Journal article style thesis

- Main Introduction
- [Literature review - optional]
- Objectives
- Chapter 1 (Article 1)
  - Introduction (shorter than above)
  - Objective(s)
  - Methods (more detailed than for journal article)
  - Results and discussion (and brief conclusions)
Journal article style thesis

- Chapter 2 (Article 2)
  - Introduction (shorter than above)
  - Objective(s)
  - Methods (more detailed than for article)
  - Results and discussion (and brief conclusions)
- Chapter 3 (Article 3)
  - ....
- Chapter 4 (Overall Conclusions)
- References
- Appendix
Organizing

- Organize by objectives
- Talk with your major professor before you start to write
- Look at other recent theses/dissertations
Choosing a Journal

- Appropriate to content of article
  - Have similar topics been covered in that journal? Similar length?
- What audience do you want to read your article?
- What is the role of “prestige” in journal selection?
- Regional, national or international?
- Is timeliness important?
- Page charges?
- Other considerations?
Journal article outline

- Title page
- Abstract page
- Introduction
  - Objectives
- Methods
  - Field experiments
  - Lab experiments
- Results and Discussion
  - Field experiments
  - Lab experiments
- [Conclusions]
May be the only thing people see. Shows up in:
  - Literature citations
  - Literature searches
  - Your vitae

Essential that it be:
  - Informative
  - Specific
  - Appropriate for the audience
Writing a title

- List key words
- Choose the most important key words
- Be specific
- Be complete
- Put important words first
  - (e.g., not “effects of” or “observations on”)
Writing a title (continued)

- Use common name of insect if it’s an Ent. Soc. of America journal (see journal for examples)
  - Give order and family
- Otherwise, generally use scientific name
  - With some descriptive word or words (e.g., the carabid beetle *Bembidion quadrimaculatum*)
Introduction

- Two goals
  - Give readers background so they can understand the problem and the paper
  - Clearly state the problem and objectives
- Broad beginning - start at a level that most or all readers already know
- Introduce the main focus or foci
  - e.g., tell about your insect
  - Introduce your ecological system
Introduction

- Start broad and narrow down to objectives
- Perhaps give goal or goals (broad, long term)
- Specific Objectives - final paragraph
- Objectives should be specific enough to define the experimental methods
- [Some authors and journals include brief methods and results in the Introduction]
Scientific names

- Always cite the full scientific name and author the first time it is used in the abstract and again in the introduction -
  - *Genus, species, author*

- After that, the name can be abbreviated as *G. species*

- If other species in the same genus have already been listed, still give the full genus name the first time.
Citations

- Generally put citations at the end of the sentence or the end of the thought
  - Blah, blah, blah (Smith and Jones 1998, Murray 1999)

- Do not list authors as part of the text unless authorship is important (e.g., breakthrough research, unusual results)
  - Smith and Jones showed for the first time that blah blah (1998)
Citations, continued

- (PROC GLM, SAS Institute 2001) for software user's manual in text. In reference list:

- List citations in chronological order
  » (Jones 1997, Brower 1999)

- Personal communication
  - (L. J. Smith, personal communication)
  - Letter or email documentation required by editor
Citations, continued

- Unpublished data (your own)
  - (unpublished)
  - (E.G., unpublished)
- Articles that have been accepted for publication
  - Smith (in press)
- Web sites
  - By author or “anonymous”
  - List site and most recent date accessed
References cited

- See Day and Gastel chapter 15
- See your specific journal
  - Follow those guidelines exactly
- Keep a full list of references
  - condense or format (number order, etc.) during the last revision before submitting
  - Keep this full reference list for future use
- Use Zotero, End Notes, etc.
References cited
(after final revisions)

- Review all references in text to be sure they are cited in References section
- Review all references in Ref Cited section to be sure they are in text

[This is tiresome but important]
Present vs. past tense in citing previous work

- What someone did is past tense:
  e.g. “Smith and Jones (1998) measured black fly populations in streams.”

- Accepted knowledge is present tense:
  e.g., “Black flies inhabit streams (Smith and Jones 1998).”

- If their results were a special case: “In their study, Smith and Jones (1998) found black flies in streams. However, Brown and Cummins…”

- For your results, use past tense: “We found black flies in streams.”

See Day and Gastel p. 191-193
Acronyms/Text abbreviations

- Acronym - a word formed from an abbreviation
- Text abbreviations (DNA)
  - Do not use abbreviations, if possible
    » Confuses the reader
    » Disrupts reading and interpretation process
  - Use abbreviations if they are commonly accepted in your field
    » DNA, PCR, IPM, etc.
  - Spell out and define the first time in Intro and in Abstract
Writing Blocks

- A barrier to free expression of ideas on paper - just can’t get going or keep going-

- Symptoms
  - Procrastination
  - Anxiety
  - Guilt
  - Restlessness
  - Missed deadlines

- Why do you get blocked?
  - Technical problems
  - Internal critic
Everything I do starts out a mess. You’d be embarrassed to have anybody look at it. And you just have to sit with it and push it around- and throw half of it out, and take the other half and mush that around a little bit. It just takes time. Most people just give up.  

_Garrison Keeler, A Prairie Home Companion_
Writing Blocks (continued)

- Unblocking at:
  - Writing the rough draft
    » Seize a creative moment
    » Make a writing appointment
    - Pick a time of day that is “up” for you
    » Get started and keep going
    - Turn off your inside critic
    » Non-stops - short timed start and stop
Writing Blocks (continued)

» Don’t get side-tracked by…
  - Telephone, email
  - Need a specific reference, spelling
  - Finding the perfect words

» Put in notes or reminders and keep going “…here I need to say something about xxx…”
Writing Blocks (continued)

- Unblocking at:
  - Revising and polishing
    » Now you turn on your “critic”
    » Take a break after writing and before revising
    » Put in your references, check spelling, fill in reminders
    » Change the medium (computer to print-out, different font, ?)
    » Read aloud
    » Keep previous drafts (e.g., v1, v2, etc.)
    » Get a friend to review and discuss
Revision process

- First
  - Look for overall organization, outline, logical progression
    - Does the introduction lead the reader down to objectives
    - Is any information left out
    - Is there too much on a topic?
  - Are there good transitions between paragraphs?
  - Insert/delete/move paragraphs or sections
Revision process

- **Second**
  - Go back and do minor revisions
    » Paragraph and sentence structure, spelling
    » Fill in references, data, etc.
    » See Day “Words and expressions to avoid”
    » See your journal style manual

- **Finally**
  - Review again for overall structure, flow, details, etc.
Do you ask a friend or co-worker for comments on a paper you wrote for a class?
  - Why not?

What can other readers tell you about your writing?

What if the reader is just stupid? Doesn’t get it?

Set up a “partnership” for reviewing each others’ writing
Revision/Reviewing

- What about reviewing/critiquing papers for this class?
  - Review writing structure, style, format, etc.
  - Not a class where we do an evaluation of the science, experimental design, statistics, etc.
Reviewing in a positive manner

- Use “I messages” e.g., “This is unclear to me”, “I am having difficulty with this”,… Not, “You really screwed up here”, “You wrote this badly”, “This part sucks!”
- If something is unclear, offer a suggestion about how to fix it
- Explain why you make the suggestions/comments
Revision/Reviewing

- Accepting reviews
  - Try not to take anything personally
  - It’s a part of any writing process
  - Remember that others in your group have as many problems with their writing as you do.
  - Ask for details about why a section is confusing or why something was misinterpreted
  - Don’t get defensive -- “Anyone with a brain could understand this. It’s perfectly clear.”
Assignments

- Readings (Day and Bastel)
  - General topics (Chapters 1-6)
  - Title (Chapter 7)
  - Authorship (Chapter 8)
  - Introduction (Chapter 10)

- Title and Introduction
  - Due to your group, Matt, and Ed by Jan 27
  - Small groups meet the week of Feb 1

- Mind Maps - bring to small group meeting