

chicago style examples for citing theses and dissertations

The Importance of Proper Citation in Academic Writing

chicago style examples for citing theses and dissertations are crucial for any scholar engaged in academic research, particularly at the graduate level. Properly attributing sources demonstrates academic integrity, avoids plagiarism, and allows readers to trace the lineage of ideas. This guide will delve into the intricacies of citing theses and dissertations within the Chicago Manual of Style, covering both the notes-bibliography system and the author-date system. We will explore common scenarios, provide clear examples, and highlight the essential elements required for accurate and comprehensive citations. Understanding these nuances is key to producing polished and credible academic work that adheres to the rigorous standards of scholarly communication.

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Understanding Chicago Style for Theses and Dissertations

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) offers two primary citation systems: the notes-bibliography system and the author-date system. Both are widely accepted in academia, but their application to theses and dissertations requires specific attention to detail. The choice between these systems often depends on the conventions of a particular discipline or the requirements of the academic institution. Regardless of the chosen system, the goal remains the same: to provide clear, consistent, and accurate bibliographic information for all consulted sources. This section will lay the groundwork for understanding the fundamental differences and commonalities in how Chicago style

handles these specialized academic documents.

The Notes-Bibliography System: Citing Theses and Dissertations

The notes-bibliography system, prevalent in the humanities and some social sciences, utilizes footnotes or endnotes for in-text citations and a comprehensive bibliography at the end of the work. When citing a thesis or dissertation, the notes and bibliography entries share core information but are formatted differently to serve their respective functions within the academic text. Understanding the structure and content of both is vital for accurate referencing.

Footnotes and Endnotes

Footnotes appear at the bottom of the page where the citation is referenced, while endnotes are compiled at the end of the chapter or the entire document. Both serve to directly link a specific point in your text to its source. For a thesis or dissertation, the initial footnote or endnote will typically include the author's full name, the full title of the work (italicized), the degree pursued (e.g., PhD dissertation, Master's thesis), the university, and the year of submission. Subsequent references to the same work are usually shortened.

Here's a general format for a first note:

- 1. Author's Full Name, "Title of Thesis or Dissertation" (Degree Type, Field of Study, University Name, Year), page number(s).

For subsequent notes, a shortened version is preferred:

- 2. Author's Last Name, "Shortened Title," page number(s).

The Bibliography Entry

The bibliography entry for a thesis or dissertation, appearing at the end of the work, provides a more condensed but complete bibliographic record. It lists all consulted sources alphabetically by author's last name. The formatting in the bibliography aims for clarity and conciseness, allowing readers to easily locate the original source without needing to sift through multiple pages of notes. It is crucial to ensure all necessary components are present for the reader's reference.

The standard format for a bibliography entry for a thesis or dissertation in the notes-bibliography system is:

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Thesis or Dissertation." Degree Type, Field of Study, University Name, Year.

The Author-Date System: Citing Theses and Dissertations

The author-date system, common in the sciences and social sciences, uses parenthetical in-text citations that include the author's last name and the year of publication, followed by a detailed reference list at the end of the document. This system prioritizes the chronological order of research and the author's contribution. Citing theses and dissertations within this framework involves integrating the essential source information into the concise in-text citation and then providing a full bibliographic entry in the reference list.

In-Text Citations

In the author-date system, in-text citations are brief and placed within the text, typically in parentheses. They immediately follow the information or quotation being attributed. For a thesis or dissertation, the citation will include the author's last name and the year the work was submitted or published. If a specific page number is relevant, it is included after the year, separated by a comma.

An example of an in-text citation would look like this:

- (Smith 2022)
- (Smith 2022, 45)

The Reference List Entry

The reference list, appearing at the end of the document, provides full bibliographic details for every source cited in the text. For theses and dissertations, this entry should contain enough information for a reader to locate the original work. The structure is similar to the bibliography entry in the notes-bibliography system, but the formatting within the author-date system differs, particularly in the placement of the year.

The typical format for a reference list entry for a thesis or dissertation is:

- Author's Last Name, First Name. Year. "Title of Thesis or Dissertation." Degree Type, Field of Study, University Name.

Common Elements in Thesis and Dissertation Citations

Regardless of which Chicago style system you employ, several core pieces of information are essential for accurately citing a thesis or dissertation. These elements ensure that the reader has all the necessary details to identify and potentially access the source material. Missing any of these can hinder proper attribution and academic transparency.

Author's Name

The author's name is the primary identifier of the work. In the notes-bibliography system, the full name is used in the initial note and bibliography entry, with the last name appearing first in the bibliography. In the author-date system, the last name is consistently used in both in-text citations and the reference list. Consistency in naming is paramount.

Title of Work

The full title of the thesis or dissertation is a critical component. It should be presented accurately, including any subtitles. In the notes-bibliography system, the title is typically italicized in notes and the bibliography. In the author-date system, the title is also italicized in the reference list. Pay close attention to capitalization rules for titles as prescribed by CMOS.

Degree Type and Field

Specifying the degree awarded (e.g., PhD dissertation, Master's thesis) and the field of study is important context for understanding the scope and academic level of the work. This information helps distinguish between different types of academic documents and clarifies the author's specialization. This detail is included in both citation systems.

Institution and Location

The university or institution that granted the degree, along with its location (city and state or country), is a key identifier. This helps pinpoint the origin of the research and differentiate it from works from other universities. Ensure you use the correct and full name of the institution.

Year of Publication or Submission

The year the thesis or dissertation was officially submitted or made publicly available is crucial for establishing its chronological placement within the academic discourse. This year is fundamental for both in-text citations in the author-date system and for locating the source in either citation system's final list of references. Always verify the correct year.

Access Information (if applicable)

If the thesis or dissertation is accessed electronically, particularly through a university repository or a database like ProQuest, providing information on how it was accessed is necessary. This may include the name of the database, a stable URL (permalink), or a direct link. This is increasingly common for contemporary theses and dissertations.

Variations and Special Cases

While general rules apply, certain scenarios require specific formatting adjustments when citing theses and dissertations in Chicago style. These variations ensure that unique access methods or publication statuses are accurately reflected in your citations, providing clarity for your readers.

Unpublished Theses and Dissertations

If a thesis or dissertation has not yet been formally published or made publicly available through a repository, it is treated as an unpublished work. The citation will reflect this status. The key is to indicate that it is a manuscript or a personal copy, rather than a published volume. This distinction is important for scholarly communication, as unpublished works may have limited accessibility.

For unpublished works in the notes-bibliography system:

- Author's Full Name, "Title of Thesis or Dissertation" (Degree Type, Field of Study, University Name, Year of Submission), manuscript or personal copy.

In the author-date system, it would appear similarly in the reference list, noting its unpublished status.

Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs)

The increasing availability of electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) necessitates specific citation practices. When an ETD is accessed online, the citation should include information on where and how it was found. This often involves providing the name of the repository or database and a stable URL or permalink. This ensures that readers can access the exact version you consulted.

Example for notes-bibliography:

- Author's Full Name, "Title of Thesis or Dissertation" (Degree Type, Field of Study, University Name, Year), accessed Month Day, Year, [URL or database name].

Example for author-date:

- Author's Last Name, First Name. Year. "Title of Thesis or Dissertation." Degree Type, Field of Study, University Name. Accessed Month Day, Year. [URL or database name].

Theses and Dissertations from Other Institutions

When citing a thesis or dissertation completed at an institution other than your own, it's vital to clearly state the originating university. This is standard practice, but it bears reinforcing. Ensuring the correct name and location of the awarding institution is always a part of the citation, regardless of its origin, but becomes especially important when you are referencing external academic work.

Ensuring Accuracy in Your Citations

The meticulous process of citing theses and dissertations demands careful attention to detail. Whether you are using the notes-bibliography or author-date system, a commitment to accuracy ensures the integrity of your research and strengthens the credibility of your academic work. Double-checking all components – names, titles, institutions, and dates – against the original source is a critical step. Many academic institutions provide style guides or citation assistance resources that can be invaluable. Familiarizing yourself with the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style and consulting specific departmental guidelines will further enhance the precision of your academic references. Ultimately, proper citation is not just a requirement; it is a cornerstone of responsible scholarship.

FAQ

Q: What is the main difference between citing a thesis and a dissertation in Chicago style?

A: In Chicago style, the fundamental process of citing a thesis and a dissertation is largely the same, with the primary distinction being the degree type indicated. A dissertation is typically a doctoral-level work, while a thesis is usually for a master's degree. Both require the author's name, title, institution, degree type, and year of completion, formatted according to either the notes-bibliography or author-date system.

Q: How do I cite a thesis or dissertation that I accessed online?

A: When citing an electronic thesis or dissertation (ETD) in Chicago style, you need to include access information. This typically involves providing the name of the database or repository where you found it, followed by a stable URL or permalink. For the notes-bibliography system, this information is usually added at the end of the note or bibliography entry. In the author-date system, it's appended to the reference list entry.

Q: Should I italicize the title of a thesis or dissertation in Chicago style?

A: Yes, in Chicago style, the titles of theses and dissertations are generally italicized, whether they appear in footnotes, endnotes, the bibliography, or the reference list. This is a standard convention for scholarly works, indicating that it is a distinct, standalone piece of research.

Q: What if the thesis or dissertation I'm citing is unpublished?

A: If a thesis or dissertation is unpublished, you should clearly indicate its status. In the notes-bibliography system, you might add "manuscript" or "personal copy" after the year of submission. In the author-date system, you would also note its unpublished status in the reference list entry. This distinction is important for readers trying to locate the source.

Q: How do I format the author's name when citing a thesis or dissertation in Chicago style?

A: In the notes-bibliography system, the author's full name is used in the first note, with the last name appearing first in the bibliography entry (e.g., Smith, John). In the author-date system, the last name followed by the first name is used in the reference list entry, and only the last name is used in the in-text citation.

Q: Is there a specific way to cite a thesis or dissertation from a foreign university?

A: When citing a thesis or dissertation from a foreign university, you should include the full name of the institution and its location, typically including the city and country, if it's not a well-known institution. The rest of the citation format in Chicago style remains consistent with domestic sources, adhering to either the notes-bibliography or author-date system.

Q: What is the difference between a "thesis" and a "dissertation" in academic terms, and how does it affect citation?

A: While both are research-intensive academic documents, a dissertation is typically the final major research project for a doctoral degree (Ph.D.), representing a more substantial original contribution to knowledge. A thesis is usually completed for a master's degree and may be less extensive. For citation purposes in Chicago style, the distinction is primarily in naming the degree type (e.g., "PhD dissertation" vs. "MA thesis"), but the structural elements and formatting rules remain the same for both within a chosen citation system.

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