

## THESIS DUE DATE

A PDF file of the thesis is due by **5pm ET, Thursday, March 11, 2021, uploaded [here](#)**. Your file should be named using the convention **Last Name\_First Name\_Thesis21**. Thesis grades and reader comments will be distributed in early-to-mid May. Please note that **we will not discuss your thesis readers with you** at any time.

## FORMAT

- **Title Page:** See the following page for the *Title Page* format.
- **Abstract:** Please include a 150- to 200-word abstract. The abstract should provide a brief description of the thesis question and findings, as well as highlight the importance of your research.
- **Margins:** Top, bottom, right-hand, and left-hand margins should be one inch. These measurements should be consistent on every page (including Table/Figure pages). (If you wish to bind a hardcopy of your thesis for yourself, please note that you may want to have a 1.5 inch left-hand margin to allow for a small remaining margin once pages are put in the binder.)
- **Spacing:** The thesis must be double-spaced (except footnotes).
- **References/Bibliography:** There is no established format that is required by the Economics Department, but we do require that the author choose a format and maintain it consistently throughout the thesis. We highly recommend using a style typical of economics journals, as outlined in the [Writing Economics handbook](#). The American Economic Association also has a helpful document [here](#). Additionally, various formats can be found in Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*; and in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.
- **Tables and Figures:** Tables and Figures should be numbered consecutively. Each Table and Figure needs a title at the top of the Table/Figure (e.g., Table 1: Average Per-Capita Income, by state) and, when applicable, a source at the bottom of the Table/Figure (e.g., Source: US Census Bureau, 2010).
- **Font:** Times New Roman 12 point or another serif font comparable in size.
- **Thesis assembly order:** Title Page, Abstract, Acknowledgements (optional), Table of Contents (optional), Main Text, Tables and Figures (if not included in the main text), Appendices (if applicable), References.
- **Electronic copy:** Please name your thesis PDF file as Lastname\_Firstname\_Thesis21.pdf and upload it [here](#).
- **Your thesis should also have:** numbered pages, single-spaced footnotes, numbered equations.

## LENGTH

Theses of any length will be accepted; however, the Economics Faculty recommends a limit of 100 pages of text and tables for a senior honors thesis. Students are strongly encouraged to comply with this limit, and graders may penalize a thesis in excess of 100 pages **if they feel the length is not justified**. If, however, the substance of the student's research merits discussion in excess of 100 pages, there is no automatic penalty. There is no minimum length. Depending on the topic, most theses range from 45 to 75 pages.

Writing a Senior Honors Thesis:  
Why Harvard Students Write Theses

Your Name

Presented to the Department of Economics  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honors

Harvard College  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
March 11, 2021