Millersville University
Graduate Studies

Thesis & Dissertation Guidelines and Requirements

Revised October 2025

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Introduction

A Master's Thesis or Doctoral Dissertation serves as a contribution to a field of study through the knowledge and demonstration of scholarship and research techniques that represent the culmination of your graduate studies. You will take justifiable pride in this project since it not only satisfies a degree requirement but also positions you within your discipline and advances your field of study with original work, especially when your manuscript is made available to other scholars and readers worldwide.

Please read these pages carefully before preparation, understanding this tool is to be used in conjunction with guidance from your program faculty and advisory committee. We encourage high standards of accuracy and soundness of research. Significant variances in these guidelines should be arranged through consultation with the Graduate Dean.

As a condition of graduation, each student's project must be electronically submitted for inclusion in the University's digital repository, a free online archive of research created by the members of the University community.

RESEARCH AND SUPPORT

Research Support Funding

Several sources of on-campus funding are available for undergraduate and graduate students seeking to conduct course-related or degree-related research. You may be eligible for this funding to aid you in completing your thesis or presenting your thesis at professional conferences or meetings.

Student Research Grant Program - Both graduate and undergraduate students are eligible for these grants. Undergraduates can receive a maximum award of $500, and graduate students can receive up to $1000. This funding is made available through an Academic Affairs' performance funding allocation. Consult the Office of Grants, Sponsored Programs, and Research (OGSPR) for current deadlines, guidelines, and applications.

Noonan Endowment Fund Grant Program - Undergraduate and graduate students may also be eligible to apply for Noonan Grants. Current deadlines and information about Noonan Endowment Grants are available on OGSPR's website.

Undergraduate and graduate students should also consult their academic department to determine if additional department or university sources of funding are available to them.

Library Research Support

For support and consultation on using the research tools and resources available at McNairy Library, please visit the library website at http://www.library.millersville.edu/ or contact the library to make an appointment with a research librarian or subject librarian.

Policies on Research with Human Subjects or Animals

All systematic investigations involving human or animal subjects that are performed to meet academic requirements (e.g., thesis) or designed for public dissemination under the aegis of Millersville University require approval from the appropriate entity.

If your thesis or dissertation involves research using human subjects, you will need to follow the procedures to have your research approved by the IRB. Proposals requiring a full Board review must be submitted ten days in advance of the Board's meetings. A current meeting schedule as well as additional details on the IRB and their processes, are available at their website at https://www.millersville.edu/spra/irb/

If your thesis or dissertation involves research using animal subjects, you will need to have your research proposal approved by IACUC (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee). The Millersville University IACUC should review any research proposals that involve the use of laboratory animals and will work with grant seekers to ensure that the proposed research incorporates adequate safeguards for and appropriate treatment of laboratory animals.

FORMATTING AND SUBMISSION

Acceptable Formats

Before beginning the preparation of your manuscript, you should consult with your advisor concerning the proper style to be used for your discipline. Some of the style guides approved for disciplines at MU are:

- Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.
- American Psychological Association. Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.
- University of Chicago. Chicago Manual of Style.

Technical Requirements

Font/Type
Text is to be printed on one side of the page only. Use 8 ½ x 11 paper size settings. Use a typeface no smaller than 12-point. Times New Roman is the recommended font, and other fonts that are acceptable are Arial 12 and Bookman 12. Script and italicized are not acceptable except where necessary. You may use a larger size font for title page and chapter headings, but no larger than 18-point. Type-in tables, figures and appendices can be reduced but no smaller than 9-point and should be legible.

Line spacing
Each page must be double-spaced, with the exception of the title page, lists of tables, figures, table of contents, footnotes, endnotes, bibliography, and references. Those exceptions should be double-spaced between entries.

Margins
All pages should have 1-inch top, bottom, and side margins. You may have to adjust the header and footer of the page to 1 inch to be sure you have the required margins at both the bottom and top of the page. If you are planning on printing and binding your document, then it is best to have a left margin of 1.5 inches for those copies.

Pagination
Every page in your document, including those with tables and figures, must be counted. Use lower-case Roman numerals for the front matter and Arabic numbers for the text. No word "Page" or pagination embellishments (dashes or periods) are permitted. The title page does not show a number, though it is page i. The Approval page is typically page ii. The Abstract will typically begin on page iii. The text of the thesis/dissertation begins on page 1. Allow reasonable space between page numbers and text. Running headers are not permitted.

Page Number Placement
All page numbers in the body of the text can be centered at the top or bottom of the page, or in the lower or upper right-hand corner. Allow a reasonable distance between the page number and the text. A chapter page or page with a major heading, however should have the page number placed at the bottom center no matter where placed on the rest of the document. This may require creating the page as a separate document. If an illustration or chart prevents a page number placement, then still consider that a numbered page and continue the sequence on the next page.

Justification
Type may be left justified, which leaves a "ragged right" margin, or can be full justified, which creates equal margins on the left and right. All pages should be justified in the same manner.

Widows and Orphans
Widow and orphans are lines at the beginning or end of a paragraph that are left dangling at the top or bottom of the next page. You will want to avoid them as they are aesthetically distracting and break the flow of text for the reader.

Footnotes/Endnotes
Footnotes are single-spaced, with a double space between each note. Generally, footnotes are the same font and size as the body of the text, and style and placement are consistent. Footnotes should be numbered throughout the document. Endnotes are used solely and not in conjunction with footnotes.

Front Matter
Front matter refers to the pages in front of the main text of the document. Front matter pages are numbers with lower-case Roman numerals. Pages should be in this order:

- Title page
- Dedication page (optional)
- Acknowledgements (optional for thesis)
- Approval page
- Preface
- Abstract page
- Table of contents (optional for thesis)
- List of tables (optional for thesis)
- List of figures (optional for thesis)

The **title page** should appear exactly as in the sample Title Page provided. Use your legal name as it appears on your student record. Though not required, you may place the copyright line below the name line, using the word "Copyright" or the copyright symbol ©. It will appear as "© 2016 Jane A. Doe". See page 6 for more Copyright information. The date line should list the date of degree conferral (month and year), not the date of defense. The title page is page number i, but is not listed on the page.

A **dedication** page recognizes those who have inspired you or supported you during your graduate studies, but not those who assisted you in your academic research, which would be done in an **acknowledgements** page. Acknowledgements typically include advisors, committee members, professors, librarians, and those who provided research assistance.

A final copy of your **approval page** should appear exactly as in the sample Approval Page and include the signatures and date of your chair and committee members. Upon final submission to the University Repository, the approval page must be replaced with typed signatures, and the phrase "*signatures are on file in the Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning". The approval page with original signatures is to be sent to the Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning.

A **preface** is the author's own personal statement about the reason for and/or nature of the work. It can include experiences during the writing and research. A preface may include acknowledgements if thanking those who helped you is directly related to this statement.

Every thesis or dissertation must include an **abstract** that appears exactly as in the sample Abstract Page. It is a summary of your work intended to inform the prospective reader of its content. Abstracts include a statement of the research and a brief summary of methods used, results and conclusions. The abstract for a thesis must be no longer than 150 words. The abstract for a dissertation must be no longer than 350 words (2450 characters). An abstract that is longer will be cut by the limits of the Repository.

A **table of contents** is an outline of your thesis or dissertation. A detailed table of contents is useful for the reader since there is no index. Be sure your headings are listed exactly as in the text. Most word processing software generated tables of contents are acceptable, and a sample Table of Contents page is provided for you.

Back Matter

- Appendices
- Glossary (opt.)
- Bibliography/References

Appendices
Be sure materials are properly presented in an appendix and would not be better placed in the body of the text. Multiple appendices should be labeled appropriately (A, B, C etc., for example). Cover pages are not necessary. Appendices are part of the document and must conform to required margin sizes and page numbering.

Illustrative Materials
Illustrative material may include charts, graphs, tables, photos, maps, symbols, etc. You may include them in the body of the text or in an appendix. The explanation should precede the item. With whole page items pagination rules still apply. Photos should be of sharp image quality. Reduce oversized items to fit on an 8.5 x 11 page. Each item should have a number and a caption.

Glossary
If you believe a glossary of important terms is needed for your document, then you should include one near the end of your document after your appendices. This can include technical or foreign terms that are unfamiliar to your readers.

Bibliography/References
Properly acknowledging the outside research you use in your work is crucial. List every outside source individually. Different disciplines may use different formats, so consult with your committee for style.

Submitting Your Document:

Be sure your document is properly and completely formatted.

The Approval Page should be replaced with typed names and "*signature on file in the Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning" noted, as no signatures should appear in the document to be uploaded to the repository.

Be sure to submit the **original** Approval Page with actual signatures and the "Permission to Digitize Thesis, Dissertation or Scholarly Project" form to The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning.

You are also required to supply keywords appropriate for your topic. These words will be searchable by researchers interested in your topic to help them more efficiently locate your publication in our repository. Choose keywords that best describe the content of your document.

The current embargo option is up to 3 years, after which there is an auto release. Some considerations for choosing an embargo are patents pending, sensitive or classified information, or impact on an existing or potential publishing agreement. A student can opt out of the electronic repository only by request to the Graduate Dean. Repository items have a permanent URL, and the institution is committed to maintaining the service into the future.

Submit all documents electronically to the Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning no later than 2 weeks before the end of the semester. See additional information at www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php

Copyright:

As you submit your thesis/dissertation/scholarly project to the Repository, we recommend that you select this Creative Commons copyright license:

> **Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs**
> **CC BY-NC-ND**: This license is the most restrictive of the six main licenses, only allowing others to download your works and share them with others as long as they credit you, but they can't change them in any way or use them commercially.
>
> If you would like to choose a different Creative Commons copyright license agreement, please select from the following:
>
> - **Attribution**
> **CC BY**: This license lets others distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon your work, even commercially, as long as they credit you for the original creation. This is the most accommodating of licenses offered. Recommended for maximum dissemination and use of licensed materials.
>
> - **Attribution-ShareAlike**
> **CC BY-SA**: This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon your work even for commercial purposes, as long as they credit you and license their new creations under the identical terms. This license is often compared to "copyleft" free and open source software licenses. All new works based on yours will carry the same license, so any derivatives will also allow commercial use. This is the license used by Wikipedia, and is recommended for materials that would benefit from incorporating content from Wikipedia and similarly licensed projects.
>
> - **Attribution-NoDerivs**
> **CC BY-ND**: This license allows for redistribution, commercial and non-commercial, as long as it is passed along unchanged and in whole, with credit to you.
>
> - **Attribution-NonCommercial**
> **CC BY-NC**: This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon your work non-commercially, and although their new works must also acknowledge you and be non-commercial, they don't have to license their derivative works on the same terms.
>
> - **Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike**
> **CC BY-NC-SA**: This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon your work non-commercially, as long as they credit you and license their new creations.

Creative Commons copyright licenses: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/

Copyright ownership means you have the exclusive right to print, reprint, copy, sell and prepare derivative works based on your work. Copyright law protects an author against infringement of these rights. You may insert the copyright notice on your title page, though it is not required. You may choose to register your claim to copyright by requesting a TX application form from the Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington D.C. 20559 or consult their website at http://lcweb.loc.gov/copyright/. This makes a public record of your copyright and provides additional protections if another party violates your copyright.

THESIS

Definition of a Thesis. Why to Complete One.

A master's thesis is an approved creative project or an interpretive, analytical work that offers evidence of an original point of view, supported by original research and the results of that research. In completing a thesis, the student demonstrates a capacity for independent research, an ability to organize and present empirical evidence logically, and proficiency in the use of scholarly language. The final written thesis demonstrates originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate format, organization, and thorough documentation. In certain circumstances, a thesis may be a literary review.

A thesis is different from a research project in that it is greater in scale, complexity, and time to produce. A thesis will result in an electronically accessible paper that is submitted to the academic department and the MU Institutional Repository. If you are completing a research report rather than a thesis, you should consult with your advisor concerning requirements. Research reports are not submitted to The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning. Students must fulfill departmental requirements in the completion of a research report.

Students enrolled in programs of study in which there is currently no defined thesis option can explore completing a thesis by obtaining permission from the program coordinator.

If you are planning to pursue a doctoral program, you may want to strongly consider completing a thesis as part of your master's degree requirements. Many doctoral programs look to this as a requirement for admission.

The master's degree programs at Millersville that offer an option for a thesis:

M.Ed. Art

M.Ed. Elementary Education

M.Ed. Language and Literacy Education

M.Ed. Early Childhood Education

M.Ed. Gifted Education

M.A. English

M.Ed. English

M.A. French, German, Spanish

M.Ed. French, German, Spanish

M.A. History

M.Ed. Math

M.S. Clinical Psychology

M.S. School Psychology

M.Ed. School Counseling

M.Ed. Special Education

M.Ed. Sport Management

M.S. Technology & Innovation

Choosing a Topic and Committee Chair

The student is responsible for selecting a topic and finding a graduate faculty member who is willing to serve as a chair. In general, the student should follow these steps in selecting a topic and a chair:

1. Begin by exploring topics that match your interests, knowledge, and skills.
2. Discuss your ideas for the master's thesis with faculty members who have an interest and expertise in the area of your selected topic. You may explore possible topics with several faculty members before selecting your final topic.
3. Select a chair based on mutual interests and the availability of the faculty member to direct the thesis project during the appropriate semester(s). Keep in mind that a thesis is rarely completed in one semester; often, a full year is utilized to complete it.
4. The committee chair must be a member of the graduate faculty at Millersville University.
5. Note that departments may use different procedures for thesis proposal approval: some departments require a thorough discussion and a written tentative outline, while other departments through a more detailed proposal.

Timeline

Deadlines and timelines may fluctuate depending on your academic discipline, your topic, and your advisor. This timeline is intended as a general guideline.

One year prior to graduation:	Explore possible topics on your own and with potential faculty advisors.
11 months prior to graduation:	Select a topic and advisor and consider additional committee members (at least three committee members are required).
10 months prior to graduation:	Thesis proposal submitted for approval (depending on your department, requirements for approval may vary). Your thesis committee should also be finalized at this time. Regardless of approval requirements, a "Thesis Proposal Approval Form" should be signed and submitted to the department office for your academic program. **This **must** be completed before the semester in which you plan to apply for graduation.
9 months prior to graduation:	Begin research; prepare abstract, bibliography, and outline.
5 months prior to graduation:	Meet with your advisor to review thesis progress (at a minimum). During the entire thesis process, you should remain in communication with your advisor to ensure successful progress.
In the semester you plan to complete your thesis:	Fill out the "Thesis/Dissertation/Scholarly Project Request Form" to register for the thesis course in your program. (Generally, the thesis is a 3 or 6-credit course registered for in one semester; however, it will most likely take you more than one semester to complete the thesis. Generally, a thesis from start to finish will take about a year).
3-4 months prior to graduation:	Give the first draft of the thesis to your advisor.

2 months prior to graduation:	Submit the revised, final version of the thesis to your advisor and committee (allow a few weeks for review before defense). Schedule a thesis defense presentation with your advisor and committee. Allow time for any requested revisions. ***Note: a thesis must be defended and recorded 30 days prior to the commencement ceremony to qualify for participation. Please plan accordingly.***
1 month prior to graduation:	Thesis grade should be recorded via Banner web grading by the student's advisor, or via the standard grade change form if the student had previously taken an "incomplete."
2 weeks prior to graduation:	An electronic copy of the final form of the thesis and other required documents must be submitted to Graduate Studies and Adult Learning. Please consult with Thesis Checklist before for final submission.
Graduation:	Attend Commencement Ceremony. You must purchase or rent regalia. Contact the University Store for more details.
Following Graduation:	Follow the directions provided by the Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning to upload your thesis to the MU Institutional Repository.

Roles & Responsibilities of Student, Committee, Advisor, Coordinator & Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning

Student

The graduate student has the primary responsibility for the master's thesis from the creation of the subject matter to the preparation of the thesis document. The student is responsible for ensuring that the thesis manuscript meets accepted standards for scholarly writing and has thoroughly proofread the documents for accuracy, including spelling, punctuation, and grammar. The student should read MU Thesis & Dissertation Guidelines and Requirements thoroughly and know the requirements and guidelines for preparation of the thesis. The student should also identify and become familiar with a recognized academic style manual appropriate to his/her academic discipline. Both documents should be used in the preparation of the thesis.

Thesis Advisor

The thesis advisor, who must be a member of the MU Graduate Faculty, accepts and assumes the major responsibility to work directly with the graduate student in the research or creative project. The thesis advisor will work closely with the student in all aspects of the thesis experience, including the development of the research proposal, the implementation of the research design, the analysis of the data or supporting evidence, and the writing of the thesis. The thesis advisor has the responsibility to edit the thesis for accuracy in terms of both content and format. Prior to the submission of the thesis to the thesis committee, it is the responsibility of the thesis advisor to review the document and ensure that it is of high quality in content and literary style.

Thesis Committee

The student's departmental thesis committee is comprised of the thesis advisor and at least two additional members. The majority of the committee must be MU Graduate Faculty; in other words, one member of a three-person committee may be an outside member. The outside member should be a subject matter expert and must be approved by the department. Each department determines the composition of the thesis committee and the roles of its members. The members of the committee should be available to the student for consultation and advisement.

Graduate Coordinator

The graduate coordinator monitors thesis progress and ensures that the student is making acceptable progress on the thesis in a timely manner for the student’s intended graduation.

The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning

The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning verifies receipt of all needed documentation and provides directions to the student for uploading thesis to the MU Institutional Repository.

Thesis Grading Policy

Theses are evaluated by the student’s thesis committee on the basis of H (Honors), P (Pass), F (Fail), or I (Incomplete). Requirements for receiving a grade of “H” are set individually by departments. Please speak with your advisor regarding departmental grading guidelines. An incomplete grade may be assigned to a thesis, and you will have one year to complete the thesis and have the incomplete changed to an assigned grade by the department.

Checklist for Thesis

- **Thesis Proposal Approval Form** is submitted to the Department Office for your Academic Program. All committee members must be assigned and listed before submission.
- **Thesis/Dissertation Request Form** is submitted to the advisor. The Dean of College is the final signature and forwards the form to the Registrar for registration.
- Complete the online form, **Application for Graduation,** found on The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning Student Forms Center website.
- **Thesis Examination Report** is completed by the advisor after initial defense and submitted to The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning.
- Required pages are in proper order:
  - Title Page
  - Approval Page
  - Abstract Page
  - Dedications (opt.)
  - Acknowledgments (opt.)
  - Table of Contents (opt.)
  - List of Tables (opt.)
  - List of Figures (opt.)
  - List of Abbreviations (opt.)
  - Body
  - Appendices
  - Glossary (opt.)
  - References/Endnotes (can be incorporated at the end of each chapter)(opt.)
  - References/Bibliography
  - Curriculum Vitae (opt.)
- Copyright permission letter(s) from copyright owner(s) must be included if copyrighted material is used outside of the guidelines of fair use.
- A letter from the owner of the software license granting permission to use their software must be attached if executable software owned by another party is used in the thesis.
- Submit the following to The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning via email:
  - **Final document in PDF format** (**Abstract** and **Thesis Approval** pages should include typed names; add the note "Signatures on File" to the Thesis Approval form.)
  - **Signed copie**s of the following as separate documents:
    - Abstract
    - Approval Page
    - Thesis Examination Report
    - Permission to Digitize
- Follow instructions provided by The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning to upload your Dissertation to the Millersville Institutional Repository. Include 1-6 keywords.

Millersville University

Office of Graduate Studies & Adult Learning
717-871-7171
https://www.millersville.edu/gsal

THESIS/NON-THESIS PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

***STUDENT**: Fill out the following fields and forward to your thesis committee chair*

Student Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

Degree: _____ Major Area: _____

Thesis Title: _____

_____

Expected completion date: _____

*Human Use Committee (IRB) chair approval (as required): _____ _____

*Animal Use Committee (IACUC) chair approval (as required): _____

*roval

**If IRB approval is required, the IRB protocol form (available on the IP .ed with this form. If approval of IACUC is required, appropriate documentation and signature of IACUC chair must.*

EXAMPLE ONLY – PLEASE ACCESS CURRENT VERSION OF FORM ONLINE AT www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php

APPROVALS

Chair: Approved ____ Not Approved_ _____

_____ _____
Chair Signature Date

Member: Approved ____ N omments: _____

_____ _____ _____
Member Signa Date

Member: Ap oved_____ Comments: _____

_____ _____ _____
Member Signa Date

Member: Approved ____ Not Approved_____ Comments: _____

_____ _____
Member Signature Date

Member: Approved ____ Not Approved_____ Comments: _____

_____ _____
Member Signature Date

Suggested accompaniments to this form as per your department requirements. Approved form should be routed to the Department Office for your academic program. Include this approved form as a separate document when you submit your thesis packet via email to AdultLearning@millersille.edu. A copy of this form WITHOUT SIGNATURES will be part of your Thesis/Dissertation PDF.

Millersville University

Office of Graduate Studies & Adult Learning
717-871-7171
https://www.millersville.edu/gsal

THESIS/DISSERTATION/SCHOLARLY PROJECT REQUEST FORM

***STUDENT**: Fill out the following fields and submit to Advisor.*

Student Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____ _____

Graduate Program: _____ Expected _____

…mple: Fall 2026)

Thesis/Dissertation/Project Advisor name: _____ _____

_____ _____

Student Signature _____

ADVISOR: *Please select* one option and complete course

Course Information Fall: _____ Winter: _ Summer: _____

☐ **Thesis**

Subject: _____ Cou… Credits: _____

Topic Title: _____ _____

Abbreviated Title for Tran… _____

☐ **Dissertation /** ☐ **Sch…**

Subject: ___ …se #: _____ Credits: _____

Topic Titl… _____

Abb… …ript *(max 22 spaces)*: _____

_____ _____ _____

Thesis/L… …ion/Project Advisor Signature Date

EXAMPLE ONLY – PLEASE ACCESS CURRENT VERSION OF FORM ONLINE AT www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php

APPROVAL: *Signatures required for approval and payment authorization. Please submit to the Registrar's Office.*

_____ _____

Department Chair Date

_____ _____

Graduate Coordinator Date

_____ _____

Dean of College Date

For Registrar's Office Use Only: CRN _____ c: Office of Graduate Studies & Adult Learning

Millersville University

Office of Graduate Studies & Adult Learning
717-871-7171
https://www.millersville.edu/gsal

THESIS EXAMINATION REPORT

Student Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

Department: _____ # of credits: _____ s.h.

Program: _____

Title of Thesis: _____ _____

_____ _____

Date of Examination: _____

Action taken on Thesis:

_____ Approved

_____ Approved with revisions suggested by committe , chair

_____ Schedule a re-exam after corrections or re

_____ Not approved (Attach specific reason

_____ Other (Please explain)

Names of Examining Committee

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Chair of Committee Signature Date

**Please note this is for notification of approval only. Grade must be submitted via Banner web grading to appear officially on transcript.*

EXAMPLE ONLY – PLEASE ACCESS CURRENT VERSION OF FORM ONLINE AT www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php

Include this approved form as a separate document when you submit your thesis packet via email to AdultLearning@millersille.edu. See Thesis/Dissertation Process Checklist at for more information (www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php)

An original copy should be kept by the Program Coordinator, Advisor, and Student.

Millersville University

Office of Graduate Studies & Adult Learning
717-871-7171
https://www.millersville.edu/gsal

PERMISSION TO DIGITIZE THESIS, DISSERTATION, OR SCHOLARLY PROJECT

Permission to scan and redistribute

I grant to Millersville University of Pennsylvania the nonexclusive right to create a digital version of the above-named publication (the "Manuscript") and to make my Manuscript available as part of the collection the MU Institutional Repository. I understand that the full text of my Manuscript will be available to the public in form, and I give my permission for the University to make my manuscript available online.

Non-exclusive and perpetual license

I understand that this permission constitutes a non-exclusive, perpetual, royal I retain all other rights to the copyright in my Manuscript, including the right to use it in other works s ks.

Authority to grant license

I represent and warrant that I am the sole author and owner of the ript, and that I have full and sole authority to grant this permission. I also represent that this Man best of my knowledge, infringe or violate any rights of others. I have obtained any third-party ri

EXAMPLE ONLY – PLEASE ACCESS CURRENT VERSION OF FORM ONLINE AT www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php

STUDENT: *Please complete the fields below and sig*

Author: _____ Manuscript Date: _____

Thesis/Dissertation/Scholarly Project Ti _____

_____ _____

Address: _____ _____

Email: _____ _____

Phone Num _____

Permissi y:

_____ _____

Author's Signature Date

Copy to be kept by the student.

Include this signed form as a separate document when you submit your thesis packet via email to AdultLearning@millersille.edu. See Thesis/Dissertation Process Checklist at for more information (www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php)

Signed copy of this form to be uploaded by the student to the McNairy Institutional Repository.

Sample Pages
(Sample Title Page)

(Thesis Title)

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Millersville University of Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

of Master of Art/Education/Science

By (Student's Name)

(Date/Month & Year)

(Sample Approval Page to be inserted immediately following Title Page)

This Thesis for the Master of Education Degree by

John A. Smith

has been approved on behalf of the

Graduate School by

Thesis Committee:

_____
Research Advisor

_____
Committee Member

_____
Committee Member

(Create as many lines for committee members as necessary)

_____
Date

NOTE TO STUDENT: Include this approved form as a separate document when you submit your thesis packet via email to AdultLearning@millersille.edu. A copy of this form WITHOUT SIGNATURES should be included as part of your Thesis PDF. See Thesis/Dissertation Process Checklist at for more information (www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php)

(Sample Abstract Page to be inserted following Approval Page)

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

(INSERT THESIS TITLE)

By

(Student Name)

Millersville University, (Year)

Millersville, Pennsylvania

Directed by (Advisor's Name)

Your Abstract should begin here, and begin with the STATEMENT OF PROBLEM followed by the SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION (300 words).

Signature of Investigator _____ Date_____

NOTE TO STUDENT: Include this approved form as a separate document when you submit your thesis packet via email to AdultLearning@millersille.edu. A copy of this form WITHOUT SIGNATURES should be included as part of your Thesis PDF. See Thesis/Dissertation Process Checklist at for more information (www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php)

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DISSERTATION

Definition of a Dissertation

In order to achieve a doctorate degree, a doctoral student is required to complete the theory, research, and presentation of a dissertation. Writing a dissertation requires an ability to do competent research, organize materials effectively, write clearly, and make sound interpretations and conclusions from facts presented. Each statement within your dissertation should be supported by a reference to published scientific literature or by your own original work. However, a dissertation shouldn't repeat the details of the published sources' critical thinking and analysis; it should instead use the published work's results as scientific fact and refer readers to it as a source for additional detail. The essence of a dissertation is the demonstration of critical thinking skills, not merely presenting experimental data. Dissertations are expected to make a new and creative contribution to a field of study. A dissertation will result in a manuscript that is submitted to the MU Institutional Repository and the academic department.

Choosing a Topic and Dissertation Chair

The student is responsible for selecting a topic and finding a graduate faculty member who is willing to serve as a committee chair. Some things you can consider when choosing a dissertation topic:

1. Begin by exploring topics that match your interests, knowledge and skills.
2. Consider what is happening in your professional field. New innovations can be explored further.
3. Choose a topic that will keep you engaged; one that interests you long term.
4. Discuss your ideas for the dissertation with faculty members who have an interest and expertise in the area of your selected topic. You may explore possible topics with several faculty members before selecting your final topic.
5. Select a committee chair based on mutual interests and the availability of the faculty member to direct the dissertation project during the appropriate semester(s). Things to consider:
    - Is the professor someone with whom you find it helpful and easy to brainstorm?
    - Have you found the feedback on earlier work with that faculty member helpful?
    - Is her or his intellectual and professional approach one you find compatible?
    - Do you feel that the professor has an interest in your research and will be a strong advocate for you on the dissertation committee?
6. The committee chair and at least one committee member must be full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty at Millersville University or joint institution if a joint program. Exceptions must be approved by the Graduate Dean.
7. Submit a formal request for your chair selection, as required by your program.

Roles & Responsibilities of Student, Committee, Advisor, Coordinator & Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning

Student
The doctoral student has the primary responsibility for the dissertation from the creation of the subject matter to the preparation of the final defense. The student is responsible for ensuring that the dissertation manuscript meets accepted standards for scholarly writing and has thoroughly proofread the documents for accuracy, including spelling, punctuation, and grammar. The student should read this document thoroughly and know the requirements and guidelines. The student should also identify and become familiar with a recognized academic style manual appropriate to his/her academic discipline. Both documents should be used in the preparation of the dissertation.

Dissertation Committee Chair
The dissertation committee chair, who must be a member of the MU or joint program institution graduate faculty, accepts and assumes the major responsibility to work directly with the graduate student in the research or creative project. The dissertation committee chair will work closely with the student in all aspects of the dissertation experience, including the development of the research proposal, the implementation of the research design, the analysis of the data or supporting evidence, and the writing of the dissertation. The dissertation committee chair has the responsibility to edit the dissertation for accuracy in terms of both content and format. Prior to the submission of the dissertation to the dissertation committee, it is the responsibility of the dissertation committee chair to review the document and ensure that it is of high quality in content and literary style.

Dissertation Committee
The student's departmental dissertation committee is comprised of the dissertation advisor and at least two at-large voting members. Committee members should be chosen together, with your chair, to compose a complementary dissertation committee. They are often chosen to provide thematic or methodological expertise. Or they may be faculty with whom you have a good “brainstorming” relationship, or who you find to be particularly good readers. In many cases, they will not be involved in the everyday progress of the dissertation but will weigh in at the discretion of the dissertation chair. Qualified persons include: graduate faculty, instructors, lecturers, retired and emeriti professors, and other University faculty or staff. Your dissertation chair will determine their eligibility for dissertation committee service.

Doctoral Graduate Coordinator
The Doctoral Program Coordinator monitors dissertation progress and ensures that the student is making acceptable progress on the dissertation in a timely manner for the student’s intended graduation.

Graduate Studies and Adult Learning
The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning verifies receipt of all needed documentation and provides directions to the student for uploading dissertation to the MU Institutional Repository.

Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal is a persuasive and comprehensive statement of the student's research interests. A statement of the proposed study should include an overall objective, timeline, theoretical framework, research statement, research methods, discussion of variables, collection of evidence, and potential outcomes. A copy of the dissertation proposal should be forwarded to the dissertation committee several weeks in advance of the first meeting. The full dissertation committee will meet with the student at least one time prior to approval submission. Other faculty may be involved in the proposal's review, but the committee chair and both committee members must sign the Dissertation Proposal Approval Form. The signed approval form will be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning. It is expected that the student will wait until this submission to conduct the bulk of their dissertation data collection and research.

Dissertation Defense

The dissertation defense is a formal, public event in which the student makes an oral presentation to the dissertation committee. The committee chair and at least one committee member must be present at the defense. During the defense, the student is expected to establish the validity and significance of the research and be able to explain and defend all methods, findings, and conclusions. Expectations will vary by discipline and department, so it is important for the student to communicate with the dissertation committee chair on how to prepare.

Students should contact their departments to schedule the dissertation defense. Copies of the dissertation should be sent to committee members at no later than three weeks prior to the defense. The defense will be an open presentation by the student on the main aspects of the research reported in the dissertation, followed by questions, comments, and discussion. The dissertation chair will moderate the discussion. The dissertation committee and invited departmental faculty in attendance will then deliberate to decide whether the defense has been satisfactory. The dissertation chair will report back to the student with a signed Approval Page or a request for revisions, to include a timeframe of when revisions are to be completed.

Timeline

Deadlines and timeline may fluctuate depending on your academic discipline, your topic, and your committee chair. This timeline is intended as a general guideline.

One year prior to graduation:		Explore possible topics on your own and with potential faculty advisors.
11 months prior to graduation:	Dissertation Seminar	Select topic and committee chair. Also consider two additional committee members.
10 months prior to graduation:	Dissertation Seminar	Defend the comprehensive paper or equivalent requirement.
10 months prior to graduation	Dissertation Seminar	Develop proposal. Include: 1) Problem Statement/Research Question, 2) Literature Review, 3) Research Methodology.
9 months prior to graduation	Dissertation I	Oral defense of proposal. Prepare "Dissertation Proposal Approval Form" and send through process for signatures (regardless of your program approval requirements). Your dissertation committee should also be finalized at this time.

9 months prior to graduation	Dissertation I	Submit IRB proposal. Begin research; prepare abstract, bibliography and outline.
8 months prior to graduation:	Dissertation I	Continued research and writing.
5 months prior to graduation:	Dissertation I	Meet with your committee chair to review progress (at a minimum). During the entire dissertation process, you should remain in communication with your committee chair to ensure successful progress.
5 months prior to graduation:	Dissertation I	Submit a completed "Thesis/Dissertation/Scholarly Project Request Form to the Registrar to register for your Dissertation II course.
3-4 months prior to graduation:	Dissertation II	Give the first draft of the dissertation to your committee chair. Submit the "Application for Graduation". Indicate your intention to attend the Commencement Ceremony.
2 months prior to graduation:	Dissertation II	Submit the revised, final version of the dissertation to your advisor and committee (allow a few weeks for review before defense). Schedule a dissertation defense presentation with your advisor and committee. Allow time for any requested revisions. ***Note: a dissertation must be defended and recorded 30 days prior to the commencement ceremony to qualify for participation. Please plan accordingly.***
1 month prior to graduation:	Dissertation II	Dissertation grade should be recorded via Banner web grading by the student's committee chair, or via the standard grade change form if the student had previously taken an Incomplete grade. An electronic copy of the final form of the dissertation and other required documents must be submitted to The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning. Please refer to the Dissertation Checklist before final submission.
Graduation:		Attend Commencement Ceremony. You must purchase or rent regalia. Contact the University Store for more details.
Following Graduation:		Follow the directions provided by The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning to upload your dissertation to the MU Institutional Repository.

Continuous Enrollment

The continuous enrollment policy applies to all students writing a doctoral dissertation. Doctoral students must register for the required coursework each semester until the defense is complete. Failure to register will result in the student being charged a continuous enrollment fee of 1 dissertation credit, along with applicable late registration, technology, and activity fees. Exceptions to this policy are a one-semester extension to revise a defended dissertation or if the student's major professor is on leave or otherwise unavailable. In such a case, the approval of the Graduate Dean is required. In the case of serious medical circumstances, a student may request a leave of absence, also subject to the approval of the Graduate Dean. Retroactive approval will not be granted.

Dissertation Grading Policy

Dissertations are evaluated by the student's thesis committee on the basis of H (Honors), P (Pass), F (Fail), or I (Incomplete). Requirements for receiving a grade of "H" are set individually by programs. Please speak with your committee chair regarding program grading guidelines. An incomplete grade may be assigned to a dissertation, and you will have one year to complete the dissertation and have the incomplete changed to an assigned grade by the department. A continuous enrollment fee will be charged during this time.

Checklist for Dissertation

- Submit the signed **Dissertation Proposal Approval Form** to the Department Office for your academic program. All committee members must be assigned and listed before submission.
- Submit the **Dissertation Request Form** to your committee chair. Dean of College is the final signature and forwards the form to the Registrar for registration.
- Complete the online form, **Application for Graduation,** found on The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning Student Forms Center website.
- **Dissertation Examination Report** is completed by the committee chair after the defense and submitted to The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning. The chair also submits the final grade in Banner.
- Required pages are in proper order:
  - Title Page
  - Approval Page
  - Abstract Page
  - Dedications (opt.)
  - Acknowledgments (opt.)
  - Table of Contents
  - List of Tables
  - List of Figures
  - List of Abbreviations
  - Body
  - Appendices
  - Glossary (opt.)
  - References/Endnotes (can be incorporated at the end of each chapter) (opt.)
  - References/Bibliography
- Copyright permission letter(s) from copyright owner(s) must be included if copyrighted material is used outside of the guidelines of fair use.
- A letter from the owner of the software license granting permission to use their software must be attached if executable software owned by another party is used in the dissertation.
- Submit the following to The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning via email:
  - **Final document in PDF format** (**Abstract** and **Dissertation Approval** pages should include typed names; add the note "Signatures on File" to the Dissertation Approval form.)
  - **Signed copies** of the following as separate documents:
    - Abstract
    - Approval Page
    - Dissertation Examination Report
    - Permission to Digitize
- Follow instructions provided by The Office of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning to upload your Dissertation to the Millersville Institutional Repository. Include 1-6 keywords.
- Confirm that your committee chair has submitted a grade for dissertation credits.

Millersville University

Office of Graduate Studies & Adult Learning
717-871-7171
https://www.millersville.edu/gsal

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

***STUDENT**: Fill out the following fields and submit to dissertation committee chair.*

Student Name: _____ Student ID#: _____ _____

Degree: _____ Major Area: _____ _

Thesis Title: _____

_____ ____

Expected completion date: _____

*Human Use Committee (IRB) chair approval (as required): ___ _____
roval

*Animal Use Committee (IACUC) chair approval (as re _____
te of Approval

**If IRB approval is required, the IRB protocol form (availa be submitted with this form. If approval of IACUC is required, appropriate documentation and signature of IACUC c'*

EXAMPLE ONLY – PLEASE ACCESS CURRENT VERSION OF FORM ONLINE AT www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php

APPROVALS

Chair: Approved ____ Not A ments: _____

_____ ___ _____
Chair Signature Date

Member: Approv _____ Comments: _____

_____ _____ _____
Mer Date

Men Not Approved_____ Comments: _____

_____ _____ _____
Member ature Date

Member: Approved ____ Not Approved_____ Comments: _____

_____ _____
Member Signature Date

Member: Approved ____ Not Approved_____ Comments: _____

_____ _____
Member Signature Date

Approved form should be routed to the Department Office for your academic program. Include a signed copy of this approved form as a separate document when you submit your Dissertation packet via email to AdultLearning@millersille.edu. A copy of this form WITHOUT SIGNATURES will be part of your Dissertation PDF.

Millersville University

Office of Graduate Studies & Adult Learning
717-871-7171
https://www.millersville.edu/gsal

THESIS/DISSERTATION/SCHOLARLY PROJECT REQUEST FORM

***STUDENT**: Fill out the following fields and submit to Advisor.*

Student Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____ _____

Graduate Program: _____ Expected grad _____

: Fall 2026)

Thesis/Dissertation/Project Advisor name: _____ _____

_____ _____

Student Signature

ADVISOR: *Please select* one option and complete course inf

Course Information Fall: _____ Winter: ____ ummer: _____

☐ **Thesis**

Subject: _____ Course dits: _____

Topic Title: _____ _____

Abbreviated Title for Transcri _____

☐ **Dissertation /** ☐ **Scholar'**

Subject: _____ _____ Credits: _____

Topic Title: _ _____

Abbrevi *(max 22 spaces)*: _____

_____ _____ _____

Thesis Project Advisor Signature Date

APPROVAL: *Signatures required for approval and payment authorization. Please submit to the Registrar's Office.*

_____ _____

Department Chair Date

_____ _____

Graduate Coordinator Date

_____ _____

Dean of College Date

For Registrar's Office Use Only: CRN _____ c: Office of Graduate Studies & Adult Learning

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Millersville University

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https://www.millersville.edu/gsal

DISSERTATION/SCHOLARLY PROJECT EXAMINATION REPORT

Student Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

Department: _____

Program: _____

Title of Dissertation: _____

_____

Date of Examination: _____

Action taken on Dissertation/Scholarly Project:

_____ Approved

_____ Approved with revisions suggested by cor ked by chair

_____ Schedule a re-exam after correction made

_____ Not approved (Attach specific r

_____ Other (Please explain)

Names of Examining Com

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Chair of Committee Signature Date

**Please note this is for notification of approval only. Grade must be submitted via Banner web grading to appear officially on transcript.*

EXAMPLE ONLY – PLEASE ACCESS CURRENT VERSION OF FORM ONLINE AT www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php

Approved form should be routed to the Department Office for your academic program. Include a signed copy of this form when you submit your dissertation packet via email to AdultLearning@millersille.edu. See Thesis/Dissertation Process Checklist at for more information (www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php)

An original copy should be kept by the Program Coordinator, Advisor, and Student.

Millersville University

Office of Graduate Studies & Adult Learning
717-871-7171
https://www.millersville.edu/gsal

PERMISSION TO DIGITIZE THESIS, DISSERTATION, OR SCHOLARLY PROJECT

Permission to scan and redistribute
I grant to Millersville University of Pennsylvania the nonexclusive right to create a digital version of the above-named publication (the "Manuscript") and to make my Manuscript available as part of the collection in the MU Institutional Repository. I understand that the full text of my Manuscript will be available to the public in digital form, and I give my permission for the University to make my manuscript available online.

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I understand that this permission constitutes a non-exclusive, perpetual, royalty free license, a etain all other rights to the copyright in my Manuscript, including the right to use it in other works such as article

Authority to grant license
I represent and warrant that I am the sole author and owner of the copyright in my M ave full and sole authority to grant this permission. I also represent that this Manuscript does not vledge, infringe or violate any rights of others. I have obtained any third-party rights, if necessar

STUDENT: *Please complete the fields below and sign.*

Author: _____ ate: _____

Thesis/Dissertation/Scholarly Project Title: _____ _____

_____ _____

Address: _____ _____

Email: _____ _____

Phone Number: _____ _____

Permission Gr

_____ _____ _____
Author's Signature Date

EXAMPLE ONLY – PLEASE ACCESS CURRENT VERSION OF FORM ONLINE AT www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php

Copy to be kept by the student.
Include a copy of this signed form when you submit your dissertation packet via email to AdultLearning@millersille.edu. See Thesis/Dissertation Process Checklist at for more information (www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php)

Signed copy of this form to be uploaded by the student to the McNairy Institutional Repository.

Sample Pages
(Sample Title Page)

(Dissertation Title)

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Millersville University of Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of (Program)

By (Student's Name)

(Date/Month & Year)

(Sample Approval Page to be inserted immediately following Title Page)

This Dissertation for the Doctoral (Program) Degree by

John A. Smith

has been approved on behalf of the

Graduate School by

Dissertation Committee:

_____
Committee Chair

_____
Committee Member

_____
Committee Member

(Create as many lines for committee members as necessary.)

_____
Date

NOTE TO STUDENT: Include this signed form as a separate document when you submit your dissertation packet via email to AdultLearning@millersille.edu. A copy of this form WITHOUT SIGNATURES should be included as part of your Dissertation PDF. See Thesis/Dissertation Process Checklist at for more information (www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php)

(Sample Abstract Page to be inserted following Approval Page)

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

(Insert Dissertation Title)

By

(Student Name)

Millersville University, (Year)

Millersville, Pennsylvania

Directed by (Committee Chair's Name)

Your Abstract should begin here, and begin with the STATEMENT OF PROBLEM followed by the SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION (300 words).

Signature of Investigator _____ Date_____

NOTE TO STUDENT: Include this signed form as a separate document when you submit your dissertation packet via email to AdultLearning@millersille.edu. A copy of this form WITHOUT SIGNATURES should be included as part of your Dissertation PDF. See Thesis/Dissertation Process Checklist at for more information (www.millersville.edu/gsal/current-student-resources/student-research.php)

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