



# Time Management Tips for Writing a Graduate Thesis

## A-State Online Writing Center

### **Why is Time Management Important When Writing a Thesis?**

Writing a thesis is a large project, so the process must be planned out in order to not become overwhelming. Depending on how many hours your university allows you to have to write it, you could have anywhere between a semester and a few semesters' time to complete your thesis groundwork, research, and overall completion. Below are some tips to help you manage your time while writing your graduate thesis. Hopefully, these tips will ease your mind and help you organize your thoughts as you create your masterpiece!

### **How to Utilize Time Management While Writing your Graduate Thesis:**

1. Decide when you will use your thesis hours weekly. A thesis is an independent project, so it is important that you set aside a specific time to work on it weekly (or even daily). Take a good look at your weekly schedule, then schedule a few "thesis hours" you can stick to on a regular basis. Be sure to always work on your thesis during these hours and to make these hours a priority, just like you would with attending a college class or to meetings with your thesis mentor or academic advisor; this is possibly the most crucial step of thesis time management. If hours are not scheduled, then the thesis will not get done in time!
2. Find a suitable work area. It is crucial that you have an orderly workspace in which you can work on your thesis. This space can be an office, a specific room in your home, a library room on campus, or any other place where you feel like you can be most productive with your work. Whenever you have thesis hours, go to this place and be ready to get to work.
3. Remove all distractions. During these thesis hours, it is vital that you stay focused on the task at hand. You must remove all distractions in your workspace, such as weblinks to social media sights, online videos, having family members or friends in the room, your phone, or anything else that could divert your attention away from working on your thesis during your set-aside hours.

4. Set a goal for every work session. Make sure to have a personal goal set for every thesis session. Some examples could be “finish the literature review chapter,” “write at least 5 pages,” or even “format the table of contents.” As long as you have a doable, realistic goal for every thesis work session, you will be set! However, if you don’t set a goal, you will be prone to distractions. Be diligent in setting daily goals for yourself as you create your thesis.
5. Keep track of your thesis progress. Ensure that you are monitoring your work during and after each thesis work session. Reward yourself whenever you reach a goal, and if you ever fall behind, seek assistance from a peer or thesis mentor.
6. Have an accountability partner(s). You’re not the first or only student to write a thesis, so remember that you always have peers you can reach out to for help if you need advice on writing your thesis or any of the responsibilities that go along with it.
7. Keep a healthy boundary between your personal and professional lives. This one speaks for itself. Always make time for yourself and your personal life while working on your thesis. It is a large project, and while it is time-consuming, it should not take up your entire life. Make sure to limit your hours on it so that you can spend time with yourself, your friends, and your loved ones. They are your support system, and you need to make time for them, too. Find the balance, and you will be good to go.

**Works Consulted:**

“Dissertation Plan.” Retrieved 30 January 2021 from  
<https://sites.duke.edu/timemanagementresources/dissertation-plan/>.