



Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Policy

One of the primary goals of Theses and Dissertations being electronic is timely and increased access to these documents. Beginning with October 2014 graduation, the final copy of any thesis or dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Graduate College Degree at The University of Vermont must be submitted electronically in PDF format to ProQuest. ProQuest will subsequently provide a copy of the thesis or dissertation to ScholarWorks, The University of Vermont institutional repository. The Graduate College will not accept paper copy submissions after May 2014.

One of the advantages of ETDs is the ability to embed files and hyperlinks into a PDF document. Embedded files, whenever possible, must use standard file formats such as .bmp, .jpg, .gif, or .tif for graphics, .mpeg for video and .wav or .mp3 for audio. Exceptions to standard file formats must be approved by the Graduate College. Embedding files and using hyperlinks are not required. In the interest of preserving the integrity of theses and dissertations, the student in consultation with their advisor must ensure the stability and availability of critical data.

The submission process may only begin once a student has completed a format check with the Graduate College and has successfully defended. Furthermore, any thesis or dissertation submitted before the receipt of the Defense Examination Record will not be evaluated by the Graduate College. To begin the process of electronic submission, students should double check that the electronic file is in the proper format and that it conforms to the appearance standards set forth in the ETS Style Guide. The student will submit a PDF copy of the thesis or dissertation that is unchanged in format and substance from the approved copy to ProQuest. Students will also be required to upload a signed Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Rights and Permissions Form at the time of submission. Once successfully uploaded to ProQuest, the Graduate College Reviewers will be able to view and approve the thesis or dissertation. Graduation requirements are not considered complete until the Graduate College has approved the final version of the thesis or dissertation on the ProQuest portal.

There are several situations in which a student should consider restricting access to their work. The University of Vermont offers three embargo options: six months, one year and two years. These options are available while uploading the PDF to ProQuest. The embargo period begins from the date the Graduate College approves the thesis or dissertation and lasts for the selected period of time. If you select an embargo, your thesis or dissertation will not be available until the end of the embargo period. ***Important note:*** It is the student's responsibility to renew an embargo through both ProQuest and the UVM libraries should more time be necessary. Students

should log into ProQuest to request additional time and also send an e-mail to both gradcoll@uvm.edu and scholarworks@uvm.edu. The e-mail should include the student's name, year of graduation, degree and the additional amount of time needed.

Scenarios when an embargo should be considered include but are not limited to:

1. If your work is based on data generated through research that will support other publications from people on the research team (such as your advisor), it may be necessary to refrain from releasing that data, as it underlies your thesis/dissertation, while other publications are prepared. The embargo options in these situations should be discussed with your committee and research team.
2. If you plan to apply for a patent based on research that is discussed in your dissertation, you should be aware of the rules governing prior publication of material for which a patent is sought. Generally, once patent applications publish their ideas or invention, they have a one-year window. After one year, the applicant's own publication may be considered "prior art" that could prevent the issuance of a patent. Since electronic distribution of your dissertation through either ProQuest or Scholar Works is publication for this purpose, an embargo will delay the beginning of this one-year time clock against a potential patent application. By selecting a two-year embargo, therefore, you will have a total of three years (two year embargo plus one year window after publication) to submit a patent application.
3. If your thesis/dissertation contains data or material that was generated pursuant to a grant or contract and the thesis/dissertation is subject to review by the sponsor or grantor prior to publication, you should select at least a six month embargo. If you are unsure whether your research falls into this area, please review The University of Vermont's [Export Controls Policy](#).
4. If you are planning to publish all or part of your thesis/dissertation and know that publishers in your field consider open access electronic thesis/dissertations to be a prior publication, you may want to consider an embargo or check on their open access policy before submitting your thesis/dissertation.