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About thesis layout at our department: Southern Swedish Forest Research Center, Faculty of forestry, SLU, Alnarp

We don't have so many strict rules about the writing style for MSc thesis at our department or at our faculty. So far we haven't needed it. Students use common sense. But as I get many question about this, I put together this paper and hope it might give you some answers.

You find some more general information, but highly recommended in the end of the paper "instruction for master degree thesis"

https://arbetsplats.slu.se/sites/sfak/faculty_doc/Delade%20dokument/exjobb/Instructions_mastestesis_SLU_20090701.pdf

There are some recommendations for thesis at LTJ faculty that can be useful. Templates for word ("dokumentmall för Microsoft Word") can be found :

<http://www.bib.slu.se/bibliotek/alnarp/publicering-exi.html>

Unfortunately in Swedish. As it is a word file, it shows the structure and so on and could give some help. Possible to download from SLU homepage:

And the SLU library homepage has much good information about writing, literature lists, and more "Search collect publish" <http://www.bib.slu.se/kurser/sss/esokasamlaskriva.html>

First of all: **the three most common mistakes:** (in order!) t:hat we have to deal with

1. **Color in Graphs!** Make as many graphs and figures in Black and White. We don't' print in color just because students are lazy and just accept the graphs made by excel.
2. **No Key-words.** The abstract shall end with key-word
3. **Manual content list.** Use the possibilities with index, "*innehållsförteckning*", in MS Word! Then it is possible to update page numbering if changes must be done.

About structure

There must be a summary (or abstract)

If the thesis is written in Swedish one summary **must be in English** (often called abstract). Abstract in the very beginning of the thesis, with key words,

For international students I recommend to have a summary in their home language. Don't forget to translate the title and key-words.

Content, (list)

Use the possibilities in word to make and update the list of contents..

Not too many levels of headings 3 (or 4) is normally enough.

Introduction ,

The introduction ends with aim of the study. It often includes your result of literature search. If the work is more like a review of literature or this is a large part of the work, it can be a separate chapter, but normally it shall be a part of the introduction.

Material and method

Normally a good idea to write short and straightforward about the material. Short but all details shall be here! But use common sense! You don't need to write what brand of caliper you use, but in some cases important if you measure in mm or cm.

Today you don't need to write that you used excel for calculations. But you must write about the methods you used for statistic and more.

It shall be possible to repeat your experiment or calculations.

Results

Can also be quite short. Everything shall be there, but no novels about the result.

Discussion (and don't forget conclusions)

Sometimes, but not often, Results and discussion in one chapter.

Literature or references. You shall use "the oxford system". Also bellow (a paper I wrote some years ago).

Appendix(?) Very good to put detailed information, photos and so on in an appendix

About the writing:

(Recommendations mostly)

Text size 11pt, (or 12pt??) (Times new roman, Universe,this page is written in Calibri 11pt), use a style you like!

Distance between lines 1,15 or "exactly" 16pt.

I prefer text with only straight left marginal, but it is OK to have straight right marginal also.

Marginal; top and **bottom 3cm, left and right 2,5 cm, NEVER** smaller marginal! Wider is OK!

If you use "indentation", just very short one (not like this one)!

It just looks very strange and the reader get lost!

"Some" extra **space** between different parts of the text (paragraphs) 1.5 or exactly 6pt (students very often write very "compact". With some extra space it is easier to read and to follow your ideas, "one paragraph, one thought", space before next paragraph!).

Text describing tables (top) and figures (bottom) in size 11pt. (or smaller than the running text, never larger!)

Text and figures in Tables : 11 or 10 pt or in special occasion, 9pt. But most important that they are easy to read!

Better divide tables in two or more, or put some information in an appendix, than have much information in a large table!

Figures. Excel is normally very good for making graphs, but don't use colors. We print in Black and White. Do the figures understandable in B/W. There is an extra cost for printing a page in color. If you must use that option (a few pages) concentrate such figures to some pages. E.g. have a page with photos as an appendix.

Page number. Pages before the list of content shall not have a page number printed, but they are counted. Inside cover is no 1 (right hand page.. If you have problems with this, we can fix that just before printing. Page number : bottom, centre of the page. **Do not use** any complicated systems with I, ii, iii and so on for pages before the content list

The final version

Normally the thesis will be printed in Alnarp. Send a word file without cover page! In this way we easily can change page number and other necessary changes. Send the cover page as a separate file, with picture and more. Adress: Violeta.kokos@ess.slu.se

Cover and first page.

We do the first page (or the professional printing office helps us with picture, logo and more. Give all information but don't work too much with it. We also give the thesis a number; add information about examiner and so on. Responsible for this part is Violeta Kokos at our department Violeta.kokos@ess.slu.se

Number of copies

We normally print 14 copies. 8 for the student, one each for supervisor and examiner, and 5 for the department. Your copies shall be enough for some hosts, partners and so on. If you need a higher number of copies, please tell us before the printing. Please remember that all theses are published on the SLU library data base and are available for anyone.

Epsilon

All MSc thesis shall be uploaded at library portal. This is done by Violeta Kokos. We then use the "professional pdf file" from the printing office.

SearchCollectPublish

There is a lot of useful information on the SLU library homepage "*söka samla skriva*" or "**SearchCollectPublish**",

Literature:

If you write an Msc thesis in English you must of course mainly refer to literature in English. Sometimes you must refer to publications not available in English, but the **majority of the references must be in English.**

And how to include references?

I wrote this some years ago, some help??

Some examples of how to use the “Harvard system”

Much more (and more professional): <http://www.bib.slu.se/kurser/sss/esokasamlaskriva.html>

Clear-cutting systems normally combine low costs with high volume increment of valuable species (Matthews, 1986). In Sweden site preparation is widely used. Soil scarification was 2005 about 170.000 ha (Skogsstyrelsen 2008).

Beech is limited to south Sweden. The costs for pre-commercial thinning might be reduced by new methods described by Ekö and Pettersson (1992). In central Europe, volume production in Norway spruce and beech are studied, e.g. (Slodicak et al 2005). Slodicak et al (2005) studied litter fall after thinning in spruce and found....

And in the literature list:

Ekö, P.M. and Pettersson, N., 1992. Pre commercial thinning in European beech (*Fagus sylvatica* L.) - Volume and quality in a field experiment at 35 years of age. (In Swedish with English summary). *SLU, Department of Forest Yield Research*, report nr . 32.

Matthews, J.D., 1986. *Silvicultural systems*. Oxford science publications.

Skogsstyrelsen, 2008. Silvicultural activities increasing. Available : www.svo.se/epsiver4/templates/SNormalpage.aspx?id=38490 date: 20080506

Slodicak, M., Novak, J. and Skovsgaard, J.P., 2005. Wood production, litter fall and humus accumulation in a Czech thinning experiment in Norway spruce (*Picea abies* (L.) Karst). *Forest ecology and management* 209 p157-166.

There are many alternatives to set up the literature list, bellow I give some. There are many rules, but I think the most important is to be logical and to:

- Help the reader to read the text and the literature list easily
- Help the reader to easily find the source at library or internet or..
- Write consistently, in the same manner, information in the same order, and so on

An alternative:

Ekö, P.M. & Pettersson, N., 1992. Ett röjningsförsök i bok – Volym och kvalitet vid 35 års alder. (Pre commercial thinning in European beech (*Fagus sylvatica* L.) - Volume and quality in a field experiment at 35 years of age). Rapport nr 32, inst för skogsproduktion, SLU. *In Swedish with English summary*

Matthews, J.D., 1986. *Silvicultural systems*. Oxford science publications.

Skogsstyrelsen, 2008. Silvicultural activities increasing. Available : www.svo.se date: 20080506

Slodicak, M., Novak, J. & Skovsgaard, J.P., 2005. Wood production, litterfall and humus accumulation in a Czech thinning experiment in Norway spruce (*Picea abies* (L.) Karst). *For Ecol. Manage.* 209:157-166.

I prefer no indentation or other “fancy” structure of the literature list.

Do **not** write like this:

Ekö, P.M. & Pettersson, N., 1992. Ett röjningsförsök i bok – Volym och kvalitet vid 35 års alder. (Pre commercial thinning in European beech (*Fagus sylvatica* L.) - Volume and quality in a field experiment at 35 years of age). Rapport nr 32, inst för skogsproduktion, SLU. *In Swedish with English summary*

Matthews, J.D., 1986. Silvicultural systems. Oxford science publications.

Skogsstyrelsen, 2008. Silvicultural activities increasing. Available :
www.svo.se date: 20080506

Slodicak, M., Novak, J. & Skovsgaard, J.P., 2005. Wood production, litterfall and humus accumulation in a Czech thinning experiment in Norway spruce (*Picea abies* (L.) Karst). *For Ecol. Manage.* 209:157-166.

And the alphabetic order: e.g.

Ekö, P.M., 1990

Ekö, P.M., 1991

Ekö, P.M. and Klang, F., 1995

Ekö, P.M. and Pettersson, N., 1992

Ekö, P.M., Pettersson, N. and Fahlvik, 1992

As there are so many details in a literature list, you can always find errors, also in the examples above!