

# *The Form of the PhD Dissertation*

## Introduction

This publication is intended to assist students in preparing PhD dissertations. The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) requires that each PhD student submit a dissertation through the online ProQuest submission tool which can be found at [www.etdadmin.com/gsas.harvard](http://www.etdadmin.com/gsas.harvard). The formatting requirements are outlined within this booklet. A dissertation that does not conform to the minimum standards set by GSAS may have to be reformatted and resubmitted. In that event, the degree cannot be awarded until a dissertation in satisfactory form is completed and submitted. Please follow the guidelines in this booklet. Do not use dissertations previously published as examples.

A summary of the requirements set by GSAS to which all dissertations in Arts and Sciences must conform is provided below, in the section “Preparation of the Dissertation.” For **March 2012** degree candidates a bound copy of the dissertation will be produced by ProQuest at no cost. These students are not required to provide additional copies to the Registrar’s Office.

Applications for the PhD degree must be filed at the Registrar’s Office, on a form provided by that office, approximately two months in advance of the month in which the degree is expected (degrees are awarded in November, March, and May). The exact dates by which the degree application is due at the Registrar’s Office can be found in the *GSAS Handbook* (see the GSAS website at <http://www.gsas.harvard.edu>).

For any questions relating to the physical format of the dissertation not adequately answered by this booklet, please contact the FAS Registrar’s Office, (617) 496-4182 or (617) 495-1489.

## Advanced Planning of Dissertation

### Approval of Dissertation Subject

The subject of the dissertation must be approved in advance by the student’s department. If a student wishes to submit as a dissertation a published article or series of articles, a book or monograph, or a manuscript that has been accepted for publication, approval by the appropriate department must be obtained. In no event may a dissertation be presented for the PhD degree that has already been submitted toward any degree, either at Harvard or elsewhere, in substantially the same form and content. In addition to the specific requirements set by GSAS, students must be aware of and conform to any requirements prescribed by their department or dissertation committee, particularly the recommendations of their dissertation supervisor.

### Language of the Dissertation

The language of the dissertation is ordinarily English, although some departments whose subject matter involves foreign languages may accept a dissertation written in a language other than English.

# Form of Presentation

## Length

Most dissertations are 100 to 300 pages in length. All dissertations should be divided into appropriate sections, and long dissertations may need chapters, main divisions, and even subdivisions. Students should keep in mind that GSAS and many departments deplore overlong and wordy dissertations. If a dissertation contains as many as 400 pages, the binder may recommend binding it in two volumes rather than one. For two volume dissertations, pagination should be continuous across two volumes.

## Pagination

Every page in the dissertation has a number. For the preliminary pages (abstract, table of contents, list of tables, graphs, illustrations, and preface), use small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, v...). These may be placed either at the top or the bottom of the page. *All pages must contain text or images. Should you wish to include a blank page, please print 'Page intentionally left blank', centered in the middle of the page, to clearly indicate your intent.*

Count the title page as page i and the copyright page as page ii, *but do not print the page numbers on either of these two pages.*

For the text, use Arabic numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5...) starting with page one (the first page of the text itself). As in a book, page numbers can be centered at top or bottom, or placed in the upper right-hand corner. Whatever the format, the placement of page numbers must be consistent throughout. Page numbers should be at least half an inch from any edge of the paper to avoid loss when the dissertation is trimmed. Since page numbers are used to demonstrate that the dissertation is complete, every page must be consecutively numbered, including tables, graphs, illustrations, and bibliography/index (if they are included); letter suffixes (such as 10a, 10b...) are not allowed. It is customary not to have a page number at the top of a page containing a chapter heading.

Check pagination carefully. Account for all pages. Text and illustrations should appear on right (right hand side). They should not be bound face-to-face.

## Title Page

The dissertation begins with a title page, which must be prepared in the form specified on page 3. The title should be as concise as possible, consistent with giving an accurate description of the dissertation. Students are strongly encouraged to embed key words into their title, so that the title will be retrievable on computerized listings. Be sure to use words for formulas, symbols, Greek letters, and so on.

See the following page for a sample title page of a PhD dissertation.

Sample Title Page for the PhD Dissertation

[*Title*]

A dissertation presented

by

[*full name of author as it appears on your GSAS record*]

to

The [*official name of the department, division, or committee  
under which dissertation was written*]

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the subject of

[*official name of subject as listed in  
the GSAS Handbook (see “Degree Programs”)*]

Harvard University  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

[*Month and year of the submission of the completed  
dissertation to the department, division, or committee*]

## Copyright Notice

The Copyright Act of 1976 provides for statutory copyright protection of a work from the moment it is tangibly fixed. To secure this protection, a copyright notice should be affixed on a separate page immediately following the title page. It should include the copyright symbol ©, the year in which copyright is established, and the full, legal name of the author. The notice should appear thus:

© year - Author's Name  
All rights reserved.

If a student requests copyright registration, ProQuest/UMI, Dissertation Publishing, will send copies of the dissertation to the Copyright Office in Washington, DC. This office will then send registered copies to the Library of Congress. Under mandatory deposit requirements, UMI ( designated as the national repository) also sends copies of all dissertations to the Library of Congress upon their request. See page 12 for more information about UMI. The price for copyright is \$55.00.

Do *not* print a page number on the copyright page. It is understood to be page ii for counting purposes only.

## Abstract

An abstract, not to exceed 350 words, is required. It should immediately follow the copyright page, and should state the problem, describe the methods and procedures used, and give the main results or conclusions of the research. The abstract should appear in both the bound Archives copy and the electronic copy. ProQuest/UMI will publish all abstracts in *Dissertation Abstracts International*. The abstract should be double-spaced. The author's name and the title of the dissertation, as well as the name of the dissertation advisor, should be included on the abstract page. The author's name should be right justified, the title of the dissertation centered, and Dissertation Advisor: Professor \_\_\_\_\_, left-justified at the top of the abstract page. ProQuest no longer provides on-demand copies of abstracts.

Sample Abstract:

[Advisor's name]	[Author's name]
[Title of Dissertation]	
Abstract	
The text of the abstract, not to exceed 350 words should be double-spaced. The first line of each paragraph is indented.	
Full justification of the text is not recommended.	
iii (Page number placement should be consistent with the rest of the dissertation)	

## Front and Back Matter

For any dissertation that is divided into sections, a table of contents listing at least the major headings should be prepared.

The order of sections should be as follows:

1. Title page
2. Copyright page
3. Abstract
4. Table of Contents
5. Front Matter
6. Body of Text
7. Back Matter

Front matter may include: acknowledgments of help or encouragement from individuals or institutions; a dedication; a list of illustrations or of tables; a glossary of terms; one or more epigraphs—pertinent quotations at the beginning of a dissertation or a chapter.

Back matter may consist of appendixes, a bibliography, and, rarely, an index.

## Body of Text

Students should take care that the same style of font or typeface that appears in the main body of the text is also used in all headers, page numbers, and footnotes. Exceptions are made only for tables and figures produced by different technology or by graphic artists.

Use font size 10-12. Full justification of the text is not recommended.

## Scholarly Reference

There are many ways to handle scholarly references, and preferred usage varies among fields. In choosing an annotation or reference system, students should be guided by the practice of their discipline and the recommendations of their dissertation advisor, department, or committee. In some fields, publishers of scholarly books or articles have established styles for various editorial details and may have issued a style manual to guide contributors. Students who plan eventual publication may find these guides helpful in setting a style for their dissertations that will be appropriate for publication without extensive alteration. Several such manuals are listed on page 14.

The general byword for scholarly reference is consistency. Essential publication facts should be as nearly complete as possible, but unnecessary details should be avoided. In all these matters, writers do well to follow the practice of their discipline.

## Footnotes

Textual notes that provide bibliographic reference, supplementary information, opinions, explanations, or suggestions that are not part of the text must appear at the bottom of the page as a footnote. This placement ensures that they will appear as close as possible to the referenced passage. Lengthy footnotes may be continued on the next page.

Footnote numbering can be continuous throughout the dissertation, or may start again for each chapter or page, but the method must be consistent. Footnotes may be single-spaced within each entry, but must be double-spaced between each entry.

## Bibliography

Students should check with their advisor or department to determine whether a bibliography is customary in their field. If it is, they should be sure to follow the conventions of the discipline.

The bibliography may be single-spaced within each entry, but must be double-spaced between each entry. On the first page of the bibliography, the page number is placed at the bottom of the page, centered between the margins. Thereafter, page numbers should be placed in the same position as they are throughout the rest of the text. Also, the bibliography should be consecutively paginated after the text.

## Acknowledging the Work of Others

Students are responsible for acknowledging any facts, ideas, or materials of others used in their own work. Students should refer to the statement on “Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism” in the *GSAS Handbook*.

## Use of Copyrighted Material

If copyrighted material belonging to others is used in the dissertation, the student must give full credit to the author and publisher of the work used. If a quotation exceeds “fair use,” permission from the copyright owner must be obtained and uploaded as supplementary material as part of the online dissertation submission. According to the Association of American University Presses, permission is required for quotations that are reproduced as complete units—poems, letters, short stories, essays, journal articles, complete chapters or sections of books, maps, charts, graphs, tables, figures, drawings, or other illustrative materials. To determine whether other excerpts from copyrighted material exceed “fair use” criteria, consider the length and substantiality of the portion quoted, the nature of the copyrighted work quoted, how the use of the excerpt will affect the market for or value of the quoted work, and the purpose and character of its use, including whether it is commercial in nature or for nonprofit educational use. When in doubt, the safest course is to obtain permission.

If material in a dissertation is co-authored, permission from the author(s) to use this material is required. In most cases, there will be co-authors of previously published or recently submitted journal articles. If copyright has not been signed away to the journal publisher, then the co-authors should grant permission.

Permission to use copyrighted material is obtained from the owner of the copyright. If a student includes in the dissertation his or her own previously published material, and if the student had granted publication rights to the publisher (most publishers require that this right be granted), then the student must obtain permission from the publisher to include this material in the dissertation. ProQuest/UMI requires copies of permission letters to be attached as supplemental material of the dissertation, and assumes no liability for copyright violations. When images or quotations from materials obtained from libraries, archives, museums, and the like are included in the dissertation, students should also follow the policies of the respective repositories concerning permission requirements.

When material copyrighted by someone other than the author appears in a dissertation, and when the author has failed to obtain permission from the copyright holder for ProQuest/UMI to sell such material, ProQuest/UMI cannot make the complete dissertation available for sale to anyone other than the author. The dissertation should be embargoed until the permission of the copyright holder has been obtained.

## Tables and Figures

**Ordinarily, tables and figures must be placed as close as possible to their first mention in the text.**

They may be placed on a page with no text above or below, or they may be placed directly into the text. If a table or a figure is alone on a page (with no narrative), it should be centered within the margins on the page. Tables and figures referred to in the text may not be placed at the end of the chapter or at the end of the dissertation. Figure and table numbering must be either continuous throughout the dissertation or by chapter (e.g., 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2). For example, there cannot be two figures designated in a dissertation as

“Figure 5.” Given the standards of the discipline, an exception is made for dissertations in the Department of History of Art and Architecture; illustrations may be placed at the end of the dissertation.

Headings of tables should be placed at the top of the table. While there are no specific rules for the format of table headings and figure captions, a consistent format must be used throughout the dissertation. (See style manuals appropriate to one’s field.)

Captions of figures should be placed at the bottom of the figure. If the figure takes up the entire page, the figure caption should be placed alone on the preceding page and centered vertically and horizontally within the margins. Each page receives a separate page number. When a figure or table title is on a preceding page, the second and subsequent pages of the figure or table should say, for example, “Figure 5 (Continued).” In such an instance, the list of figures or tables will list the page number containing the title. The word “figure” should be written in full (not abbreviated), and the “F” should be capitalized (e.g., Figure 5).

Horizontal figures and tables (i.e., those landscaped on the page) must be positioned correctly and bound at the top, so that the top of the figure or table will be at the left margin. Figure and table headings/captions are placed with the same orientation as the figure or table when on the same page. When on a separate page, headings/captions are always placed in vertical orientation, regardless of the orientation of the figure or table. Page numbers are always placed as if the figure were vertical on the page.

If a graphic artist does the figures, GSAS will accept lettering done by the artist only within the figure. Figures done with software are acceptable if the figures are clear and legible. Legends and titles done by the same process as the figures will be accepted if they too are clear, legible, and run at least 10 or 12 characters per inch. Otherwise, legends and captions should be printed with the same font used in the text.

All graphs, diagrams, line drawings, manuscript facsimiles, maps, chemical formulas, computer printouts, musical scores, and so on included in the body of the dissertation must be printed on archival paper for the bound copy and must be produced by acceptable permanent methods. Pages should not vary from the standard size of 8½” x 11” (an exception to the size requirement will be made for music scores). Plan illustrative materials so they can be reduced to meet this specification. They should be centered between the margins on a page with no text above or below. Exceptions to this rule are discussed in the section on foldouts.

## Visual Material

Original illustrations, photographs, and fine arts prints should be scanned and included in the PDF of the dissertation. See Resources and Guidelines in the ETD tool.

## Preparation of the Dissertation

### Physical Requirements

#### **For the bound (Archives) copy:**

##### **Margins:**

- Top, right-hand, and bottom margins: at least 1 inch
- Left-hand margin: at least 1 inch
- Page numbers should be at least ½ inch from every edge

**Spacing:**

- Spacing throughout body of text: double spacing
- Spacing for block quotations, footnotes, and bibliographies: single spacing *within* each entry but double spacing *between* each entry.
- Spacing for table of contents, list of tables, list of figures or illustrations, and lengthy tables: single spacing may be used.

**Binding:**

Dissertations for March degrees will be bound by ProQuest with no cost to GSAS students. Additional copies may be ordered at the expense of the student.

**Supplemental material:**

If additional digital information (including text, audio, video, image, or data sets) will accompany the main body of the dissertation, it should be uploaded as supplemental material via the ProQuest submission. ProQuest will provide media copies for Archives as part of the bound dissertation. Dissertations with media supplements will include a sleeve on the back cover of the dissertation, containing the supplementary material on disc.

To view dissertations and supplemental material submitted to ProQuest in prior years, students can use the e-research function of the Harvard Library system, available at <http://eresearch.lib.harvard.edu/V>. To access the material students should follow these steps:

- Go to <http://eresearch.lib.harvard.edu/V>
- Click on “Find e-resources”
- Select “Dissertations & Theses Full Text (ProQuest)” from the drop-down menu and click “Go”
- Find material using the search options that are relevant to the subject or department

Note: The University Archives does not guarantee the preservation of additional digital files on CDs. Please contact the Archives at 617-495-2461 if you have questions.

**ProQuest/UMI Dissertation Publishing**

Students are required to complete the publishing agreement provided in the ProQuest tool. All fees related to publishing or personal copies must be paid at the time of submission. The agreement gives ProQuest specific rights to publish the Abstract in their monthly Dissertation Abstracts International and in the ProQuest Dissertation and Theses computerized database, and to index the material in the annual Comprehensive Dissertation Index. ProQuest pays a 10 percent royalty on all sales of the manuscript. Royalty payments must exceed \$25 in a calendar year to be paid. In addition, the agreement allows ProQuest to distribute copies of the dissertation in microfilm, paper, and digital forms.

The ProQuest/UMI publishing agreement is non-exclusive and in no way prevents the author from making any disposition of other manuscript copies, nor does it prevent the author from publishing the dissertation at any time.

Students may order positive roll film, microfiche, and softbound or hardbound xerographic books-at reasonable cost once the ProQuest/UMI agreement is signed. Authors will always be able to order their own dissertation at a discount.

For more information about ProQuest/UMI services, visit <http://www.proquest.com/en-US/products/dissertations/>

**Embargoes**

The assumption that underlies the regulations concerning the deposit of PhD dissertations is that they must be “published” in the old sense. That is, they must be made available as proof of the candidate’s



achievement. This assumption echoes a traditional European idea that the candidate for a doctorate must make a contribution to knowledge and cannot have a degree for making a discovery that is kept secret. It is, therefore, only in exceptional cases that access to dissertations is restricted.

If the embargo is necessary, it is possible to embargo the dissertation for six months, one year or two years. If a longer embargo is necessary, the student writes a note in the online tool to the Administrator. Once embargoed through ProQuest, the dissertation will then be embargoed through DASH.

ProQuest/UMI Copy - Students may instruct ProQuest/UMI to sell only by giving permission. This should be stated in a separate letter submitted as a note to the administrator within the ProQuest online submission tool. A written request is required to implement and to remove a restriction. For a description of available restrictions, call (800) 521-0600, extension 7020.

Patent filing - All paperwork must be completed before a copy of the dissertation is transferred to the University Archives.

### Additional Copies

Individual departments may require that students submit a bound copy of the dissertation directly to the department. Students should check their department's specific requirements. Since the Archives' copy cannot be lent, most students need to prepare extra copies for their own and the department's purposes. Copies may be purchased through ProQuest at the time of submission.

## The Completed Dissertation

### Submission of Dissertation to Department

The dissertation must be submitted to the department in conformity with the deadline date established by the department. The department's date is generally six to eight weeks earlier than the date that the completed dissertation is due at the Registrar's Office. This is in order for the candidate to qualify for a degree on one of the three conferral dates. Dissertations must be submitted in final form. Students should ascertain from their department whether the dissertation is to be submitted in bound or unbound form for reading and how many copies the department requires.

### Acceptance by Department (Dissertation Acceptance Certificate)

The dissertation must be accepted, and the Dissertation Acceptance Certificate signed, by at least three readers designated by the student's department, two of which must be members of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Harvard University. FAS emeriti (including research professors) and faculty members from other schools at Harvard who hold appointments on GSAS degree committees are authorized to sign Dissertation Acceptance Certificates as FAS Members. GSAS strongly recommends that the chair of the dissertation committee be a member of FAS. Dissertation supervisors may serve as readers. The title on the Dissertation Acceptance Certificate must read exactly as it does on the title page of the dissertation. The original certificate must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the student or the Department. The Registrar's Office will forward these to Archives for safekeeping. A scanned copy of the DAC should appear before the title page of the PDF online submission. It will be included in the electronic and bound version. No page number should be assigned to the DAC.

### Submission to the Registrar

All PhD candidates are required to submit a copy of the dissertation via the ProQuest online-submission tool by the deadline established for each degree conferral date. The online-submission tool can be found at <http://www.etdadmin.com/gsas.harvard>

The ProQuest publishing agreement must be completed and any fees for publishing paid via the tool. All additional documentation must also be received by the deadline. Please Checklist for Submission at the Registrar's Office, located on page 14, for details.

For specific dates in a particular year, students should consult the degree calendar in the *GSAS Handbook*, on the GSAS website, [http://www.gsas.harvard.edu/handbook/degree\\_calendar.php](http://www.gsas.harvard.edu/handbook/degree_calendar.php), the Registrar, or their department office. *Deadline extensions are not possible.* Students who miss the deadline must re-apply for the degree for the subsequent degree conferral date (November, March, or May). The student is responsible for meeting submission deadlines. The signed Dissertation Acceptance Certificate must be received in the Graduate Records Office no later than the dissertation due date.

### Deposit in the University Archives

The original bound copy of the dissertation is preserved in the University Archives. The electronic copy is cataloged in HOLLIS and made available to researchers. For further information about the University Archives and its policies, see <http://hul.harvard.edu/huarc/>.

DASH (Digital Archive of Scholarship at Harvard) will receive the electronic copy from ProQuest. That copy will be the official library's circulating copy.

# References

*The Chicago Manual of Style*. 15th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Crews, Kenneth D. *Copyright Law and the Doctoral Dissertation*. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest, 2000.

Day, Robert A. and Barbara Gastel. *How to Write & Publish a Scientific Paper*. 6th ed. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2006.

*MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*. 3rd ed. New York, NY: Modern Language Association of America, 2008.

Strunk, William. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York, NY: Penguin Press, 2005.

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Chicago guides to writing, editing, and publishing. 7th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

## Services and Information

### Copy Services in the Harvard Square Area

*(Quality may vary with equipment and care taken.)*

Gnomon Copy, 1308 Massachusetts Avenue; (617) 491-1111, <http://gnomonhs.com/>

Harvard Printing and Publications Services, Science Center, 1 Oxford St., B10; (617) 495-7500

FedEx Office Print & Ship Center, 1 Mifflin Place; (617) 497-0125

### Bookbinders

*(Prices and time required vary; some binderies charge a premium for rush jobs.)*

Acme Bookbinding, 100 Cambridge Street, Charlestown, MA; (617) 242-1100; [www.acmebook.com](http://www.acmebook.com)

Wells Bindery, 54 Stearns Street, Waltham, MA; (781) 893-3050

For names and addresses of other binderies, consult the Library Binding Institute website:

<http://www.lbibinders.org/links/members.html>

### Questions on the Physical Requirements of the Dissertation

Questions about physical requirements for the dissertation set by GSAS should be referred to the FAS Registrar's Office, (617) 496-4182 or (617) 495-1489.

## Comments or Suggestions

Submit comments or suggestions about this booklet, or descriptions of particularly good or bad experiences with any company listed on this page, in a brief letter or e-mail to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Office of Student Affairs, Holyoke Center, Room 350, Cambridge, MA 02138; [studaff@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:studaff@fas.harvard.edu).

Call the Registrar's Office at (617) 495-1489 with any questions.

# Dissertation Submission Checklists

## Final Format Check

- ☐ Is every page of the dissertation correctly numbered? (page 2)
- ☐ Does the body of the text begin with Page 1? (page 2)
- ☐ Is the pagination continuous? Are all pages included? (page 2)
- ☐ Is the Dissertation Acceptance Certificate unnumbered, and the first page of the dissertation? (page 11)
- ☐ Is the placement of page numbers consistent throughout the manuscript? (page 2)
- ☐ Is the title page formatted correctly? (pages 2 and 3)
- ☐ Is the author's name, in full, on the title page of the dissertation and the abstract? (pages 3 and 4)
- ☐ Does the name read the same on both? (pages 3 and 4)
- ☐ Does the copyright page follow the title page? (pages 4 and 5)
- ☐ Is the abstract included after the copyright page, and is it formatted consistently with the rest of the manuscript? (page 4)
- ☐ Does the abstract include the title of the dissertation, the author's name, and the dissertation advisor's name? (page 4)
- ☐ Is the title on the abstract the same as that on the title page? (page 4)
- ☐ Are the margins 1" on the left and one inch on the top, bottom, and right? (page 10)
- ☐ Is the font size 10-12? (page 10)
- ☐ Are references in the form of footnotes, *not* endnotes? (pages 5-6)
- ☐ Are all charts, graphs, and other illustrative materials perfectly legible? (pages 7-11)

## Checklist for Submission at the Registrar's Office

In addition to the successful and full online submission of the dissertation, including the publishing agreement, supplemental files, and payment of all fees due, each student is required to submit the following to the Registrar's Office:

\_ Signed **Dissertation Acceptance Certificate**

The Dissertation Acceptance Certificate should be prepared by the department or the student. A template for the document can be obtained from the Department.

\_ Completed **Survey of Earned Doctorates** or a printed confirmation of completion (see below)

\_ Completed **Survey of Postgraduate Plans**

\_ Completed **Student Exit Interview**

The Survey of Earned Doctorates can be completed online at <https://sed.norc.org/survey>. A copy of completion confirmation email, or a completion certificate can be printed and submitted to the Registrar's Office.

The Survey of Postgraduate Plans and the Student Exit Interview are available on the Registrar's website. [http://registrar.fas.harvard.edu/fasro/grad/phd\\_packet.jsp?cat=grad&subcat=information](http://registrar.fas.harvard.edu/fasro/grad/phd_packet.jsp?cat=grad&subcat=information)