z \tag{2.1}$$

2.5. Abbreviations

This template uses the `glossaries` package to manage the use of abbreviations and to populate the List of Abbreviations page. This system automates the expansion of terms and ensures that only terms cited in the text appear in the front matter.

Abbreviations should be declared in `config.tex`. The `\gls` command is used to invoke the abbreviation in the manuscript. On first use, the command renders the full form followed by the abbreviation in parentheses, and subsequent uses render only the abbreviation.

Authors may manage their abbreviations manually if they prefer. It is the author's responsibility to ensure that all abbreviations are defined upon first use and that the List of Abbreviations complies with Graduate College formatting requirements.

2.6. Citations and Cross-Referencing

The template manages bibliographic data and internal links using standard LaTeX features to implement automated tracking of entry numbers and locations. It is the author's responsibility to ensure that no broken references (rendered as “??”) remain in the rendered document.

2.6.1. Citations

Authors should store citation data in a `.bib` file and utilize the `\cite` command for in-text references. This ensures the bibliography is generated and formatted according to the specified citation style. In-text citations can have a single source [1] or multiple sources [2, 2, 3, 4, 5].

2.6.2. Cross-Referencing

To reference specific figures, tables, or sections, authors must use the `\label{}` and `\ref{}` commands:

- **Labeling:** Place `\label{key}` immediately following a caption or section heading.
- **Referencing:** Use `\ref{key}` to render the number of the referenced element in the text.

2.7. Guidelines for Preparing Accessible Documents

There are several features built into this template to support accessibility for student ETDs which are not typically included in standard LaTeX documents. This section includes tips for leveraging these features to make ETDs accessible. Additionally, templates for creating accessible tables and figures are included elsewhere in this guide (see Figure 2.2 and Table 2.1).

2.7.1. PDF Tagging

PDF Tagging refers to the underlying digital structure embedded within a document. While the visual layer of a PDF provides formatting for sighted readers, the tagging layer provides a machine-readable map for assistive technologies, such as screen readers. This template is configured to produce documents that meet PDF/UA-2 (Universal Accessibility) standards to make ETDs more accessible to individuals using assistive technology. This section outlines some of the accessibility features that authors may see throughout the template.

2.7.1.1. The `\DocumentMetadata Command` The `\DocumentMetadata` command is located at the absolute beginning of `main.tex` and serves as the primary configuration block for the LaTeX tagging engine. This command initializes the tagging sockets, defines the document language, and sets the PDF version (2.0) required for modern accessibility standards.

- **Development vs. Testing:** To optimize performance, it is recommended that authors set the `tagging` parameter to `off` or `draft` during the while drafting to decrease compilation time. For final verification and accessibility testing, this parameter must be set to `on`.
- **Usage Restrictions:** Aside from toggling the tagging argument for performance purposes, authors must not modify or delete any other parameters within this block. The metadata is pre-configured to meet specific institutional formatting and federal accessibility requirements. Altering these predefined values may result in a document that fails mandatory accessibility validation during the submission process.

2.7.1.2. Required Compiler and Distribution The generation of an accessible, tagged PDF requires specific software capabilities that are only available in modern TeX distributions. Using outdated software may result in the loss of structural metadata, rendering the

document non-compliant with federal and institutional accessibility mandates.

- **Verified Compiler:** This template should be compiled using LuaLaTeX. Older engines, such as pdfLaTeX or XeLaTeX, have not been verified to support the tagging hooks utilized in this template.
- **Distribution Requirements:** Authors should use TeX Live 2025 or later (this template was last verified to operate correctly with TeX Live 2025 in Overleaf).

2.7.2. Document Structure and Navigation

To maintain the integrity of the tagging layer, authors should use standard LaTeX sectioning commands to define the document’s hierarchy and follow best practices when preparing the content of their ETDs.

- **Logical Heading Hierarchy:** Use `\section`, `\subsection`, and `\subsubsection` in sequential order. Do not skip levels (e.g., jumping from `\section` to `\subsubsection`) as this breaks the navigation map for screen readers.
- **Descriptive Hyperlinks:** When using `\href`, ensure the link text describes the destination. Avoid using non-descriptive phrases like “click here” or “link”; instead, use descriptive phrases like `\href{url}{Website Archive for Genome Project}`.

2.7.3. Figures, Tables, and other Visual Information

Authors should follow best practices when preparing accessible figures and tables. Aside from using this template’s designated figure and table structures, authors should also keep the following points in mind.

- **Compiler Warnings:** Monitor LaTeX compiler’s log for warnings indicating that alt text or descriptions are missing from figures.

- **Redundant Coding:** Use multiple methods to distinguish data in figures, such as combining different colors with unique shapes, patterns, or line styles (e.g., dashed vs. solid lines).
- **Image Contrast:** Use colors with high contrast between foreground elements and backgrounds to maintain legibility for users with low vision.
- **Table Complexity:** Avoid overly complex tables with heavily nested rows or columns. Limit the use of `\multicolumn` and `\multirow` for solely visual organization.

APPENDIX SECTION

This section is optional. If included, the title of the section must be called “APPENDIX SECTION” (all caps, bold, centered, as seen above). Anything included in the Appendix Section must fit within all four margins. Add your content to the file located at `Back-Matter/Appendix.tex`.

A.1. A Section in the Appendix

The template is configured so that subheadings within an Appendix do not appear in the Table of Contents. This section’s title should not appear in the Table of Contents.

A.1.1. A Subsection in the Appendix

This subsection’s title should not appear in the Table of Contents.

A.1.1.1. A Subsubsection in the Appendix This subsubsection’s title should not appear in the Table of Contents.

A.2. Figures and Tables

Figures and tables included in the Appendix are excluded from the main List of Figures and List of Tables. For example, Figure A.1 and Table A.1 appear in the appendix, but are not listed in the List of Figures or List of Tables in the front matter. It is the author’s responsibility to verify that all Appendix figures and tables are correctly unlisted, and to ensure that content in the appendix continues to meet formatting and accessibility standards.

Table A.1: This table does not appear in the List of Tables.

Appendix Data	Header 1	Header 2
Content	1	2
Content	3	4

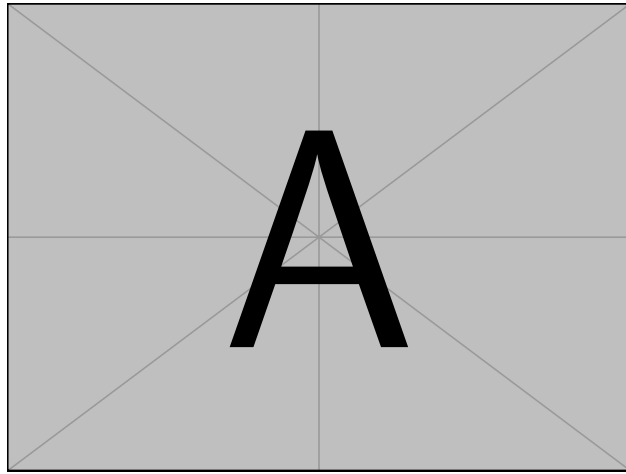


Figure A.1: This figure does not appear in the List of Figures.

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