CHECKLIST: THESIS FORMATTING
THE PURDUE GRADUATE SCHOOL

□ **Paper size**  
Use LETTER (8 ½’’ by 11”’) paper size for your thesis when converting to PDF (legal or ledger can be accepted for large tables). Before you convert to PDF, be sure Adobe Acrobat is not defaulted to a metric sized paper setting (such as A4).

□ **Font type and font size**  
Use just one font size and one font type for your entire thesis. This will include your page number, Table of Contents, headings, and figure and table captions. You may use a smaller font size for footnotes, and within tables, if you wish.

□ **Margins**  
The margin requirements for a Purdue thesis:  
LEFT: 1.5”  
RIGHT: 1”  
BOTTOM: 1.25”  
TOP: 1” (on a regular page)  
TOP: 2” (on a major heading/chapter heading page)

□ **Consistency**  
Use applied styles in your thesis consistently. Be consistent in the amount of space you use between paragraphs, listed entries, and headings throughout the document. Be consistent in your use of underline, bold, italics, numeric styles, naming of headings, and indentation.
□ **Capitalization**

- **ALL CAPS:**
  Use ALL CAPS for major headings and chapter headings, for cover pages, for major and chapter headings in your Table of Contents, and for your thesis title on the title page.

- **Common Title Case:**
  Use Common Title Case for subheadings and for your thesis title on the Abstract page.

- **lower case:**
  Use lower case Roman numerals (i, v, x, l, c) for the page numbers on your preliminary pages.

□ **Page numbers**

Page numbers go in the top right corner on portrait pages.

Page numbers go in the bottom right corner of landscape pages and are turned to read top to bottom (if using MS Word template see section 2.1 of template for more information and instructions).

Use lower case Roman numerals (ii, iii, iii...) in the preliminary section (Dedication page through the ABSTRACT page(s). Use Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3...) in the main body of your thesis, beginning with Chapter 1.

□ **Table of Contents/List of Tables/List of Figures**

Include the word **Page** at the top right of the list on all pages your Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures (above the page number column).

On List of Tables, include the word **Table** at the top left of the list on all pages.

On the List of Figures, include the word **Figure** at the top left of the list on all pages.
☐ **Table and Figure Captions**

Table captions go above tables. Figure captions go below figures.

☐ **Avoid “widows and orphans”**

Include at least 2 lines of a paragraph at the top and bottom of chapter pages.

If you have a single line at the top of a page, bring down the last line from the previous page using Section Break: Next Page or the Enter button (if using MS Word).

If you have a single line at the bottom of a page, move the line to the top of the next page using Section Break: Next Page or the Enter button (if using MS Word).

☐ **Don’t Use Pagination on Cover Pages**

Remove page numbers from cover pages and do not include cover pages in your page count. Cover pages get skipped over as if they’re not there.

☐ **References**

Do not allow a reference entry to be split between two pages.

If you have a split-entry move the entire entry to the top of the second page using Section Break: Next Page or the Enter button (if using MS Word).