

Q: What Graduate Research is All About?

- ▶ The distinguishing mark of graduate research is **an original contribution to knowledge**
- ▶ Thesis
 - ▶ a formal document to prove that you have done the above

A Generic Thesis Skeleton

1. Introduction
2. Background Information (optional)
3. Review of the State of the Art
4. Research Question or Problem Statement
5. Describing How you Solved the Problem or Answered the Question
6. Conclusions
7. References
8. Appendices

3. Review of the State of the Art

- ▶ Here you review the state of the art relevant to your thesis
- ▶ Present the major ideas in the state of the art right up to, but not including, your own personal brilliant ideas

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 - ▶ Organize this section by idea, not by author or by publication

4. Research Question or Problem Statement

- ▶ Three main parts:
 1. A concise statement of the question that your thesis tackles
 2. Justification that your question is previously unanswered
 3. Discussion of why it is worthwhile to answer

6. Conclusions

You generally cover three things in the conclusions section

7. References

- ▶ Being closely tied to the review of the state of the art
- ▶ All references given must be referred to in the main body

Truth be known: most examiners also look for their own publications if they are in the topic area of the thesis, so list these too

8. Appendices

Q: What goes in the appendices?

- ▶ Any material which impedes the smooth development of your presentation, but which is important to justify the results of a thesis

Examples: program listings, immense tables of data, lengthy mathematical proofs or derivations,...

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NOTE: Make such decisions early, during the outline phase

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- ▶ Take-home message: a rush job has painful consequences at the defense 

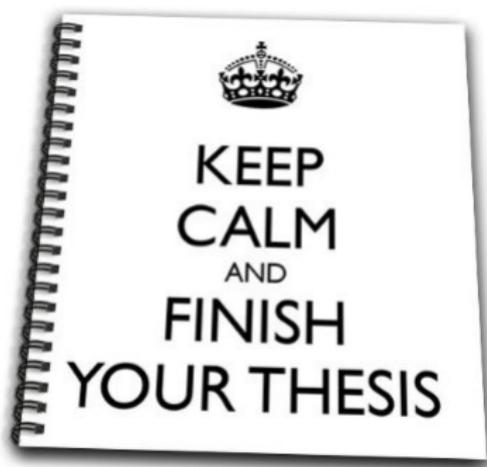
Outline

How to Organize your Thesis?

Getting Started

Hints & Tips

Conclusion



GOOD LUCK!

References

- ▶ John W. Chinneck's "How to Organize your Thesis"