

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARS THESIS MANUAL & POLICY GUIDE

Instructions concerning the Undergraduate Research Scholars honors distinction and the preparation of undergraduate research theses at
Texas A&M University

2024-2025

OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY.

WELCOME TO THE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Dear Undergraduate Research Scholars:

During the next two semesters, undergraduates in this program will have an exceptional opportunity to engage in high-impact research experiences by working closely with Texas A&M University faculty, staff, and students. Undergraduate Research Scholars will find themselves challenged in many ways but will develop knowledge and skills that go beyond what is offered in a classroom setting. Undergraduate Research (UGR) is here to help undergraduates achieve their goals.

The title of “**Undergraduate Research Scholar**” is a stand-alone honors distinction awarded to students who meet the requirements presented in this Thesis Manual & Policy Guide. Undergraduate Research Scholars are required to describe the results of their faculty-mentored research and scholarly work in a formal written thesis. Undergraduate Research Scholars’ theses will be electronically submitted and indexed in the permanent Undergraduate Research Collection of the OAKTrust Digital Repository at Texas A&M University where they will be accessible worldwide. Theses must be presented in a uniform scholarly manner, professionally designed and properly documented, and must accurately represent each Undergraduate Research Scholar’s creative and intellectual studies. Theses should also exemplify the highest level of scholarship as they will be available to the general public and be seen as a representation of the quality of research endeavors at Texas A&M University.

This Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis Manual & Policy Guide, along with the Thesis Formatting Guide, are designed to assist Undergraduate Research Scholars and faculty advisors in the preparation of theses by providing uniform standards of style and format while allowing enough flexibility to satisfy the accepted practices of different academic disciplines. This Manual & Guide has been adapted from the Thesis Manual published by Graduate and Professional Studies at Texas A&M to emphasize the expectation that the resulting Undergraduate Research Scholar’s thesis meets the same high standards for format and style as a master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation. Previously submitted theses are available for view in the **Undergraduate Research Scholars Capstone Collection** in the Texas A&M Libraries OAKTrust Repository.

Thanks & Gig ‘Em,

UGR Staff

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Introduction

Undergraduate Research Scholars and faculty advisors are responsible for the quality of the content within the thesis and are expected to meet regularly to assess the strength and validity of the research content and methodology. UGR will review theses for format alone and provide feedback on thesis formatting and style. **UGR will not comment directly on the content of projects.**

The Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis will be the primary product of this program and must:

- Be written in progression over the fall and spring semesters
- Be approved by the office of Research Compliance & Biosafety prior to the start of any data collection if the project involves the use of human subjects, vertebrate animals, or biohazards and pathogens
- Reflect original work done by an undergraduate under the mentorship of a Texas A&M faculty advisor that is presented in a scholarly, well-integrated, and properly documented manner

UGR provides several resources to students in the URS thesis program:

- Thesis Manual & Policy Guide
- Thesis Formatting Guide
- Thesis Templates
- Common Mistakes Videos
- Optional Thesis Writing Course in the spring semester (**COLLEGE STATION**, **GALVESTON**, **MCALLEN**, and **QATAR**)
- Canvas Community
- Scholars Thesis Submittal System (STSS)
- OAKTrust Digital Repository
- Workshops and Resource Sessions
- Drop-in Help Sessions
- Scheduled Appointments: ugr@tamu.edu
- Additional Resources through the [University Writing Center](#)

Contact UGR:

- Henderson Hall (HEND) 114 (Front Desk)
- Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM-5:00 PM
- (979) 845-1957
- ugr@tamu.edu
- <https://ugr.tamu.edu>
- <https://launch.tamu.edu>

Program Benefits

Priority Registration

All Undergraduate Research Scholar applicants approved by faculty advisors will receive priority registration for the spring semester so they can better manage classes and research scheduling. Students with registration holds on their accounts and students on probation with an honors program will not receive priority registration. Any questions about priority registration can be directed to ugr@tamu.edu.

Recognition, Transcript Distinctions, and Graduation Regalia

Upon graduation, you will be recognized as an Undergraduate Research Scholar. This stand-alone distinction will appear on your official transcript and in the graduation program. **This distinction does not appear on your official transcript until after you graduate.**

You will also receive an Undergraduate Research Scholars medallion as official graduation regalia. If you are a graduating senior in May 2025, medallions will be distributed at the UGR Recognition Ceremony at the end of the spring semester. If you are unable to attend the Recognition Ceremony, medallions are also distributed at graduation. If you are not a graduating senior in May 2025, you will receive your medallion the semester you graduate. Email ugr@tamu.edu with questions about the Recognition Ceremony or regalia.

Monitor graduation updates at graduation.tamu.edu for the most up-to-date information regarding commencement and regalia.

Publication

All Undergraduate Research Scholars Theses are published to the [Undergraduate Research Scholars Capstone Collection in the Texas A&M Libraries OAKTrust Repository](#). Once your thesis is deposited in OAKTrust, it will be available for viewing by the public. You and your faculty advisor can place a 2-year hold (also known as an embargo) on your thesis if you are seeking publication in an academic journal or intend to submit the work for patent consideration.

When the embargo expires, UGR staff will contact your faculty advisor to confirm that the thesis can be released. Talk to your faculty advisor prior to the final thesis submission about the availability of your thesis to the public and whether or not to make your thesis immediately available. During this process, you will learn about academic publishing, your rights as a researcher, and copyright law.

Email ugr@tamu.edu with questions about thesis holds (embargos) and the publication of your thesis to OAKTrust.

Thesis Writing Course

UGR offers an optional 1-credit hour writing intensive (W) Thesis Writing Course in the spring semester. This course is available to students on the **COLLEGE STATION**, **GALVESTON**, **MCALLEN**, and **QATAR** campuses. Limited seats are available in the course.

The **COLLEGE STATION** course will be taught by a UGR staff member and features topics such as:

- Thesis Writing
- Academic Publishing
- Copyright and Digital Citizenship
- Research Presentations

The most up-to-date information about this course will be found in Howdy.

GALVESTON, **MCALLEN**, and **QATAR** students interested in registering for the Thesis Writing UGST 405 course should contact their Campus Representative for more information about the course.

Travel Award and Poster Voucher Requests

UGR can offer limited financial support to students in the program. You may apply for either, but not both, the poster printing voucher and travel reimbursement for your public presentation.

Conference and Travel Reimbursements

DENTAL HYGIENE, **MCALLEN**, and **QATAR** students should contact their campus contact for available resources for travel reimbursement.

GALVESTON students should contact the Galveston Chair of Undergraduate Research at undergraduateresearch@tamug.edu regarding the process for conference and travel reimbursements.

COLLEGE STATION students: UGR can offer up to 10 travel awards for up to \$500.00 to students on the **COLLEGE STATION** campus. These awards are available on a first-come, first-served basis for conference registration and travel expenses to make a public presentation of the Undergraduate Research Scholars project at a national or international conference or meeting.

Contact us at ugr@tamu.edu before making a purchase to verify that the expenses can be covered.

Before scheduling travel, monitor Texas A&M University travel guidance and policies. Only authorized travel will be eligible for reimbursements. During the 2024-2025 program, UGR is accepting virtual conference registration for travel reimbursement.

IMPORTANT: This travel award will be processed through the office of Scholarships & Financial Aid. Reimbursements are posted to Texas A&M University student accounts in the form of a scholarship. **If students have a balance due to their student account, this payment will be applied toward that balance. Students receiving need-based financial aid should be aware that this travel award may result in revisions to their financial aid package.** Students can set up direct deposit through Howdy on the Finance tab.

Travel Award Reimbursement Eligibility Requirements for URS Students

Travel award reimbursement requests will be accepted from October 21, 2024 through April 30, 2025 as funds are available. However, public presentations for the program requirement must occur between October 21, 2024 and April 3, 2025.

Proof of acceptance into a conference is required to hold a travel award.

If your travel award hold has been approved by UGR, you must submit your receipts and completed reimbursement form to UGR no later than 1 week after the last day of your conference or you will forfeit your hold on a travel award.

If you are unable to provide proof of acceptance into a conference, you will not be guaranteed a travel award. Instead, you will be put on a waiting list until proof of acceptance is received by UGR.

Expenses* covered include normally reimbursable expenses such as:

- Conference Registration
- Housing / Hotel
- Airfare
- Fuel / Gas
- Parking

***NOTE:** Reimbursable expenses are contingent on current Texas A&M University travel policies. Only authorized travel will be eligible for reimbursements.

Procedures for Requesting Travel Award Reimbursements

- Confirm travel is authorized by the university.
- Confirm travel is authorized by your Department Head.
- Email ugr@tamu.edu to check on travel award availability.
- If awards are available, you will be asked to provide information about your conference and anticipated expenses.
- Once your information has been reviewed by UGR, you will receive notification of whether or not your travel award hold has been approved.
- If you have been granted a hold on a travel award, you must submit your receipts and completed reimbursement form to UGR no later than 1 week after the last day of your conference or you will forfeit your hold on a travel award.
- If you forfeit your hold on a travel award, you will be moved to the bottom of the waiting list.
- Travel awards are not guaranteed to those on the waiting list.

Poster Vouchers

DENTAL HYGIENE, **GALVESTON**, **MCALLEN**, and **QATAR** students should contact their campus contact for available resources for poster printing services.

COLLEGE STATION students: UGR will provide poster printing vouchers for up to one 40 in. wide x 48 in. tall glossy paper poster print for a maximum of up to 100 students on a first-come, first-served basis through the Technology Services help desk in Langford A, Room 122.

Voucher Availability is dependent on Technology Services help desk hours, as well as university policies. Once you are ready to print your poster, email ugr@tamu.edu to request a voucher.

Program Structure

Requirements at a Glance

Fall	Spring
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete the required Canvas Orientation Module Quiz 2. Attend 2 small group meetings 3. Complete 1 progress report 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete the required Canvas Thesis Formatting Module Quiz 2. Attend 2 small group meetings 3. Complete 2 installment submissions 4. Complete 2 progress reports 5. Make 1 public presentation and submit 1 presentation report* 6. Complete the final thesis submission and receive faculty advisor approval

***COLLEGE STATION, MCALLEN,** and **QATAR** Students: Public presentations can take place in either fall or spring between October 21 and April 3. **DENTAL HYGIENE** and **GALVESTON** Students: Public presentations can take place in either fall or spring between October 21 and April 17.

General Expectations

- Respond to program emails within 2 business days. All program email correspondence will be sent to your official Texas A&M Gmail account.
- Add ugr@tamu.edu and your assigned Thesis Reviewer’s email address to your *Safe Senders List* so that program emails do not go to your Spam or Junk Folders.
- Receive Research Compliance Approval (if applicable to your project) before collecting data.
- Notify UGR staff of any absences or missed assignments and provide documentation of a university-excused absence. **No late work will be accepted without a university-excused absence.** See the [Texas A&M Student Rules website](#) for a list of university-excused absences, including religious holidays. Missing mandatory events or assignments without a university-excused absence may result in your removal from the program. To receive an excused absence, student must comply with the documentation and notification guidelines outlined in Student Rule 7. Documentation for missing a program deadline or mandatory event should be emailed to ugr@tamu.edu. Advance notice of university-excused absences is encouraged when possible.
- Student projects vary by discipline and scope. **All URS theses must have a minimum of 5,500 words of paragraph/body text.** This minimum word count includes body text in the Introduction through Conclusion sections, as well as body text in the Creative Artifact section (if using the Creative Works template). The minimum word count does **not** include text in the preliminary pages (excluding abstract text), references section, captions, figures, tables, or equations. Many Undergraduate Research Scholars write more than the minimum 5,500 word count. Keep this minimum word count in mind when planning out your thesis.

Honor and Student Conduct Code Acknowledgement

Any type of honor or student conduct code violation from student rules will result in a review and possible dismissal from the program. Additionally, any type of honor or student conduct code violation after completion of the program will result in a review and ineligibility to receive the Undergraduate Research Scholar honors transcript distinction.

- (1) Students in the URS thesis program must be in good standing at the university while they are in the program, at the time of graduation distinction audit, and through graduation to be eligible for the Undergraduate Research Scholar honors transcript distinction.
- (2) Students who receive the F* sanction for academic misconduct at any time through graduation are ineligible to participate in the URS program or receive the Undergraduate Research Scholar honors transcript distinction.
- (3) Students who have been found responsible for a violation of the Student Conduct Code and sanctioned with suspension, expulsion, or any sanction that has resulted in their not being in good disciplinary standing while they are in the program, at the time of graduation distinction audit, and through graduation are ineligible to participate in the URS program or receive the Undergraduate Research Scholar honors transcript designation upon final resolution of their case.
- (4) Students may not be awarded the Undergraduate Research Scholar honors transcript retroactively after completing the Academic Integrity Development Program.

In summary, our policy is that students must:

- (1) Currently be and remain in good standing (prior offenses where students were not in good standing are not considered if the student is in good standing at the time they apply to the program through graduation)
- (2) Have never received an F* from entry to Texas A&M University through graduation
- (3) Have never received a sanction of suspension or expulsion from entry to Texas A&M University through graduation

Accommodations Requests

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Resources in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

URS thesis program staff are not automatically made aware of accommodations requests. It is the responsibility of students to share their accommodations letters with URS program staff (ugr@tamu.edu) in a timely manner at the start of each semester. Once an accommodations letter is received, a URS program staff member will reach out to you to schedule a meeting to discuss an accommodations plan.

Expectations for Teams

All teams include a primary contact who was designated during the application process. The primary contact serves as primary point of contact for all submissions and correspondence in the URS program. All team members should familiarize themselves with both team member and primary contact responsibilities to ensure that all program requirements are met.

Team Member Responsibilities at a Glance

	Application	Mandatory Events and Modules	Reports and Installments	Final Thesis
All Team Members	Part 1 (Online Form) and Part 2 (STSS)	1 Program Orientation Module Quiz 4 Small Group Meetings 1 Thesis Formatting Module Quiz	3 Progress Reports (Canvas) 1 Presentation Report (Canvas)	Final Thesis Part 2 (STSS)
Primary Contact Only	-	-	2 Thesis Installments (Canvas)	Final Thesis Part 1 (Canvas)

Responsibilities of All Team Members

- Provide equal contributions to the URS project and thesis.
- Attend all mandatory events.
- Turn in all progress reports individually.
- Make a public presentation. Teams may present either together or individually, but each member is required to make a public presentation.
- Submit their own presentation report to the Canvas Community.
- Communicate and delegate corrections as only the primary contact will have immediate access to the “graded” document.
- Submit final advisor-approved thesis to the Scholars Thesis Submittal System (STSS). This is Part 2 of the Final Thesis Submission process.

All team members are not required to submit thesis installments; HOWEVER, if for some reason the primary contact is unable to submit an installment submission, another team member is required to submit the assignment by the specified deadline.

Responsibilities of the Team Primary Contact

- Submit all installment documents. Only the primary contact is required to submit installments.
- Notify team members when installment documents are returned for revisions, delegate corrections, and resubmit the revised document. Only the primary contact will have immediate access to the “graded” document in Canvas.
- Contact another team member to submit the installment and/or revised document by the specified deadline if for some reason the primary contact is unable to submit an installment submission.
- Submit Part 1 of the Final Thesis Submission process to Canvas.

If you have any questions about procedures for URS teams, please contact UGR staff at ugr@tamu.edu.

Mandatory Events

All Undergraduate Research Scholars are required to attend **four mandatory events**:

1. One October Small Group Meeting
2. One November Small Group Meeting
3. One January Small Group Meeting
4. One March Small Group Meeting

The purpose of mandatory events is to familiarize all students with program policies, expectations, and resources. Event details, descriptions, and RSVP links can be found in the *Full Program Schedule* section of this Thesis Manual & Policy Guide.

Policy on Missing Mandatory Events

University-excused absences are required for missing mandatory events. Submit documentation of university-excused absences to ugr@tamu.edu.

Assignment Submissions

Policy on Incomplete or Late Assignments

No incomplete or late assignments will be accepted without a university-excused absence and appropriate documentation. Students risk dismissal from the program without university-excused absences.

Submit documentation of university-excused absences to ugr@tamu.edu.

Progress Report Submissions

Three Progress Reports assignments will be submitted through the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Research Scholars Canvas Community over the course of the program:

1. Progress Report 1 due on November 20
2. Progress Report 2 due on January 17
3. Progress Report 3 due on February 20

The purpose of these report assignments is to monitor student progress and to prompt students to think more deeply about their research, writing progress, and available resources/opportunities.

Thesis Installment Submissions

Two Thesis Installment assignments will be submitted through the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Research Scholars Canvas Community during the Spring semester:

1. Installment 1 due on January 22
2. Installment 2 due on March 3

The purpose of the installments is to prompt students to write their theses throughout the duration of the program and to ensure proper formatting of the thesis documents.

Final Thesis Submission

The final thesis submission on April 3 is a two-part process:

1. Submitted first to the [2024-2025 Undergraduate Research Scholars Canvas Community](#) for a brief formatting check.
2. When approved by your assigned thesis viewer after April 3, continue your submission in the [Scholars Thesis Submittal System \(STSS\)](#) to receive faculty advisor approval.

The final thesis is the culmination of the URS program and is the document that will be eventually published in [the Undergraduate Research Scholars Capstone Collection in the Texas A&M OAKTrust Repository](#).

Public Presentation and Presentation Report

All Undergraduate Research Scholars are required to present their research projects to the public to satisfy the public presentation component of the program. Students may present in poster, oral, or other formats at national, international, or other conferences/symposia. Many students take advantage of other on-campus presentation opportunities, however, ***presenting to a lab or classroom is not***

acceptable. Contact UGR at ugr@tamu.edu if you have questions about whether or not your presentation venue meets program requirements.

All Undergraduate Research Scholars should include the Undergraduate Research Scholars logo on posters or PowerPoint presentations. Logos in multiple formats will be made available for download on the [URS Resources Page](#). Email ugr@tamu.edu for questions about logos.

All Undergraduate Research Scholars must submit a Presentation Report to the Canvas Community by the specified deadline* to receive credit for making a public presentation.

***COLLEGE STATION, MCALLEN,** and **QATAR** Students: Public presentations can take place in either fall or spring between October 21 and April 3.

***DENTAL HYGIENE** and **GALVESTON** Students: Public presentations can take place in either fall or spring between October 21 and April 17. **GALVESTON** students are expected to present at the Student Research Symposium on the Galveston campus in mid-April. **DENTAL HYGIENE** students are expected to present at venues designated by their campus contact.

Undergraduate Research Scholars Symposium

All students from **COLLEGE STATION, DENTAL HYGIENE, GALVESTON, MCALLEN,** and **QATAR** campuses are invited and highly encouraged to present at the URS Symposium hosted by UGR in College Station.*

The URS Symposium fulfills the URS thesis program requirement for students to do a public presentation and offers you a chance to receive direct constructive feedback on your research projects and presentation skills. The URS Symposium features both poster and oral presentations by current Undergraduate Researcher Scholars in a variety of disciplines.

Both oral and poster presentations are attended by faculty, staff, post-docs, and graduate students who are invited to be active listeners and provide feedback on research projects and presentation skills. Undergraduate students in Honors and Learning Communities programs will visit presentations and will be assigned reflection activities to help them discover their own research interests and develop their communication skills. Volunteers for the URS Symposium will include the Undergraduate Research Ambassadors, Learning Communities' Peer Mentors, and staff members.

***NOTE:** Monitor the [URS Symposium page](#) on the UGR website for the most up-to-date information about the URS Symposium.

Why Present at the URS Symposium?

- Free and on-campus!
- Fulfills URS public presentation requirement
- Will help hone your presentation skills for future research presentations—faculty, postdocs, and graduate students will be participating as active listeners and oral session moderators to provide you constructive feedback.
- Timeslots are self-selected—no need to worry about missing class or work, and you can invite your faculty advisor well in advance to your session!
- Oral and poster session formats are available.
- Print your poster for free on us with one of our poster vouchers.**

****NOTE:** Voucher Availability is dependent on Technology Services help desk hours, as well as university policies.

Additional Program Information

Research Compliance and Ethics

<https://rcb.tamu.edu> | <https://vpr.tamu.edu>

Research performed by undergraduate students must comply with all federal, state, and Texas A&M University rules and regulations. Undergraduate students are expected to obtain the same approvals and receive the same training as graduate, faculty, and staff researchers performing equivalent work.

Faculty research advisors who mentor undergraduates in the URS thesis program are solely responsible for advising and verifying student research compliance, research ethics, and necessary training. Faculty advisors are required to review and approve all aspects of URS applications and final theses, including the student's acknowledgement of research compliance verification. Complete the following steps to clear your research compliance status:

1. Discuss research compliance status with your URS Faculty Advisor
2. Submit URS application with completed research compliance acknowledgement (appears in application template)
3. Acquire URS application approval from both your URS Faculty Advisor and UGR
4. Once accepted, if your project changes, notify your Faculty Advisor BEFORE you collect any data to determine if you need compliance training or approval
5. Submit final thesis with completed research compliance acknowledgement (appears in thesis template)
6. Acquire URS final thesis approval from both your URS Faculty Advisor and UGR

Direct questions about obtaining compliance to the appropriate [RCB committees](#):

- **Human subjects:** Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- **Vertebrate animals:** Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)
- **Biohazards and pathogens:** Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)

Your faculty advisor should know whether your URS project requires research compliance approval and will be able to guide you through the approval and training process. If you are unsure about whether or not your project needs compliance approval, talk to your faculty advisor as well as the Research Compliance & Biosafety (RCB) office.

Texas A&M University's Division of Research, through the RCB office, is responsible for providing training and support to faculty, students, and staff in regulatory requirements for research. The offices seek to promote and ensure the highest standards for research compliance across the university. For more information, visit the [RCB website](#).

Approval and Training

You must obtain necessary approvals from the appropriate committee and complete any specialized training **before collecting any data**.

You and your faculty advisor must work directly with the RCB office to receive any required approvals. If you think that you need additional training or certification, ask your faculty advisor for clarification. If your project changes during the program you may need to seek approval. Check regularly with your faculty advisor to determine whether you need to have compliance approval. You must acknowledge that you have appropriate approvals, if required, and provide protocol numbers in your final thesis before your faculty advisor approves your document.

University SAP 15.99.99.M0.04, Responsible Conduct for Research

This SAP establishes University requirements for the training of students and postdoctoral researchers involved in University-related research, regardless of funding. Any undergraduate student who participates in research must complete online RCR training within 60 days from their initial involvement in the research activity. See [the full SAP](#).

Availability of Theses to the Public

After your final thesis has been approved by both the faculty advisor and UGR staff, it will be uploaded to the [Undergraduate Research Scholars Capstone Collection in the OAKTrust Repository](#), where it will be freely available to the public. Upon submission of the final thesis in April, you and your faculty advisor have the chance to select and approve the appropriate embargo option for the work through the [STSS](#). Therefore, theses will be deposited into OAKTrust based on the embargo option that was approved by the faculty advisor during the final thesis submission process.

At the completion of the URS program, each Undergraduate Research Scholar must discuss with their faculty advisor whether to make the thesis available immediately or to place it on hold for two years. During a two-year hold, the thesis will not be made public, allowing for time to seek publication in an academic journal or submit the work for patent consideration. If a hold is placed on a thesis, UGR staff will contact the faculty advisor after two years to confirm that the thesis can be released. **If no response is received from the faculty advisor after two years, the thesis will be released.**

NOTE: No changes can be made to the thesis document once it has received final approval by the UGR office and your faculty advisor even after the embargo expires.

Thesis Copyright

Undergraduate Research Scholars will own the copyright to the Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis. This means that the original work in the thesis can still be submitted for publication in a scholarly journal. Because the OAKTrust Digital Repository is legally classified as a publication, care must be taken not to violate United States copyright laws. If an Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis contains any material (pictures, figures, tables, text, etc.) taken from other copyrighted sources, the student and faculty advisor are responsible for determining if a letter of permission from the copyright holder should be included as a statement within the document or as supplemental material to allow its use in the thesis. This is true even if you are an author of the material. Ultimately, if a permission statement is required by the copyright holder, it must be included in the thesis and proper credit (dictated by the letter of permission) must be given in the text. The appropriate place for this attribution is the Acknowledgements page.

If you have already published material that you subsequently want to include as part of your Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis, you should be aware of the agreement that you signed when the material was accepted for publication. At that time, you may have assigned copyright to someone else (a journal, for example) as publisher, and you may no longer possess rights. Publisher agreement forms can be modified before they are signed so that you retain the right to include the material in your thesis. When negotiating with the publisher, remember to inform them that the thesis will be available publicly available online. If you have not retained the right to use the material in the thesis, written permission must be obtained from the copyright holder to include the material in the thesis.

Proper credit, as instructed in the letter of permission, must be given in the text. A copy of the letter of permission should be included in the Appendix section in the thesis. The permission granter should also be acknowledged in the Contributors section on the Acknowledgements page in the thesis.

Useful Links

- <https://copyright.gov/circs/circ01.pdf>
- <https://policies.tamus.edu/17-01.pdf>
- <https://tamu.libguides.com/copyright>
- <https://creativecommons.org>

Required and Recommended Technology

Required: The URS thesis templates are available in Microsoft Word and LaTeX format. If you are using the Microsoft Word templates, you will need latest version of Microsoft Word for Desktop. If you are using the LaTeX template, you will need to create an account with [Overleaf.com](https://overleaf.com).

Recommended: Use of citation management software (EndNote, Mendeley, RefWorks, Zotero, etc.) is highly recommended. Requirements for each software varies.

Technology Support

Common Issues and Resolutions

- **Updates:** Keep both your computer and your installation of Microsoft Office up to date for the best template experience.
- **Web vs. Desktop:** Use caution when editing your URS thesis template on Microsoft Office 365 for web (accessed through a browser or mobile app). **Microsoft Office for desktop (installed to your computer) is required to properly edit the templates.** Some advanced features built into the templates are not available on the web and may become corrupted if edited using Word in Microsoft 365 for web or if edited on a mobile device. **Never open or edit your thesis template using the browser or mobile version of Office 365.** Instead, download a copy of the desktop version of Microsoft Word to your personal computer from your Aggie Account Gateway:
 - Login to <https://gateway.tamu.edu/office365> using your NetID and Password.
 - Look for the “Install Office” button at the top right.
 - Select “Other install options.”
 - Select “Install Office.”
- **Google:** Never open or edit your template using Google Docs. Google Docs and Microsoft Word are not compatible. We recommend using Google Drive as method for file transfers only. We

recommend using Google Docs with the intention of copying and pasting your writing as plain text into your Microsoft Word thesis template.

Updating Operating Systems

- [View the Texas A&M University minimum computer requirements.](#)
- [Visit WhatsMyOS.com to find out which operating system you have.](#)
 - [Purchase the latest copy of Windows from Texas A&M University.](#)
 - [View the system requirements for the most-up-to-date Windows operating system.](#)
 - [Upgrade your Mac to the latest macOS for free.](#)
 - [View the system requirements for the most up-to-date Mac operating system.](#)

Installing the Latest Version of Microsoft Office

- [Find out which version of Microsoft Office you have.](#)
- [View the system requirements for Microsoft Word.](#)
- [Access your FREE Texas A&M University Office 365 account using your NetID and password.](#)
- Click the “Install Office” drop-down menu at the top right corner.
 - Install the entire Office Suite, including Microsoft Word, by selecting “Office 365 Apps.”

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.”

“Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one’s work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case” ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at aggiehonor.tamu.edu.

Useful Links

- Student Rules: <https://student-rules.tamu.edu>
- Student Rights and Responsibilities: <https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rights>
- Attendance: <https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>
- Conduct Code: <https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule24>
- Authorship: https://vpr.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/AuthorshipGuidelines_01_2024.pdf
- Ethics and Responsible Conduct: <https://rules-saps.tamu.edu/PDFs/15.99.03.M1.pdf>
- Human Subjects: <https://rules-saps.tamu.edu/PDFs/15.99.01.M1.pdf>
- Biohazards: <https://rules-saps.tamu.edu/PDFs/15.99.06.M1.pdf>
- Vertebrate Animals: <https://rules-saps.tamu.edu/PDFs/15.99.07.M1.pdf>
- Intellectual Property: <https://rules-saps.tamu.edu/PDFs/17.01.07.M0.01.pdf>

20.1.2.3.9 University Rules on Research

Students involved in conducting research and/or scholarly activities at Texas A&M University must also adhere to standards set forth in University Rule 15.99.03.M1 - Responsible Conduct in Research and Scholarship.

20.1.2.4 Special Note on Group Projects

If someone in a group commits academic misconduct, the entire group could be held responsible for it as well. It is important to clearly document who contributes what parts of the joint project and to know what group members are doing and how they are getting the material they provide.

University Libraries

COLLEGE STATION <https://library.tamu.edu> | **DENTAL HYGIENE** <https://bhslibrary.tamhsc.edu/>

GALVESTON <https://www.tamug.edu/library> | **MCALLEN** <https://tamu.libguides.com/c.php?g=949829>

QATAR <https://qatar.library.tamu.edu>

The University Libraries provide librarians to assist you with your bibliographic searches, as well as webpages and workshops on how to use the most common bibliographic and database tools. Take advantage of all the resources the library has to offer, including training with citation software (EndNote or RefWorks) that will make writing your thesis much easier. If you are not using one of these programs to organize your citations, you will be amazed at how they simplify the reference process.

University Writing Center

<https://uwc.tamu.edu>

The University Writing Center (UWC) offers face-to-face or online consultations with certified consultants for writing or public speaking projects. During the consultations, you will receive personalized advice and assistance based on your project and your needs. UWC staff will work with you on any type of writing, at any stage of the composing process, including developing and organizing content, understanding assignments or the demands of specific genres, and perfecting prose by editing and proofreading. For public speaking, you can ask for assistance with developing and perfecting outlines and content, or with designing slides, handouts, or posters. You can even practice your presentation!

Check out our [curated collection of UWC resources](#) for journal style theses.

Dissertation and Thesis Assistance (DATA)

[https://writingcenter.tamu.edu/grads/data-\(dissertation,-article,-and-thesis-assistance\)](https://writingcenter.tamu.edu/grads/data-(dissertation,-article,-and-thesis-assistance))

UWC also offers the DATA program to Undergraduate Research Scholars. Students in the DATA program are paired with a UWC consultant for multiple meetings. The consultant's job is to help the writer improve writing skills, but the repeating appointments allow the consultant to get to know the student and the project more thoroughly.

Vital Program Resources

Undergraduate Research Scholars can expect to encounter the following websites—many requiring a Texas A&M NetID and Password—throughout the program:

1. <https://ugr.tamu.edu>
2. <https://canvas.tamu.edu>
3. <https://scholarsthesis.tamu.edu>
4. <https://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/handle/1969.1/3367>
5. <https://gateway.tamu.edu/office365>
6. <https://google.tamu.edu>
7. <https://calendar.tamu.edu/ugr/urs.php>
8. <https://ers.tamu.edu>
9. <https://tamu.zoom.us>

1. UGR Website

<https://ugr.tamu.edu>

The UGR website contains the most up-to-date information and resources you need to be successful in the URS program. Under the *Undergraduate Research Scholars (thesis)* tab you will find a program schedule overview, more details about the Journal Style Thesis Templates, links to resources such as the Common Mistakes Guide, and a FAQs page to answer your common questions.

2. Canvas Community

<https://canvas.tamu.edu>

The Undergraduate Research Scholars Canvas Community will be your gateway into the Undergraduate Research Scholars program. From the Canvas Community you can check deadlines, review requirements, and locate program resources. The Canvas Community is where you will submit thesis installments and progress reports and receive feedback on your documents from UGR staff. Further instruction on utilizing the Canvas Community be provided on the [URS Resources Page](#) and briefly discussed in Small Group Meetings.

3. Scholars Thesis Submittal System (STSS)

<https://scholarsthesis.tamu.edu>

The Scholars Thesis Submittal System bookends your program experience—you use it to apply for and to complete the program. STSS is the same portal graduate students use to submit their dissertations for publication, and it is also used to process URS Applications and Part 2 of the Final Thesis Submission. At the end of the URS program your STSS profile will be used to publish your thesis and create your profile in the OAKTrust Digital Repository.

4. OAKTrust Digital Repository

<https://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/handle/1969.1/3367>

The OAKTrust Digital Repository is where your thesis will be published either at the completion of the URS program, or after your thesis embargo expires. You can reference URS theses from past years to get ideas about how to style your thesis and to motivate you to complete the program!

NOTE: Thesis templates change each year, so your thesis templates may differ from those of years past. Always follow formatting guidelines present in the current year's thesis templates and Thesis Formatting Guide.

5. Microsoft Word

<https://gateway.tamu.edu/office365>

Students have access to Office 365 at no additional cost. This includes the Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote for up to five computers, tablets and mobile devices. Office 365 users also receive 1 TB of storage in Microsoft's OneDrive.

Web vs. Desktop: Use caution when editing your URS thesis template on Microsoft Office 365 for web (accessed through a browser or mobile app). **Microsoft Office for desktop (installed to your computer) is required to properly edit the templates.** Some advanced features built into the templates are not available on the web and may become corrupted if edited using Word in Microsoft 365 for web or if edited on a mobile device.

Never open or edit your thesis template using the browser or mobile version of Office 365.

Instead, download a copy of the desktop version of Microsoft Word to your personal computer from your Aggie Account Gateway:

- Login to <https://gateway.tamu.edu/office365> using your NetID and Password.
- Look for the "Install Office" button at the top right.
- Select "Other install options."
- Select "Install Office."

NOTE: Remember to keep both your computer's operating system and your installation of Microsoft Word up to date for the best URS thesis template experience. If you have questions about the system and software requirements for the URS thesis program, or are experiencing technical difficulties with the thesis templates, contact us at ugr@tamu.edu.

6. *Google Applications*

<https://google.tamu.edu>

Gmail

All program correspondence will be handled through your official Texas A&M Gmail account. Be sure to check your email regularly as you are expected to respond to program emails within 2 business days. You will receive official program emails from ugr@tamu.edu and your assigned Thesis Reviewer. Be sure to add these email addresses to your *Safe Senders List* so that program emails do not go to your Spam or Junk Folders.

Google Drive and Google Docs

Many students and teams use Google Drive and Google docs to collaborate, prepare, and edit content for their thesis documents. However, Google Docs and the Microsoft Word thesis templates are not completely compatible. **Never open or edit your thesis template using Google Docs.** We recommend using Google Docs with the intention of copying and pasting your text (select the **Keep Text Only** option) into your Microsoft Word thesis template.

7. *URS Campus Calendar*

<https://calendar.tamu.edu/ugr/urs.php>

Use the URS calendar to keep track of all deadlines, events, and workshops. You can add these events to your personal calendar by clicking the name of the event and then the *Add to My Calendar* button.

8. *Event Registration System (ERS)*

<https://ers.tamu.edu>

Register for all URS events using ERS. This system helps us keep track of which events and workshops are in high demand and reserves you a spot. ERS event links are available in the URS Weekly emails and in Canvas announcements.

9. *Zoom Web Conferencing*

<https://tamu.zoom.us>

All virtual meetings will be held via Zoom. Login with a Texas A&M NetID and Password will be required. Be sure to log in using the SSO sign-in option. You may be asked to verify your identity by showing your Student ID and/or providing your UIN.

Choosing a Thesis Style and Template

There are two thesis style options:

1. Traditional Style Thesis (organized by chapters/sections)
2. Journal Style Thesis (organized by manuscripts tied into an overarching Introduction and Conclusion)

Traditional Style Thesis

There are 5 **Traditional Style** thesis templates to choose from:

1. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) – Microsoft Word
2. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) – LaTeX/Overleaf.com
3. Liberal Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences – Microsoft Word
4. Creative Works – Microsoft Word
5. Dental Hygiene* – Microsoft Word

*The **DENTAL HYGIENE** template is only available for and must be used by students enrolled at the Caruth School of Dental Hygiene.

Journal Style Thesis

There are 2 **Journal Style** thesis templates to choose from:

1. IMRAD Subheadings – Microsoft Word
2. Custom Subheadings – Microsoft Word

Unsure about which Thesis Style to choose—Traditional or Journal?

- Consult the [Traditional vs. Journal Style Thesis Templates Page](#) on the UGR website for an in-depth description of the differences between the thesis styles
- Consult your faculty advisor

Where to Access the Templates

Visit the [URS Resources Page on the UGR website](#) to download the appropriate template for your discipline and to access the LaTeX template through Overleaf. Please contact us at ugr@tamu.edu for inquiries about templates.

Be sure to review the *Required and Recommended Technology* section of this Thesis Manual & Policy Guide for tips and warnings before downloading a template.

Main Differences Between Traditional Style and Journal Style Theses at a Glance

Main Differences	Traditional Style Thesis	Journal Style Thesis
Organization Scheme	Chapters or Sections	Overarching Introduction + Manuscript(s) + Overarching Conclusion
Introduction	One overarching Introduction Chapter/Section	One overarching Introduction Section + Individual Introduction Subheading per Manuscript*
Body	Chapters/Sections need the support of the rest of your thesis for understandability (like a <i>chapter of a book</i>)	Manuscript(s) should be able to stand on their own without the support of the rest of your thesis for understandability (like a <i>journal article</i>)
Conclusion	One overarching Conclusion Chapter/Section	One overarching Conclusion Section + Individual Conclusion Subheading per Manuscript*
References List	One overarching References Chapter/Section	Individual References Subheading per Section/Manuscript

*NOTE: If you are using the Journal Style Custom Subheadings template, subheading usage is optional. However, regardless of inclusion of subheadings, you will still need to discuss introductory materials and your research conclusions in each manuscript. Manuscripts should be able to stand on their own without the support of the rest of your thesis.

Main Differences Between Traditional Style and Journal Style Theses at a Glance Continued

Main Differences	Traditional Style	Journal Style
Plan to Include Published Content in your Thesis? **	Content from Article(s) you have published in a professional journal can be included with appropriate copyright permissions, but the content is split into the Chapters/Sections organization of the thesis	Article(s) you have published in a professional journal can be included with appropriate copyright permissions as Manuscript(s) in your thesis
Interested in Publishing in a Professional Journal?	<p>May or may not be seeking publication in a professional journal(s)</p> <p>Do not need to have a specific professional journal(s) in mind before writing</p> <p>Thesis content can be reformatted into Journal Article(s) for later publication</p>	<p>Should be seeking publication in a specific professional journal(s)</p> <p>Do need a specific professional journal(s) in mind before writing</p> <p>Prepared Journal Article(s)/Manuscript(s) are combined into a thesis</p>

**NOTE: If you plan to include published content in your thesis you will need to adhere to copyright laws and gain all needed copyright permissions. All included content included in your thesis must adhere to formatting guidelines outlined in the Thesis Formatting Guide.

Thesis Styles and Templates at a Glance

✓ = required page □ = optional page	Traditional Style Thesis	Journal Style Thesis
Preliminary Pages (must be in the order seen below)		
Title Page	✓	✓
Research Compliance Certification	✓	✓
Table of Contents	✓	✓
Abstract	✓	✓
Dedication	□	□
Acknowledgements	✓	✓
Nomenclature	□	□
Thesis Body Content (must be in the order seen below)*		
Introduction (all-inclusive)	✓	✓
Body Structure (varies by template)	Multiple Body Chapters or Sections Required	Minimum 1 Medium-length Manuscript Required** OR Multiple Short-length Manuscripts Required**
Conclusion (all-inclusive)	✓	✓
Supplemental Content (must be in the order seen below)		
References	All-inclusive References Section Required	Individual References Subheading per Manuscript Required
Appendix(ces) (all-inclusive)	□ ⁺ Required for Creative Works Template Users	□

*NOTE: Regardless of the number of included chapters/sections or manuscripts, all URS theses must adhere to the minimum word count of 5,500 words of paragraph/body text. This minimum word count includes body text in the Introduction through Conclusion sections, as well as body text in the Creative Artifact section (if using the Creative Works template). The minimum word count does not include text in the preliminary pages, references section, captions, figures, tables, or equations. Many Undergraduate Research Scholars write more than the minimum 5,500 word count.

**NOTE: In the Journal Style Thesis Templates, 1 medium-length manuscript is typical for arts/humanities and social sciences projects.

In the Journal Style Thesis Templates, multiple short-length manuscripts are typical for STEM and social sciences projects. If you are planning on writing just 1 manuscript, a Traditional Style: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Thesis Template may be more appropriate for your thesis.

Full Program Schedule

UGR offers a variety of activities to assist in the completion of the program. Event locations may vary from in-person to virtual. These activities provide essential information for writing a thesis and making presentations.

Check the UGR website, Canvas announcements, and the URS Weekly Emails for the most up-to-date event information. All times are Central Time (CT) – US and Canada.

Fall 2024 Semester

Canvas Orientation Module Quiz (mandatory)

- Deadline: November 4, 2024 from 9:00 AM CT
- **All students must complete the Orientation Module Quiz**

Event Description: The purpose of the Program Orientation is to familiarize all students with program policies and expectations and reinforce and assess your understanding of the program. Students will thoroughly review Modules 1-2 in the Canvas Community and complete the associated quiz by the deadline. The quiz is mandatory for all Undergraduate Research Scholars.

Research Compliance Session (optional)

- October 15, 2024 from 3:00-4:00 PM CT via Zoom
- Register here: <https://ers.tamu.edu/register.aspx?scheduleid=43337>
- Zoom details emailed to registrants 24 hours before the event

Event Description: If your Undergraduate Research Scholars thesis project involves humans, animals, and/or biohazardous materials and you are unsure whether or not your project needs research compliance approval, talk to your faculty advisor and come to this drop-in session to talk to representatives from the Research Compliance & Biosafety office.

October Small Group Meeting (mandatory)

- Dates and times vary. Register for one, one-hour session to attend from the multiple offered sessions between October 22-25, 2024. Register for a Small Group Meeting time using the *Appointment Calendar* in the Canvas Community by October 21, 2024 at 9:00 AM CT. These meetings will be held via Zoom. Instructions for registering will be available in the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Research Scholar Canvas Community.

Event Description: The purpose of this meeting is to familiarize students with the thesis reviewers, provide reminders about program expectations and deadlines, and discuss any questions students have about the program and thesis writing process.

POWER Writing Productivity Session (optional)

- November 8, 2024 from 1:30-4:00 PM CT via Zoom
- Register here: <https://ers.tamu.edu/register.aspx?scheduleid=43338>
- Zoom details emailed to registrants 24 hours before the event

Event Description: How do you begin to write your thesis? How do you increase the efficiency and productivity of your writing? This workshop, hosted by a POWER Consultant from POWER Writing Support Services, will give you tips and tricks to gain mastery over your writing and help you become a more productive writer and researcher.

November Small Group Meeting (mandatory)

- Dates and times vary. Register for one, one-hour session to attend from the multiple offered sessions between November 12-15, 2024. Register for a Small Group Meeting time using the *Appointment Calendar* in the Canvas Community by November 11, 2024 at 9:00 AM CT. These meetings will be held via Zoom. Instructions for registering will be available in the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Research Scholar Canvas Community.

Event Description: The purpose of this meeting is to prepare students for the spring semester, provide reminders about program expectations and deadlines, and discuss any questions students have about the program and thesis writing process.

Progress Report 1 (mandatory)

Submit the Fall Progress Report to the Canvas Community. See the *Progress Reports* section in this Manual to pre-prepare your answers to copy and paste into the Canvas submission portal. No late work will be accepted without a university-excused absence. Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

- **Deadline:** November 20, 2024 at 9:00 AM CT
- **Where:** Canvas Community

Writing Abstracts Workshop (optional)

- November 21, 2024 from 12:00-1:00 PM CT
- Register here: <https://ers.tamu.edu/register.aspx?scheduleid=43340>
- Zoom details emailed to registrants 24 hours before the event

Event Description: Want to publish your research? A great abstract is not only a requirement for the Undergraduate Research Scholars program, but your abstract also serves as the “resume” for your research to outside viewers and prospective publishers. Since writing an abstract is an unfamiliar process for those who are new to research, we want to teach you the basics.

Spring 2025 Semester

Check the UGR website, Canvas announcements, and the URS Weekly Emails for the most up-to-date event information. All times are Central Time (CT) – US and Canada.

Thesis Formatting Module Quiz (mandatory)

- Deadline: January 15, 2025 from 9:00 AM CT
- **All students must complete the Orientation Module Quiz**

Event Description: The purpose of the Thesis Formatting Module Quiz is to familiarize all students with the thesis formatting guidelines found in the Thesis Formatting Guide. Students will thoroughly review Formatting Modules in the Canvas Community along with the Thesis Formatting Guide and complete the associated quiz by the deadline. The quiz is mandatory for all Undergraduate Research Scholars.

Progress Report 2 Deadline (mandatory)

Submit and pass the Spring Progress Report 1 assignment. See the *Progress Reports* section in this Manual to pre-prepare your answers to copy and paste into the Canvas submission portal. No late work will be accepted without a university-excused absence. Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

- **Deadline:** January 17, 2025 at 9:00 AM CT
- **Where:** Canvas Community

First Installment Thesis Help Drop-in Session (optional)

- January 21, 2025 from 3:00-5:00 PM CT via Zoom
- Registration is not required. Zoom details will be communicated in URS Weekly Emails and Canvas announcements

Event Description: UGR staff will be available to answer general questions and to help with thesis formatting.

First Installment Deadline (mandatory)

Submit and pass the First Installment assignment. See the *Installment Submission Guidelines* section in this Manual to prepare your Installment document. No late work will be accepted without a university-excused absence. Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

- **Deadline:** January 22, 2025 at 9:00 AM CT
- **Where:** Canvas Community

URS Symposium Presenter Registration Deadline (optional)

If you are searching for a public presentation venue or would like an opportunity to receive feedback on your presentation before a different conference, consider registering to present at the URS Symposium on February 26, 2025.

- **Deadline:** January 24, 2025 at 9:00 AM CT
- **Where:** Monitor the [URS Symposium Page](#) on the UGR website for registration details

January Small Group Meeting (mandatory)

- Dates and times vary. Register for one, one-hour session to attend from the multiple offered sessions between January 28-31, 2025. Register for a Small Group Meeting time using the *Appointment Calendar* in the Canvas Community by January 27, 2025 at 9:00 AM CT. These meetings will be held via Zoom. Instructions for registering will be available in the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Research Scholar Canvas Community.

Event Description: The purpose of this meeting is to provide reminders about program expectations and deadlines and discuss any questions students have about the program and thesis writing process.

Presentation Skills Workshop (optional)

- February 7, 2024 from 12:00-1:00 PM CT
- Register here: <https://ers.tamu.edu/register.aspx?scheduleid=43885>
- Zoom

Event Description: At this workshop, you will learn the DOs and DON'Ts of giving a presentation. We will give you tips about the best way to present a poster, as well as instruct you on how to effectively use a PowerPoint presentation.

Public Presentation at the URS Symposium (optional)

- February 26, 2025, MSC Bethancourt Ballroom, presentation times vary
- Learn more about the symposium on the [URS Symposium Page](#) on the UGR Website (<https://tx.ag/URSymposium>)

Event Description: Attend the URS Symposium to listen to your peers' research presentations and help them improve on their research and presentation skills.

Second Installment Thesis Help Drop-in Session (optional)

- February 28, 2025 from 9:00-11:00 AM CT via Zoom
- Registration is not required. Zoom details will be communicated in URS Weekly Emails and Canvas announcements

Event Description: UGR staff will be available to answer general questions and to help with thesis formatting.

Progress Report 3 Deadline (mandatory)

Submit and pass the Spring Progress Report 2 assignment. See the *Progress Reports* section in this Manual to pre-prepare your answers to copy and paste into the Canvas submission portal. No late work will be accepted without a university-excused absence. Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

- **Deadline:** February 20, 2025 at 9:00 AM CT
- **Where:** Canvas Community

Second Installment Deadline (mandatory)

Submit and pass the Second Installment assignment. See the *Installment Submission Guidelines* section in this Manual to prepare your Installment document. No late work will be accepted without a university-excused absence. Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

- **Deadline:** March 3, 2025 at 9:00 AM CT
- **Where:** Canvas Community

March Small Group Meeting (mandatory)

- Dates and times vary. Register for one, one-hour session to attend from the multiple offered sessions between March 18-21, 2025. Register for a Small Group Meeting time using the *Appointment Calendar* in the Canvas Community by March 17, 2025 at 9:00 AM CT. These meetings will be held via Zoom. Instructions for registering will be available in the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Research Scholar Canvas Community.

Event Description: The purpose of this meeting is to provide reminders about program expectations and deadlines and discuss any questions students have about the program and thesis writing process.

Final Thesis Help Drop-in Sessions (optional)

- April 1, 2025 from 9:00-11:00 AM CT via Zoom
- April 2, 2025 from 3:00-5:00 PM CT via Zoom
- Registration is not required. Zoom details will be communicated in URS Weekly Emails and Canvas announcements

Event Description: UGR staff will be available to answer questions about the final thesis submission process and to help with final thesis formatting.

Final Thesis Submission Deadline (**mandatory**)

Submit your Research Faculty Advisor-Approved Final Thesis document in two-part submission process. See the *Installment Submission Guidelines* section in this Manual to prepare your final thesis document. No late work will be accepted without a university-excused absence. Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

- **Deadline:** April 3, 2025 at 9:00 AM CT
- **Where:** Both Canvas Community **and** Scholars Thesis Submittal System

Public Presentation and Presentation Report Deadline (**mandatory**)

All URS students are required to make a public presentation and submit the presentation report to the Canvas Community. For the public presentation, see the *Public Presentation and Presentation Report* section in this Manual for acceptable venue requirements. For the presentation report, see the *Presentation Report* section in this Manual to pre-prepare your answers to copy and paste into the Canvas submission portal.

- **COLLEGE STATION, MCALLEN, and QATAR** Deadline: April 3, 2025 at 9:00 AM CT
- **GALVESTON and DENTAL HYGIENE** Deadline: April 17, 2025 at 9:00 AM CT

Stay on track to graduation and attend the Undergraduate Research Recognition Ceremony to pick up your medallion.

If you cannot attend, contact us to find out our current policies for picking up medallions for graduation. If you are not graduating in May, you will receive your medallion at the reception that corresponds with your graduation semester.

Monitor graduation updates at graduation.tamu.edu for the most up-to-date information regarding commencement and regalia.

Registration required for specified events. Students may register for URS events using the ERS links above or by going to <https://ers.tamu.edu>. Monitor URS Weekly Emails, Canvas Announcements, and the URS Program Schedule Page for up-to-date registration links.

Assignment Guidelines

All progress reports, the presentation report, and all thesis installment submissions will be submitted through the Canvas Community. The Canvas Community serves as a place for all Undergraduate Research Scholars to easily locate important deadlines, assignment instructions, thesis templates, and other helpful program materials and resources.

To access the Undergraduate Research Scholars' Canvas Community, login to <https://canvas.tamu.edu> using your NetID and Password. The 2024-2025 Undergraduate Research Scholars Community should be visible on your Canvas home page under Dashboard and/or Courses. If you do not see the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Research Scholars Canvas Community by the end of October, contact us at ugr@tamu.edu as soon as possible.

Late Work and Absences Policy

- No extensions will be granted for unexcused absences.
- No late work will be accepted without a university-excused absence.
- Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about university-excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.
- Missing mandatory events or assignments without a university-excused absence may result in your removal from the program.
- Send university-excused absence documentation to ugr@tamu.edu.
- Advanced notice of university-excused absences is encouraged when possible.

Progress Reports

Progress reports are an important part of the program because they provide steps for assessing and reflecting on your progress. One progress report is due in the Fall semester and two progress reports are due in the Spring semester. Progress Report submissions are read by UGR staff. Please address any serious concerns you encounter with your project with us via email at ugr@tamu.edu.

Progress Report Submissions will be completed in Canvas. Students may prepare answers ahead of time using the questions below but will need to copy and paste their answers into the submission portal in Canvas to complete the assignment.

Progress Report 1 Questions

1. What is the current status of your research project?
 - Literature review in progress
 - Information or data collection in progress
 - Analysis in progress
 - Planning and outlining thesis sections
 - Intentionally writing thesis sections
 - Proofing and making revisions
 - Ready to submit final draft to faculty advisor
2. Have you encountered any major research challenges since the proposal stage? If yes, please explain. If no, what challenges might you encounter as your project progresses? Responses must be at least 100 words.
3. Describe your research progress this semester by referencing concrete research tasks. Be sure to include your progress toward selecting a presentation venue as well. Responses must be at least 100 words.
4. How does your progress so far match with the timeline you submitted with your proposal? Responses must be at least 100 words.
5. How frequently are you meeting with your faculty advisor?
 - Weekly
 - Bi-weekly
 - Monthly
 - Once this semester after the proposal stage
 - Have not met with my advisor since the proposal stage
6. Are you receiving help from anyone other than your faculty advisor (e.g., graduate students, postdoctoral or other research staff, other faculty members, peers, etc.)? If yes, please explain the nature of your collaborations. If no, who do you think might be an appropriate collaborator for your project (whether you plan to reach out to them or not)? Responses must be at least 50 words.
7. Has the focus of your thesis changed since submitting your proposal?
 - Yes, it has changed significantly
 - Yes, it has changed slightly
 - No, it remains the same
 - No, not enough progress to tell
8. What specific feedback have you received from your faculty advisor since submitting the proposal? You can discuss research, writing, or presentation feedback. If you have not received any feedback, describe feedback you anticipate receiving later. Responses must be at least 100 words.
9. What resources or support do you need to move forward in this program? If you feel like you have everything you need, list a few ways you think resources could be improved. Responses must be at least 50 words.
10. Do you feel confident in your current progress?
 - Yes
 - Somewhat

- No

11. How would you rate the usefulness of the Small Group Meetings?

- Extremely useful
- Somewhat useful
- Neutral
- Somewhat pointless
- Extremely pointless

12. What other information or activities could be added to the fall Small Group Meetings to make them more valuable to you? Responses must be at least 25 words.

Progress Report 2 Questions

1. What is the current status of your research project?
 - Literature review in progress
 - Information or data collection in progress
 - Analysis in progress
 - Planning and outlining thesis sections
 - Intentionally writing thesis sections
 - Proofing and making revisions
 - Ready to submit final draft to faculty advisor
2. How frequently do you plan to meet with your faculty advisor this spring?
 - Weekly
 - Bi-weekly
 - Monthly
 - Once this semester
 - Not sure
3. What skills have you developed since starting your project, and how do those skills relate to your future goals? You can discuss skills related to research methodologies, personal skills, professional skills, etc. Responses must be at least 50 words.
4. Describe the tools you are using to complete your research and how they assist you in your project. You can discuss software, equipment, resources, strategies, or other things that you have found help move your project forward. Responses must be at least 25 words.
5. Outline your approach to your public presentation. You can address how you plan to organize your poster or PowerPoint slides, what aspects of your project you will focus on, when you will seek feedback and approval from your advisor, when you will practice presenting, etc. Responses must be at least 100 words.
6. Outline the structure to one of your thesis sections. Include the section title (page heading) and at least 4 subheadings for that section. Include a short summary statement for each subheading. Subheadings must be at least two words and descriptive. Download example for expectations: [Thesis Sections Structure Example](#)
7. This question is to make sure that you are already registered for the January and March Small Group Meetings. Open a new browser window and register for your January and March Small Group Meetings before completing this quiz. Enter the dates/times/reviewer you registered for as your answer to this question.

Progress Report 3 Questions

[Coming Soon]

Presentation Report

Presentation Report Questions

[Coming Soon]

Thesis Installment Submissions

Submit to Canvas

- Installment (2 in the spring)
 - Deadlines: January 22 and March 3 at 9:00 AM CT
- Requested Revisions (multiple depending on *Needs Corrections* emails)
 - Deadlines specified in *Needs Corrections* emails; deadlines are typically within 2 business days

The purpose of the installments is to allow students to progressively add content to their thesis document throughout the duration of the program. Requested revisions ensure proper formatting of the thesis document.

Thesis Installments should be submitted in Microsoft Word format (PDFs accepted from LaTeX users) by the specified deadlines. Follow the *Installment Submission Guidelines* found in this Manual for required pages and other content expectations. **You should work on the same document file throughout the entire program to retain approved revisions.**

Grading Policy and Revisions

Thesis installments that contain errors will be sent back for revision and may delay approval of your document. Please note that you may avoid this delay by carefully checking each installment for frequent mistakes using the Formatting Guide and Common Mistakes Videos before you submit. Failure to revise your document for common mistakes before submitting may result in a delay in grading. All returned documents must be revised within two business days for approval. Documents containing track changes and/or comments will be returned for revision without review.

You will always be notified by email whether or not your installment document *Needs Corrections* or is *Approved*. Grades are also posted in Canvas on Grades Page. Installment documents are graded on a binary (0-1) scale: 0 = *Needs Corrections* and 1 = *Approved*. If you receive a *Needs Corrections* email, you will receive a new deadline to submit a revised document. The new deadline will typically be 2 business days after your document is graded. It is possible to receive multiple rounds of *Needs Corrections* emails. Your installment document will only be counted as *Approved* once it is compliant with the URS Thesis Formatting Guide and free of all mistakes.

Note for Teams: Only the primary contact will receive *Needs Corrections* and *Approved* emails because only the primary contact will have immediate access to the “graded” document in Canvas. It is the primary contact’s responsibility to notify team members when revisions are needed. Team members should communicate with their primary contact regularly to check the status of their thesis installment document.

Revisions Deadline Policies

Students are required to return revisions to installment submissions by the deadlines specified by their thesis reviewer (typically within 2 business days of receiving a *Needs Corrections* notice). Should a student fail to meet a revisions deadline, he/she/they will receive a *Past Due Notice*. Students must contact UGR and submit the revised installment to Canvas immediately.

Failure to meet revisions deadlines thereafter without documentation of a university-excused absence may result in the student's removal from the URS thesis program.

Installment Submission Guidelines

Deadlines

1. Spring Installment 1 due on January 22 at 9:00 AM CT
2. Spring Installment 2 due on March 3 at 9:00 AM CT
3. Final Thesis due on April 3 at 9:00 AM CT

The UGR office reviews theses for formatting only. Faculty advisors are the primary content experts and responsible for approving all content. Students should utilize the University Writing Center for grammar and writing quality.

The URS thesis program is diverse in terms of project disciplines and student research experience. Some students will have their thesis completely written by the end of the fall semester while others are writing up until the final thesis deadline. We encourage students to work ahead on their thesis content when possible. With these considerations in mind, we have provided two types of installment submission guidelines: 1) Minimum Submission Requirements and 2) Recommended Submission Components.

Minimum submission requirements outline content that must be included in Spring Installment 1 and Spring Installment 2. Thesis Reviewers are specifically checking for this formatting/content progression when grading. These minimum requirements are to keep students on track to complete the program by the final thesis deadline and to keep students from falling behind in their research/writing timelines. Installment submissions that do not contain these minimum submission requirements are not valid submissions and will significantly delay the grading/approval process.

Recommended Submission Components outline content that you may want to consider drafting/finalizing for the Spring Installment 1 and 2. These guidelines are to help students who are on track or ahead in their research/writing timelines complete the program by the final thesis deadline. These guidelines discuss formatting/content considerations we encourage you to have complete for the specific installment submission they are listed under; however, you will not be penalized if you choose to add this content to a later installment. NOTE: Thesis Reviewers will check the formatting of all included content (unless noted otherwise by the student).

The duration of the URS program in the spring is 12 weeks. However, you will only have about 8 weeks to work on the bulk of your writing. See the timeline below that breaks down the increments:

- 1.5 weeks (January 13-22: Installment 1 due on January 22)
- 5.5 weeks (January 22- March 3: Installment 2 due on March 3)
- 4.5 weeks (March 3-April 3; Final thesis due on April 3)
 - -1 week for finalizing thesis content (March 3-7)
 - -1 week for spring break (**COLLEGE STATION** Spring Break is March 10-14, dates vary by campus)
 - -1 week for student proofing and finalizing (March 17-21)
 - -1 week for advisor proofing and finalizing (March 24-March 28)

- 0.5 week for final wrap-up (March 31-April 2)
- **NOTE:** In the final 5 weeks, **you really only have about 1 week** of writing time.

Spring Installment 1

- **Minimum Submission Requirements**
 - **Content Progression:**
 - **At least 25% of your writing should be complete** (minimum 1,375 words). Discuss with your faculty advisor an appropriate length for your thesis, chapters, sections, and/or manuscripts. All URS theses **must** have a minimum of 5,500 words of paragraph/body text by the final thesis deadline. This minimum word count includes body text in the Introduction through Conclusion sections, as well as body text in the Creative Artifact section (if using the Creative Works template). The minimum word count does **not** include text in the preliminary pages, references section, captions, figures, tables, or equations.
 - Remember you can write thesis sections out of order—you do not need to start with the Introduction.
 - **Preliminary Pages:**
 - **The Title Page, Research Compliance Certification, and top half of the Abstract page must be completely filled in.** You may include a drafted thesis title if you are still working on finalizing your title. You do not need to have drafted Abstract content for Installment 1, but you do need to fill out the title and author/advisor information.
 - **NOTE for Teams:** By Installment 1, you should have decided the order in which you will list team member names.
 - **Template Help Text:**
 - **Make selections and then remove all yellow highlighted help text on the Title, Research Compliance Certification, and Abstract pages.** The yellow highlighted style is typically formatted as [Choose an item: Choice A/Choice B]. Make the selections that are appropriate for your thesis and then follow the instructions in the thesis templates to remove the text.
 - **References:**
 - **Include preliminary references on the appropriate page(s) in your thesis.** List these references according to your chosen citation style. Traditional Style Thesis templates: list preliminary references on the References page. Journal Style templates: list preliminary references under the References subheadings in each section/manuscript).
- **Recommended Submission Components**
 - Plan or draft figures, tables, images, captions and titles, equations, etc.
 - Outline subheadings you want to use as part of your research narrative
 - Draft chapter/section/manuscript titles
 - Create a nomenclature page
 - Work on bulleted and numbered lists
 - Appendices and what material you will include (such as permission statements, large tables, figures, graphs, study materials, survey materials, creative artifact, etc.)

- **Creative Works template only:** Outline how you will structure your Creative Artifact section. Remember to consult your faculty advisor about their expectations for the length and quality of your Creative Artifact.

Spring Installment 2

- **Minimum Submission Requirements**

- **Content Progression:**

- **At least 75% of writing should be complete** (minimum 4,125 words). You will most likely finalize the Abstract, Introduction, and Conclusion sections once you have completed the full scope of your project and have received feedback from your faculty advisor. Partial or incomplete drafts of these sections are expected.
- **Add content to or remove the optional appendix section.** You may add additional Appendices as needed.
- **Creative Works template only: Add content to the Creative Artifact section.** This content can include an organizational outline of the section (e.g. headings, subheadings, etc.). Consult with your faculty advisor about how to incorporate your Creative Artifact into your thesis. Be sure to discuss your Creative Artifact throughout the entire thesis document to have a cohesive thesis.

- **Preliminary Pages:**

- **All preliminary pages must be completely filled in.** Remove any optional preliminary pages you are not including in your final thesis.

- **Template Help Text:**

- **Remove all help text that was built into the templates.** Help text includes maroon headings, yellow highlight style, page instruction text, and page instruction comments. Modify or remove any sample text provided in the thesis templates.

- **References:**

- **Include references on the appropriate page(s) in your thesis, including in-text citations and your references list(s).** Make sure all in-text citations have a corresponding entry on the References list(s). Make sure your citation style is consistent throughout the document.

- **Recommended Submission Components**

- Incorporate feedback from your public presentation
- Finalize the thesis title on both the Title page and the Abstract page
- Finalize figures, tables, images, captions and titles, equations, etc., and make sure all figures, tables, and equations are referenced in the text.

Final Thesis Submission

Final Thesis

- 100% of writing must be complete (minimum 5,500 words)
- Incorporate content revisions from your faculty advisor
- Ensure all fillable boxes have been addressed
- Finalize your Abstract page
- Finalize your Introduction and Conclusion based on the full scope of your project

- Finalize References page/sections
- Finalize Appendix(ces) page(s)
- Proofread your document for writing style, typographical errors, grammatical errors, formatting errors, and consistency. **NOTE:** It is extremely important for you to incorporate all formatting revisions that you received from your thesis reviewers—this is the last time your faculty advisor will see your complete, properly formatted thesis before being asked for final approval.
- Plan to submit your final thesis in advance of the 9:00 AM CT deadline on April 3 in case you have internet or computer issues, or other technical difficulties.

No incomplete or late assignments will be accepted without a university-excused absence and appropriate documentation. Submit documentation of university-excused absences to ugr@tamu.edu.

The Final Thesis document will be submitted in April in a two-part submission process. Part 1 will be submitted through the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Research Scholars Canvas Community and Part 2 will be submitted to the Scholars Thesis Submittal System (STSS). Students upload their final thesis documents as PDFs to Canvas first to allow Undergraduate Research staff to check documents for proper formatting. Documents may be returned for formatting corrections, but it is expected that the document submitted on April 3 is of publishable quality. If the UGR office requires revisions, make them by the deadline(s) specified by your assigned thesis reviewer.

Once theses are approved by thesis reviewers, UGR staff will upload the formatting-approved document to the Scholars Thesis Submittal System (STSS). Scholars will then be prompted via email to complete Part 2 of the submission process in STSS. During Part 2 students will input information used to create their OAKTrust profiles, select an embargo option for their thesis document, and receive official faculty advisor approval for their thesis document and embargo selection. By this time, faculty advisors should have already reviewed your thesis outside of the submission system, as official approval is expected within 2 business days.

If your faculty advisor requires any final revisions, make them immediately and notify UGR staff.

Remember: You should have already sent your final document to your faculty advisor 2 weeks BEFORE the April 3 deadline, so you do not end up with final revisions after the deadline. Plan ahead so that you are not in this situation.

After your faculty advisor approves your final thesis and UGR staff verifies that you have completed all program requirements, you will receive a program completion email from UGR staff.

Remember: No changes can be made to your thesis once you have received the program completion email, even if an embargo (thesis hold) is placed on the document.

Formatting Guidelines

The Thesis Formatting Guide contains important information about URS thesis program templates and requirements, including:

- Explanation of available thesis templates
- Detailed thesis formatting requirements

The Thesis Formatting Guide is available for download on the URS Resources webpage on the UGR website.

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