

# GUIDELINES FOR WRITING AND DEFENDING A MASTER'S THESIS OR DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

\* Please review this entire document as you begin preparing to write and defend. This will help you plan and avoid missing important deadlines.

PART I - SELECTING A DEFENSE COMMITTEE PART II- TIMETABLE AND CHECKLIST PART III - FORMATTING PART IV - FORMS

#### PART I - SELECTING A DEFENSE COMMITTEE

MASTER'S: Your Committee will require a minimum of 3 members including an Advisor and a Chairperson. Your advisor and the Chairperson must be UVM graduate faculty. The Chairperson must be from outside your department and program including primary and secondary appointments. All members must be present at the defense unless permission has been granted in advance by the Graduate College for participation via skype or teleconferencing. The Chairperson must always be present at the defense. Your defense committee must be approved by the Graduate College. You must submit a Defense Committee Membership Form\* at the beginning of the semester you plan on defending.

DOCTORATE: Your committee will consist of a minimum of 4 members of the University of Vermont Graduate Faculty including an Advisor and a Chairperson. At least two members must be from inside your department. The Chairperson must be from outside your department and program including primary and secondary appointments. When appropriate, a non-UVM member or non-graduate faculty member may serve as an additional member on the committee if approved by the Graduate Dean. A written request from the advisor and current curriculum vitae from the member are required by the Graduate College. All members must be present at the defense unless permission has been granted in advance by the Graduate College for participation via skype or teleconferencing. The Chairperson must always be present at the defense. Your defense committee must be approved by the Graduate College. You must submit a Defense Committee Membership Form\* at the beginning of the semester you plan on defending.

Notes: Individual departments may require more than 4 committee members or have specific membership requirements. Psychology and Chemistry may require 5 members. Check with your department.

<u>Doctor of Education Students</u> - The Doctor of Education spans the Departments of Education and Integrated Professional Studies, therefore the Defense Committee Chairperson must be from outside these two departments.

<u>Interdisciplinary Program Students</u> (Bioengineering, Cell and Molecular Biology, Materials Science, etc.)

The Chairperson must be from outside the departments listed in your advisor's primary or secondary appointments.

<u>History/Historic Preservation</u> – Select your Chairperson from outside these departments.

YOUR THESIS/DISSERTATION ADVISOR: This advisor is typically your scholarly mentor - a faculty member in your program who works most closely with you as you proceed through all phases of your research. Your advisor usually has specific expertise in the field of your scholarship and offers guidance in the structure, content and methodology of the work. The advisor also assures that you are aware of current standards for the actual thesis or dissertation manuscript, its organization and format. The additional members of your thesis/dissertation defense committee are typically selected based upon specific types of expertise they hold as well. For example, you may identify a faculty member who has worked extensively with a certain type of experimental design that you are using, or perhaps the individual's scholarship has adopted a different but

complementary theoretical perspective. In any case, the committee member might help you consider alternative or more in-depth ways of thinking about certain aspects of your scholarly project.

THE ROLE OF THE CHAIRPERSON: The Chair serves quite a different role. First and foremost, the Chair is responsible for assuring that the procedures and standards of UVM's Graduate College are met as you complete and defend your thesis/dissertation. This helps to ensure that the UVM degree you earn reflects some common standard of accomplishment across the University. The Chair is the objective "outsider" (vis-a-vis your program) capable of ascertaining that the thesis and defense are meeting university-wide standards and guidelines and not merely those that are idiosyncratic to your department or program. At the same time, the Chair is there to assure that you, the student, are receiving full and fair attention from the committee--the sort of opportunity and treatment that is due each and every student in UVM's Graduate College. So, the Chair is at once a student advocate and a bearer of standards for the College as a whole.

Often a student tries to identify a Chair who also has scholarly expertise closely related to the thesis/dissertation. This can be quite helpful but it is not necessary. In fact, very interesting, and important contributions can be made by a Chair who has considerable distance from the field of inquiry. Approaching the issues from a different discipline, an individual can ask insightful questions and offer innovative perspectives that may be overlooked by those who have long been immersed in the traditions.

Our advice is to be thoughtful and creative as you work to assemble a thesis/dissertation committee. Consider your own background - its strengths and its gaps - as well as those of your advisor; ask yourself what sorts of support you would find helpful (scholarly, motivational, practical, psychological, etc.) and try to identify committee members who can contribute accordingly. Then relax and take advantage of the different skills and insights your committee members can bring to bear on your work. The system is designed to support the development of first-rate scholarship on your part.

## PART II - TIMETABLE - CHECKLIST

#### PLAN AHEAD

- Read and follow the "Guidelines for Writing and Defending a Master's Thesis or Doctoral Dissertation" \*
- Submit the "Defense Committee Membership Form"\* for Graduate College approval at the beginning of the semester of your expected defense.
- Comprehensive Exam: You must complete departmental requirements for a
  comprehensive exam; your advisor must notify the Graduate College in writing of
  the completion of the exam or the scheduled exam date(s) before you schedule a
  format check.
- Review degree requirements with your Advisor and complete the Intent to Graduate Form\*. Submit signed form to Department and a copy of form with advanced degree fee to the Graduate College.

### AT LEAST THREE WEEKS BEFORE DEFENSE

- Schedule your defense date, time & room
- Submit an electronic copy of your "Defense Notice Form" \*to the Graduate College and post a hard copy in your department.
- Schedule a Format/Record Check. Call 656-3160. Bring hard copies of your formatted Title Page, Acceptance Page, Abstract Page, Table of Contents and a few random pages of the body of your paper. See formatting section of the Graduate College "Guidelines for Writing and Defending a Master's Thesis or Doctoral Dissertation."\*

#### TWO (2) WEEKS BEFORE DEFENSE

• Submit a defendable copy to your Defense Committee members for their review. Contact your department chairperson regarding the review period requirement.

#### TAKE TO YOUR DEFENSE

• One letter quality acceptance page on acid-free 100% cotton fiber 20-24 lb. weight paper. Optional extra copies of your acceptance page for personal copy on paper of your choice.

# FINAL DEADLINES TO BE AN OCTOBER, JANUARY, OR MAY GRADUATE

	OCTOBER 2013	JANUARY 2014	MAY 2014
Graduate College Format/Record Check	August 9	October 25	March 7
Oral Defense of Thesis	August 30	November 15	March 28
Final Thesis/Dissertation to Grad College	September 20	December 6	April 11

<sup>\*</sup>Forms and Guidelines are available on the Graduate College website under Current Students/ Forms and Policies

#### AFTER YOUR DEFENSE

- After all final revisions have been completed; you must submit copies of your thesis/dissertation to the Graduate College within six weeks (or less if you are meeting a graduation deadline).
- Final approved copies required by Graduate College are as follows: Master's Thesis - 1 original copy on acid free, 100% cotton paper & 2 copies on paper of your choice
  - Doctoral Dissertation 1 original copy on acid free, 100% cotton paper & 3 copies on paper of your choice
  - Optional personal copies may be submitted with binding fee.
  - When the copies have been accepted by the Graduate College, we will obtain the Dean's signature prior to sending to the bindery.
- Survey of Earned Doctorates to be completed by all PhD students at <a href="http://survey.norc.uchicago.edu/doctorate">http://survey.norc.uchicago.edu/doctorate</a>
- Electronic Submission is optional. Submit form\* and a CD containing the thesis/dissertation in PDF format.

#### **GRADUATION DATES**

The Board of Trustees grants degrees each year in October, January, and May. In order to be eligible for a graduation period, all degree requirements must be met by the dates specified in the deadlines.

An official transcript with title and date of degree conferred may be obtained through the Registrar's Office after any of the graduation dates. Diplomas are printed in January and May.

<sup>\*</sup>Forms and Guidelines are available on the Graduate College website under Current Students/ Forms and Policies.

#### **PART III - FORMATTING**

#### SUBJECT FORMAT

The Graduate College accepts either (1) the Standard Thesis or (2) the Journal Article Thesis.

Certain departments require the use of the Standard Thesis format. Others require the use of the Journal Article Thesis format. Some allow the student and studies committee to choose the most appropriate format. Consult your Graduate Program Coordinator for the format appropriate to your program. It is the student's responsibility to meet all departmental requirements. Do not assume you may follow the format of another thesis or dissertation.

#### STANDARD THESIS

The Standard Thesis is one in which the candidate describes his or her scholarly work in the main body of the thesis, including a complete review of the literature and an exhaustive discussion of methodology, results and conclusions. The use of appendices is discouraged in the Standard Thesis except where the material would obviously disrupt the underlying thread of progress in the main body. For example, the candidate would: derive equations in the main body but place a lengthy digital computer program in an appendix; describe an instrument's use in the main body but place manufacturer's drawings and specifications of the instrument in an appendix; give the primary tabulated results in the main body but relegate extensive tables of raw preliminary data to an appendix.

The Graduate College has authorized the use of Slade and Perrin's <u>Form and Style:</u> <u>Research Papers, Reports, Theses</u>, 13<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boston: Houghton Miffin, 2008) as the general guide for the preparation of theses and dissertations in the Standard Thesis format. The guide incorporates form and style for MLA (Modern Language Association), APA (American Psychological Association) and Chicago Manual styles.

For citation in "footnote/endnote" form, Slade follows <u>The Chicago Manual of Style</u>, 15<sup>th</sup> ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). Students following Chicago will find an inexpensive and useful guide in Kate L. Turabian, <u>A Manual for Writers of Term Papers</u>, Theses, and Dissertations, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

For the alternative "parenthetical" form of citation, Slade recommends the <u>MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing</u>, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2008). A similar guide for MLA is Joseph Gibaldi, <u>MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers</u>, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2009). For APA style format you will want the <u>Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association</u>, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (American Psychological

Association, 2009). These guides are available at the University Store and in the Reference Section of Bailey Howe Library.

Students must consult their department to determine whether Chicago, MLA or APA is the appropriate form of documentation for their discipline.

#### JOURNAL ARTICLE THESIS

The Journal Article Thesis includes one or more articles prepared according to the style requirements of a scholarly journal so that the article(s) is (are) suitable for publication. The article(s) should avoid extreme brevity and be understandable to the members of the candidate's thesis/dissertation committee even if this necessitates some elaboration of the standard article format; and the context for the article(s) described as follows:

# Specific requirements are:

- 1. The student must use the publication style of either (1) one of the discipline's reading periodicals or (2) the published standards of the professional association or discipline (e.g., <u>Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association</u>, or Council of Biological Editors [A.I.B.S.] <u>Style Manual</u>) for the article(s). Two or more articles included in the same thesis/dissertation may have different styles if written for different journals.
- 2. The Abstract is a summary of the entire thesis/dissertation.
- 3. The Citation page will give the literature citation for each published article included or specific information concerning submission for publication (i.e., name of journal and date of acceptance for publication or date of submission to journal). \*The Citation page, if used, must be approved by the Graduate College. See specific guidelines on page 15.
- 4. The main body of the thesis/dissertation will include one or more articles in approved journal or periodical style. The following are also required: (1) a Comprehensive Literature Review to precede the individual articles to provide an integrated perspective to the total body of research and literature; and (2) a Comprehensive Bibliography, including all references in the individual articles as well as those from section one (1), the Comprehensive Literature Review.
- 5. Any article comprising a major portion of a thesis or dissertation must be the work of the student. The student must be the sole author or, if there is more than one author, the primary and first listed author of articles prepared for publication. In situations of more than one author, it is the

responsibility of the studies/defense committee to determine that the research and writing is indeed that of the candidate for the degree.

Each article will contain its own Reference section in addition to the Comprehensive Bibliography. The comprehensive bibliography must be in alpha order by last name of author.

The Journal Article Thesis contains appropriate appendices needed for detailed and ancillary information required for completeness and explanation but not usually presented in a published paper.

The organization of a Journal Article Thesis/Dissertation is as follows:

- o Title Page
- Acceptance Page
- o Abstract Page for entire thesis
- o Citation Page special requirements apply
- o Acknowledgement Page (optional)
- o Table of Contents
- List of Tables
- List of Figures
- o Comprehensive Literature Review
- Article(s) Format follows journals' specific requirements, including reference sections
- o Comprehensive Bibliography Alpha order by last name of author
- o Appendices (at the end)

In all provisions except the Article(s) itself - which follows the format of a scholarly journal - the directives of the Graduate College, and Slade's Form and Style, or MLA, or APA shall govern the preparation of a Journal Article Thesis.

# MECHANICAL FORMAT FOR STANDARD AND JOURNAL ARTICLE THESES

The Standard Thesis and the Journal Article Thesis differ in organization and placement of material, but not in overall content, scholarship, or clarity of presentation. Both plans have an identical title page, acceptance page, abstract, table of contents, and mechanical format (margins, pagination, etc.).

The candidate's advisor supervises the preparation of the thesis or dissertation. Regardless of style and format, all theses/dissertations must be prepared in accordance with accepted standards of academic integrity, including proper citation and attribution of all material that is not the original product of the writer.

You and your advisor are also responsible to produce a thesis/dissertation document that meets University and program standards. Candidates also are responsible for consulting the Graduate College regarding University requirements and thesis/dissertation deadlines.

# FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

Use a software program to select and/or code your text titles, headings and captions. The program will generate a Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures from the codes.

TEXT: Double-spaced. Single space long quotes if approved by the department. Final copies submitted to the Graduate College after the defense must be single sided.

FONTS: Times New Roman is now the only acceptable APA font style. Other standard serif fonts (ones with cross marks on letters) such as Book Antiqua, Garamond are also accepted by the Graduate College. The preferred type size for the text is a ten- or twelve-point font. Please note that Word does not spell check words that are capitalized.

PAGE MARGINS: Left = 1.50" Right, Bottom and Top = 1.00"

Note: Page numbers on the bottom must appear above the 1" margin.

PAGE NUMBERING: *Preliminary pages* appear in Lowercase Roman numerals (Abstract is "i" but does not appear on the page. All other preliminary pages continue with ii, iii, iv.... up to Main Body): these numbers are centered above the 1" bottom margin. *Text pages* (beginning of the Main Body) appear centered above the 1" bottom margin in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3...). Placing the numbers in right hand corner 1" inch from the top of the page and at the 1" right margin is less common but optional.

HEADINGS: Be consistent with the use of bold, italicized letters and the use of capital or lowercase titles, headings for the Preliminary pages.

Correct Example: Abstract Incorrect Example: ABSTRACT

Acknowledgements
Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

LEVELS OF HEADINGS: Always use headings system to separate and classify paper sections. Whether you use APA, MLA or Chicago Manual Style, keep your headings system consistent throughout the paper.

TABLES: Captions are placed above the Table and may be single-spaced. Captions should be a clear, concise phrase Tables may be included in text or precede the bibliography. Psychology: Tables/Figures follow conclusions unless inserted in text..

FIGURES: Captions are placed below the Figure and may be single-spaced. Captions should be a clear, concise phrase Figures may be included in text or precede the bibliography.

Note: Spellcheck will not highlight any spelling or typing errors on words that are capitalized. Please verify carefully any titles that are in uppercase letters.

# **SEQUENCE OF PAGES**

Follow the sequence order below to assemble your thesis/dissertation.

TITLE PAGE: Title in capital letters. Copy words as they appear on sample enclosed. Balance the information on the page. The date that appears on title page represents the month and year in which the degree will be conferred (October, January or May). *No page number should appear on this page*.

ACCEPTANCE: Make sure the names are spelled properly. The date that appears is the date of your defense. See sample enclosed. *No page number should appear on this page*.

ABSTRACT: This must be **single-spaced** and only **one** (1) **page** in length. This page may be in block format, have paragraphs, or indented paragraphs. *No page number appears on the abstract, though it acts as page "i"* 

CITATION: A Citation page (for journal article only) must be included if you have submitted an article for publication. See the Authorized Format that follows to see if this is required for you or not. This must be followed exactly as the instructions indicate. This page would be number ii.

DEDICATION: Page is optional and should be double-spaced. It is usually only one or two sentences and no more than one page in length.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: Is optional, and can be more than one page in length.

TABLE OF CONTENTS: A computer generated Table of Contents is required. Neither "Abstract" nor "Table of Contents" should appear within your table of contents.

LIST OF TABLES: Use here if applicable. Generate this list with computer software. Captions in the list must be **identical** to the text captions used with the Table up to the first period.

LIST OF FIGURES: Place here if applicable. Generate this list with computer software. Captions in the list must be **identical** to the text captions used with the Figure up to the first period.

MAIN BODY: This must be **double-spaced**. Long quotations may be single-spaced (if approved by the department) or set in reduced type.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Each reference may be single-spaced. Double-space between references, if approved by your Committee. A Comprehensive Bibliography is required for all formats.

APPENDICES: Lettered A, B, C... Place at the end of the thesis/dissertation if needed.

# TITLE OF YOUR THESIS OR DISSERTATION

# A Thesis (or Dissertation) Presented

Double Space (Copy words exactly as they appear)

by

**Your Name** 

to

The Faculty of the Graduate College

of

The University of Vermont

Single space and center

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of... (or Doctor of)... Specializing in...

Break three lines as they appear

May, 2010

<sup>\*</sup>Note: This is the month and year of your graduation term, and not your defense date. Use October, January or May and year of graduation.

# EXAMPLE OF ACCEPTANCE PAGE FOR MASTER'S THESIS

Use correct margins and balance the page. No page number. Copy words exactly as they appear below. Single space and begin each line at left margin = 1.5 inches; Do not hyphenate.

Accepted by the Faculty of the Graduate College, The University of Vermont, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of ..., specializing in ... (.)

Thesis Ex	camination Committee:	
	same tab settings; make lines of equal length bas name and highest degree earned below each solid li	ed on longest name; equal spacing. Follow the orde ine.
Set tabs	John Smith, Ph.D	Advisor
	Fred Rogers, Ph.D.	
	Jane Jones, Ph.D.	Chairperson
	Domenico Grasso, Ph.D.	Dean, Graduate College

Date of Defense

**April 1, 2010** 

# EXAMPLE OF ACCEPTANCE PAGE FOR DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Use correct margins and balance the page. No page number. Copy words exactly as they appear below. Single space and begin each line at left margin = 1.5 inches; Do not hyphenate.

Accepted by the Faculty of the Graduate College, The University of Vermont, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of ..., specializing in ... (.)

# **Dissertation Examination Committee:**

Indent. Use same tab settings; make lines of equal length based on longest name; equal spacing.	Follow the orde
below. Type name and highest degree earned below each solid line.	

Set tabs		Advisor
	John Smith, Ph.D	
	Fred Rogers, Ph.D.	
	Susan James, Ph.D.	
	Jane Jones, Ph.D.	Chairperson
		Dean, Graduate College

Date of Defense

**April 1, 2010** 

Domenico Grasso, Ph.D.

#### CITATION PAGE FOR JOURNAL FORMAT

If one or more of these categories apply, complete the wording below. Follow a journal reference format you have adopted for your thesis or dissertation. This page may be used if the dates are ON OR BEFORE the day you submit your final copies. Any article comprising a major portion of a thesis or dissertation must be the work of the student. The student must be the <u>sole author or the primary and first listed author</u> of articles. This page must be approved by the Graduate College during the format check.

# **CITATION(S)**

Material from this thesis (or dissertation) has been published in the following form:

Swenson, R.M.. (2006). The effect of eating New York Super Fudge Chunk on the productivity of graduate students. Journal of Ice Cream Eaters, 10, 235-255.

#### AND/OR

Material from this thesis (or dissertation) has been accepted for publication in (name of journal) on (month, day, year) in the following form:

Swenson, R.M.. (year, if known). The effect of eating New York Super Fudge Chunk on the productivity of graduate students. Journal of Ice Cream Eaters.

## AND/OR

Material from this thesis (or dissertation) has been submitted for publication to (name of journal) on (month, day, year) in the following form:

Swenson, R.M.. The effect of eating New York Super Fudge Chunk on the productivity of graduate students. Journal of Ice Cream Eaters.

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# DEFENSE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP FORM

Complete and submit this form to the Graduate College, 330 Waterman as soon as you have selected your committee. Signatures are <u>not</u> required.

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### **INTENT TO GRADUATE**

Deadlines are August 1 for October; November 1 for January; February 1 for May completions

#### Instructions:

- 1. Complete this form with your advisor, including signatures at the bottom.
- 2. Submit the original to your Department
- 3. Submit a copy of this form to the Graduate College at <u>Gradcoll@uvm.edu</u> or 330 Waterman

  Advanced Degree Fees <u>will be charged to your student account</u> at the following rates:

  Non-thesis Master's-\$10; Thesis Master's-\$20; Doctoral-\$25

NAME:						
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# GRADUATE COLLEGE DEFENSE NOTICE

# Please Post

The following thesis (or dissertation) presentation is open to those in the University community.

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Candidate's Name

Advisor: Name, highest degree

Master/Doctor of \_\_\_\_\_

Complete name of your program

Defense Date

Seminar and/or Defense Time

Seminar and/or Defense Place

Title of Thesis or Dissertation



# ELECTRONIC THESIS AND DISSERTATION SUBMISSION FORM

Student Name:
Email Address:
Document Type:
Advisor Name and Highest Degree:
Thesis or Dissertation Title:
Suggested Subject Keywords (for a database search):
Note: Please be certain electronic submission is on a cd with only the thesis/dissertation file on the disc, and that the disc is protected in a hard enclosed case.
Questions may be addressed to:
Kerry Swift, Technology Licensing Officer, Sponsored Programs Office, <a href="mailto:kswift@uvm.edu">kswift@uvm.edu</a>
Ruth Farrell Associate Vice President Sponsored Programs Office rfarrell@uym.edu



# **Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Rights and Permissions**

Student Name:
E-mail Address:
Document Type: Master's Thesis Doctoral Dissertation
School/College: Thesis or Dissertation Title:
Thesis or Dissertation Title:
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Advisor Agreement:  I have reviewed the final electronic version of the above-mentioned document and have determined that it
is an accurate representation of the document reviewed and accepted by the Defense Committee.
(Thesis or Dissertation Advisor) (Date)
Student Agreement:
I hereby certify that I have obtained all necessary permission in writing for copyrighted material to be published in my thesis or dissertation. Further, I certify that I have obtained and attached hereto a written permission statement from the owner(s) of any copyrighted matter to be included in my thesis or dissertation, allowing distribution as specified below. Copies of all such permissions are maintained in my files.  I hereby grant to the University of Vermont and its employees the nonexclusive license to archive and make accessible, under the conditions specified below, my thesis or dissertation in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known. This is a license rather than assignments, and
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