

Student's Guide

to

Thesis Preparation, Examination Procedures and Regulations

This document outlines the steps in the thesis examination process and provides guidelines for the formatting and presentation of theses, as stipulated by the School of Graduate Studies. Students should work closely with their supervisor and supervisory committee to insure that the content and presentation of the thesis meets the norms and practices of their discipline.

Further information on regulations, submission dates, degree requirements, etc., can be found on the Graduate Studies website at: <https://www.concordia.ca/sgs/resources/thesis.html>. Students may also consult the Thesis Office at any stage in the preparation of their thesis.

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Table of Contents

Foreword	5
Roles for the School of Graduate Studies, Program Directors, Committees, Thesis Supervisors and Students	6
Dean of Graduate Studies	6
School of Graduate Studies	6
Graduate Program Director	6
Examining Committee Chair	6
Examination Committee	7
Thesis Supervisors	7
Thesis Supervisory Committees	8
Graduate Students	8
Definition of a Thesis	9
Chapter-based Thesis	10
Chapter-based Thesis Structure	10
Research-Creation Theses	10
Manuscript-Based Thesis	10
Manuscript-based Thesis Structure	10
Copyright Regulations	11
Inclusion of co-authored works in a thesis	11
Inclusion of copyright material in a thesis	12
Submission Deadlines for All Theses	12
Extension of the thesis deadline	13
Theses not written in English or French	13
Inter-university degrees	13
Co-tutelle Doctoral	13
ALGANT	13
Joint PhD Programs	13
Non-Text Materials	14
Non-Text Materials (for Research-creations theses)	14
Titling video (and other multimedia) files for Spectrum	14
Use of Research Output	14

Scholarly Conventions	15
Sequence of Contents.....	15
Title Page	15
Signature Page	15
Abstract.....	15
Acknowledgements or Dedication.....	15
Contribution of Authors.....	16
Table of Contents.....	16
Format Guidelines for All Theses.....	16
Technical Regulations for Initial Submission.....	16
Page Format	16
Page Numbering.....	16
Nonstandard Theses and Thesis Components.....	16
Examination of the Thesis – Printed Copies.....	16
Thesis Process: Master’s Route	16
Initial Master’s Submission	17
Appointing an Examination Committee	17
Timing of the Initial Submission	17
Thesis Process: Doctoral Route	17
Appointing an Examination Committee	17
Setting the examination date.....	17
Setting an examination time.....	17
Initial Doctoral Submission	18
The Examining Committee	18
Doctoral Examination	19
Restructuring of the Examination Committee.....	19
Examiners Who Cannot Attend	19
Video/Teleconferencing Exams.....	20
Negative Thesis Reports (prior to defence)	20
Decision for Master’s and Doctoral Theses.....	20
Decision Impasse	21
Thesis Modifications.....	21
Final Submission.....	21
Common Problems Encountered in the Final Submission	22

ProQuest, Dissertations and Thesis Database	23
Final Grades & notations on transcripts.....	23
Procedure for re-submission	23
Binding (if applicable)	23
Deferment	23
Appendices.....	25
Sample English Ph.D. Title Page	26
Sample French Ph.D. Title Page	27
Sample English Master’s Title Page	28
Sample French Master’s Title Page	29
Sample English Master’s Signature Page	30
Sample French Master’s Signature Page	31
Sample Ph.D. Abstract	32
Sample Master’s Abstract	33

Foreword

The primary goal of Concordia University is the creation, critical examination, and dissemination of knowledge. Graduate students play a central role in achieving this mandate by carrying out and reporting on their research. At the graduate level, research and creation are expected to broaden the knowledge horizon. The successful completion of a Master's or PhD degree confirms that the graduate has achieved professional standards as a researcher in his or her disciplines.

The thesis is the final report on a comprehensive research project and is the central component to completing the degree requirements. The thesis must demonstrate a mastery of the existing body of knowledge while also expanding the body of knowledge on the subject. To accomplish this, all parts of the thesis must be organized and presented in a cohesive structure that follows a logical progression.

To complete the degree requirements, theses are subjected to an examination by a committee of experts according to the highest scholarly standards. Once the thesis is accepted, students are expected to make their finalized thesis available publically. At Concordia, theses are disseminated to the public on Spectrum, the Concordia University Research Repository. Spectrum is indexed by major search engines, which make all theses readily accessible and available on-line to the public. Students are also encouraged to make their work available through the normal means of publication in their discipline, such as journal articles, exhibitions, books, etc. Where necessary, dissemination of the thesis through Spectrum can be deferred to allow the student sufficient time to publish their work.

Roles for the School of Graduate Studies, Program Directors, Committees, Thesis Supervisors and Students

Dean of Graduate Studies

- Is responsible for the creation and implementation of the policies and regulations concerning thesis examinations and the approval of degree candidates as established by the Council of the School of Graduate Studies.
- Acts as final arbiter in conflicts arising from the interpretation of thesis and graduate regulations.
- Has the authority to bring before the Council of the School of Graduate Studies any matter that may affect the acceptance of the thesis or the conferral of the degree.

School of Graduate Studies

- Provides counsel on all aspects of the program and any conflict situations that may arise.
- Follows the progress of students and stays informed of the student's research activities (annual online progress report).
- Oversees the thesis examination process and may attend any of the proceedings.
- Oversees the reporting of the thesis grades.

Graduate Program Director

- The Graduate Program Director is the official representative of the department to its graduate students. The Director oversees all graduate students enrolled in the program and serves as the chief liaison with the School of Graduate Studies, including all matters pertaining to the thesis.
- The Director ensures that the student is aware of all program requirements, degree regulations and general regulations of the department.
- The Director is also responsible for keeping the School of Graduate Studies (Thesis Office) informed of thesis examination-related issues (scheduling, changes, cancellations *etc.*).
- The Graduate Program Director and the Dean of Graduate Studies may be required to arbitrate in a case where the student and supervisor cannot reach an agreement on the readiness of the thesis for submission.

Examining Committee Chair

- The Chair for doctoral oral defences is considered a delegate of the Dean of Graduate Studies and acts on the Dean's behalf at the examination.
- The Chair governs the proceedings of the Examination Committee to insure that all materials presented by the student for examination are evaluated.
- In conjunction with the Thesis Office, the Chair is responsible for organizing and overseeing the thesis oral examination.

- The Chair's formal duties begin with the receipt of the Examiners' reports and end with the approval for final submission of the thesis or the report of a rejected thesis.
- The Chair is responsible for insuring that the written evaluation of material is provided to the student.
- The Chair has the responsibility to act in a manner that conforms to basic principles of natural justice, academic integrity, and professionalism, as well as to manage conflict situations that may arise during the examination of the thesis.

Examination Committee

- The Examination Committee examines all materials presented by the student for examination.
- The examination process begins with the formal submission of the thesis and culminates with the completion of the thesis evaluation.
- The Examination Committee is responsible for providing written evaluation of the material.
- Examination Committee members absent from a doctoral oral defence are still required to provide an evaluation of the thesis and questions for the candidate.
- The Examination Committee members have the responsibility to act in a manner that conforms to basic principles of natural justice, academic integrity and professionalism and to manage conflict situations that may arise during the examination of the thesis.

Thesis Supervisors

- Supervisors oversee the research undertakings of graduate students in a manner generally set out through the practices and traditions of their disciplines and academic departments.
- Supervisors must discuss with students the general nature of their working relationship early in the developmental stages of their collaboration to ensure mutually compatible expectations.
- Supervisors oversee and guide the student in the creation of the thesis, as well as monitor and evaluate progress towards the degree.
- Supervisors evaluate that research contributions of all relevant individuals are appropriately credited in the Contribution of Authors sections of the student's thesis.
- Supervisors evaluate thesis for approval of examination before the formal submission to the Thesis Office.
- Supervisors ensure that students conduct their research in a manner that is ethical, effective, safe, and productive.
- Supervisors must be available to students on a reasonable basis for consultation and discussion of academic progress.
- Supervisors must provide timely comments on written material submitted by students, including their opinion on the advisability of submitting theses for examination.
- Supervisors must inform the Thesis Office of any and all contractual obligations associated with the thesis, i.e., provide a copy of Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) forms, etc.
- Supervisors shall fully inform the student of any and all contractual obligations as they may pertain to the student, which may affect the public defence and/or publication of the thesis. The supervisor shall also be aware that contractual and/or legal obligations may necessitate

that all participants in a thesis defence sign an undertaking of confidentiality.

- The supervisor has the responsibility to act in a manner that conforms to basic principles of natural justice, academic integrity, and professionalism and to manage in a similar manner conflict situations that may arise in the relationship with the student.

Thesis Supervisory Committees

- The Thesis Supervisory Committee is a committee approved by the program that assists the supervisor in overseeing and monitoring the student's progress towards their degree.
- Roles vary from discipline to discipline, however, in general, committee members provide comments on submitted material and ongoing progress in thesis research.
- Although students have the right to submit material for examination without approval of the principal supervisor or committee members, the committee must ensure that the student receives their assessment of the readiness of the work for examination.
- The committee members have the responsibility to act in a manner that conforms to basic principles of natural justice, academic integrity, and professionalism and to manage in a similar manner conflict situations that may arise in the relationship with the student and the supervisor.

Graduate Students

- Students must inform themselves concerning regulations and standards as specified in the Graduate Calendar and in the relevant documents produced by the program offering the degree and by the School of Graduate Studies.
- Students must consult, and have agreement, with their supervisor on the thesis style before beginning work on the general format (chapter-based, manuscript-based, etc.) of their thesis.
- Students must submit theses or draft publication materials to supervisors for comment and/or feedback before submission for final examination or publication.
- Students are responsible for supplying a paper copy of their thesis to an examination committee member, if requested by the program or the Thesis Office.
- Students must keep their supervisory committee and the School of Graduate Studies informed of their progress towards their degree by completing annual progress reports.
- Although it is not recommended, the student maintains the right to defend his or her thesis without the supervisor's approval.
- Students have the responsibility to act in a manner that conforms to basic principles of natural justice, academic integrity, and professionalism in their relationships with their program director, supervisor, supervisory committee, and Examination Committee members.
- Students must ensure that research contributions of all relevant individuals are appropriately credited in the Contribution of Authors section of their thesis.
- Students are expected to make themselves aware of regulations on proper [citation](#), including [copyright](#) and [intellectual property](#) regulations, in all written work to avoid misrepresenting the work of another as their own work, which will result in a charge of [plagiarism](#) as per the Academic Code of Conduct.
- Students are required to deposit the final digital submission of their thesis in Spectrum,

Concordia University's Research Repository, according to the guidelines and instructions posted on the [Spectrum](#) web site.

- Students have the [responsibility to act ethically](#) in all aspects of their academic life. This includes, but is not limited to, insuring that if humans, animals, or the environment are impacted by their work that the appropriate ethical approvals have been obtained prior to engaging in any research activity. Ethical behaviour also includes avoiding conflicts of interest or perceived conflicts of interest, see [Research Ethics Unit \(Office of Research\)](#).

Definition of a Thesis

A thesis is the primary expression of the student's scholarly research and responds to important academic questions. The thesis must provide a critical review of the current state of knowledge of the thesis subject as well as the student's own contributions to the subject. The thesis demonstrates the synthesis of information into knowledge in a form that may be used by others. The distinguishing criterion of doctoral graduate research is *a significant and original contribution to knowledge*.

To accomplish its primary goal, the thesis may be formatted as a Chapter-based thesis, a Research-Creation thesis, or a Manuscript-based thesis. Other formats may be acceptable upon approval. There is no university level regulation for the length of any thesis, but programs may set limits, and in all cases, the thesis should address its subject and its stated problem in a substantive manner. Students must consult their supervisor and program for the expectations as to general structure and length in their disciplines. In all cases, the thesis must conform to the accepted scholarly practices of the discipline in which it is presented.

The thesis is traditionally a written document, but all theses may include non-textual material to supplement or illustrate aspects of the student's work. Non-textual material to be included in the thesis must be in a recorded format and submitted with the text document for examination.

Non-recorded materials are not part of the thesis but may be included as part of a thesis examination as appropriate. Also, students may re-present performative thesis materials at the examination when appropriate.

The Supervisor and the Thesis Office can provide guidance on how to include these materials in the thesis, keeping in mind that the thesis and non-textual material must both conform to the university's regulations and the accepted scholarly practices of the student's discipline.

Chapter-based Thesis

A conventional thesis is structured in a chapter-based format. Conceptually, the thesis begins by establishing a knowledge context and framework for a problem. It then poses a significant problem expressed most often in the format of a research question, i.e., hypothesis that may be further broken down into sub-questions. This is normally followed by a presentation of the methodological approach to the question(s). This is then followed by material that systematically addresses well-defined parts of the overall thesis problem through analysis. The thesis then finishes by drawing together the results of the thesis materials into a conclusion and a statement of future directions.

Chapter-based Thesis Structure

While there are many variations on the conventional chapter-based thesis, they all begin with the required front matter (title page, signature page, abstract, etc.). The body of the thesis is structured with an introduction, review of the current state of knowledge/literature (sometimes this is combined into the chapters), and an overall problem statement that is usually then broken into smaller problems. This is then followed by the individual chapters, which describe the methodology and address the overall problem or sub-problems. Each chapter should be comprehensive and logical with a clear connection to the preceding and following chapters. The body of the thesis then ends with an overall conclusions chapter, which may include future directions; or the future directions may be a separate chapter. The thesis is then completed with endnotes (where applicable), the bibliography, or references and appendices. Some disciplines use footnotes and do not require a separate bibliography/reference section.

Research-Creation Theses

The Research-Creation thesis comprises two synthesized components: a creative production component, which may be presented in a variety of media, communicative, or performative platforms; and a written component. The written component's length is dictated by the project and varies according to the discipline. The creative production component will usually constitute an integral part of the research-creation itself, while the written component contextualizes and expands on its significance in the discipline. The written component, like the conventional research thesis, should demonstrate substantial knowledge of the relevant scholarly literature, consider methodological issues, and present a contribution to knowledge. In addition, it must demonstrate knowledge of prevailing practices and precedents in the practical field of activity in which the creative production component situates itself, and may reflect on the production process. The student must provide durable audio-visual or digital documentation of the production component in a standard format available for the examination and final deposit on Spectrum along with the written component. Programs may also require a high fidelity copy for archiving in the home department in a way that makes it available for public consultation.

Students may also want to re-present their creation, or a portion of their creation, at the defence so that the Examination Committee can have the full benefit of the work as they evaluate the defence.

Students may also use the occasion of the defence to present their work to a wider public audience. Normally, this presentation comes after the defence, in which case it plays no role in the evaluation of the thesis or defence.

Manuscript-Based Thesis

As an alternative to the chapter-based thesis format, a thesis can include a collection of one or more manuscripts. These may include articles or papers that are published, submitted for publication, or in preparation. It is critical that all components of the thesis are structured in a logical order with an appropriate framework for reporting on a coherent program of graduate research.

Manuscript-based Thesis Structure

The manuscript-based thesis must include all of the necessary elements described in the [Sequence of Contents](#). There must be a general introduction which clearly states the rationale

and objectives of the research and the thesis project(s), and a comprehensive review of the literature that frames the thesis research area. This general introduction is in addition to the introduction to each chapter/manuscript and will have some overlap in content. The summary, conclusions, and future directions must also address the entire contents of the thesis.

A manuscript-based thesis is more than a collection of manuscripts. As manuscripts for publication are frequently very concise documents, additional material, where appropriate, must be provided in sufficient detail to allow a clear and precise judgment to be made concerning the importance and originality of the research reported in the thesis, i.e., in appendices or in the bridging text. In order to ensure that the thesis is coherent, connecting texts, such as forewords and/or postscripts, may provide expository transitions between the different papers, as needed. Not all chapters in a manuscript-based thesis need to be manuscripts; some chapters may be conventional chapters, provided that the overall thesis proceeds in a coherent manner.

For works that are already published, the student must present the contents of the publications formatted according to the requirements set out in this guide. Normally, the student is expected to present the published article in its entirety. However, in some cases, a subset of the published work may be appropriate. The student must explain in the thesis why significant portions of the published work are omitted. Where appropriate, the published abstract may be omitted, or incorporated into bridging text, if it improves the flow of the thesis. Acknowledgements (to funding agencies for example) should be removed from the chapter and consolidated with the general acknowledgements. Supplementary materials to the publication can be included in the thesis as transitional material, a separate chapter, or as an appendix. In all cases, the thesis text must be coherent and proceed in a logical order. Published works are often copyrighted by the publisher and may require permission for use, even by the authors, in the thesis. See [Copyright Regulations](#). There must be a single comprehensive referencing style used throughout the entire thesis. Usually, this is a single bibliography, or list of all references, collected at the end of the thesis; however, some disciplines utilize footnotes. Bibliographies or reference lists should not appear at the ends of any of the manuscripts/chapters.

See below when Inclusion of co-authored works in a thesis are included in a thesis.

Copyright Regulations

As in all Canadian universities, members of the Concordia community are users of copyrighted materials and, as such, are subject to copyright legislation. Compliance with the [Copyright Act](#) and the University's Policy on Copyright Compliance is the student's responsibility. Failure to comply with the [Copyright Act](#) is a violation of federal legislation and may result in legal repercussions and/or disciplinary or other action by the University. Beyond legal responsibility, a student must also consider the ethical obligation to respect intellectual property rights.

The [Copyright Guide](#) for Thesis Preparation, written by Concordia Libraries, is available on the Library website.

Inclusion of co-authored works in a thesis

Since the task of the examiners is made more difficult when co-authored work forms part of the thesis, the candidate must clearly specify the contributions of all the authors of the co-authored works. Therefore, when co-authored works are included in a thesis (e.g., journal articles, book chapters, collaborative works, compositions, etc.), whether published or not; the candidate is required to make an explicit statement in the thesis as to who contributed to such work and to

what extent. This statement must appear in a single section entitled “Contribution of Authors” as a preface to the thesis. The supervisor must attest to the accuracy of this statement at the defence.

Co-authors, except for the supervisor(s), cannot be part of the Examination Committee.

The student must be aware that the publisher often holds copyright over published works even when the student is an author.

Inclusion of copyright material in a thesis

When previously published copyright material is presented in a thesis, the candidate must obtain, if necessary, signed waivers from the copyright owners and, where appropriate, co-authors. Such waivers must be submitted to the Thesis Office together with the final deposit. Reprints of published papers are not normally required but can be included in the appendices at the end of the thesis if it is deemed to be necessary.

If the Examination Committee feels that the thesis has major omissions with regard to the above co-authorship or copyright guidelines, the thesis may be rejected, and the candidate may be required to resubmit an amended version of the thesis.

Submission Deadlines for All Theses

A thesis may be submitted at any time. However, the following deadlines must be respected if students expect to graduate at a specific convocation. It is always advisable to submit **before** the deadlines to allow sufficient time for examiners to evaluate the thesis prior to defence (See Table 1 below).

Table 1: Thesis Submission Deadlines

Master’s and PhD Submission Deadlines			
		Master’s	Doctoral
Spring Convocation	Apply to graduate*	January 15	January 15
	Initial electronic submission (Prior to Defence)	March 4**	February 11 (+1 print copy)
	Final electronic submission (After Defence)	April 1	April 1
Fall Convocation	Apply to graduate*	July 15	July 15
	Initial electronic submission (Prior to Defence)	August 4**	July 14 (+1 print copy)
	Final electronic submission (After Defence)	September 1	September 1

*Students must also [apply to graduate](#) in addition to submitting their thesis. Forms are available through the [MyConcordia](#) student portal.

**Deadlines for the MA English are Feb. 1 for Spring Convocation and May 15 for Fall Convocation. The MA Film Studies deadline for first submission for Spring is Feb. 23 and July 12 for Fall.

Extension of the thesis deadline

A student who finds it necessary to request a short extension of the thesis deadline must ask his or her supervisor or Graduate Program Director to submit a formal request to the Thesis Office, giving the reason for the delay and the amount of time that will be needed to complete the thesis. This request must be submitted to the Thesis Office at least one week before the actual deadline date.

Theses not written in English or French

At Concordia, theses are normally written in English. However, a student who intends to submit their thesis in French must inform their supervisor when submitting the thesis topic for the supervisor's approval. In the event that a student wishes to submit the thesis in a language other than English or French, the thesis supervisor must make such a recommendation, with an appropriate justification, to the Graduate Program Director when the student's thesis topic is submitted for approval. The decision of the Graduate Program Director on such a recommendation shall be communicated to the Thesis Office. Students in the MA Hispanic Studies program may write their thesis in Spanish.

A thesis written in a language other than English or French must include a comprehensive summary/description of its contents. This comprehensive summary/description must be written in English or French and appear after the abstract. The summary must be between 3-6 pages for Master's and 10-20 pages for doctoral as appropriate. Students in the MA Hispanic Studies program may write their thesis in Spanish and must also include a summary in English or French.

Inter-university degrees

Co-tutelle Doctoral

Based on the agreement, a student may defend at Concordia University or the French university and must satisfy the thesis requirements/guidelines of both universities.

ALGANT

Based on the ALGANT agreement, a student defends at one of the consortium institutions and must satisfy the thesis requirements/guidelines of Concordia University.

Joint PhD Programs

Students in the PhD programs in Administration, Art History, Communication, and Religion must adhere to the thesis requirements and guidelines at Concordia.

For these Joint PhD programs, the student must submit an abstract in English and French. For inter-university categories listed above, submitted theses at both institutions must include the same components.

Non-Text Materials

All theses may include non-textual material to supplement or illustrate aspects of the student's work. The Supervisor and the Thesis Office can provide guidance on how to incorporate these materials into the thesis. The content must conform to standard usage in the field, and be in a digital format and submitted with the text document for examination. The student must, where possible, produce the material in a format that can be deposited into Spectrum. If the student cannot format the material for deposit in Spectrum, or a high-fidelity copy is available, a copy must be deposited with the Thesis Office in a DVD/media format for deposit in the library. Examples of non-text materials include, but are not limited to: recordings of music and other performative materials, genomic database files, video clips of simulation runs, recordings of experimental results, walk-throughs of building/architecture, etc.

Non-Text Materials (for Research-creations theses)

Students are strongly encouraged to record or otherwise capture important performative materials in the thesis, as the primary purpose of the thesis is to represent the student's work. Non-recorded materials are not part of the thesis but may be included as part of the defence. Also, students may re-present performative thesis materials at the examination when appropriate.

Titling video (and other multimedia) files for Spectrum

It is possible to incorporate multimedia materials into the thesis; however, the relevance of the materials must be established, and they must be clearly documented.

All multimedia materials require opening titles/credits, which minimally include the title of the video/audio recording and a statement that this recording is a component of a Concordia University thesis titled: *Thesis Title* submitted by *Author, Year*.

The student may also wish to include additional information in the recording (preceding and/or following) that places the work into context, acknowledges contributions by others, etc. The student must also create a copyright and a licensing declaration for the recording, keeping in mind the Copyright Act and the [University's Policy on Intellectual Property](#).

The opening title and closing credits must play for a period sufficiently long to allow the listener/viewer to understand the entire title/credits.

Material such as databases, computer codes, etc., should also adhere to the principles described above by having very clear documentation, including:

- a. The title of the material
- b. A statement that the material is a component of a Concordia University thesis, titled: *Thesis Title* submitted by *Author, Year*.

Use of Research Output

In most disciplines the student's research is made possible by, and carried-out within, the university's infrastructure. The supervisor may also play a pivotal role by defining the research problem and, thus, framing, developing, and directing the research. As a result, both the student and/or the university may have an interest in the research output. Use of the research output is

subject to the [University's Policy on Intellectual Property](#). Students are not entitled to exploit this intellectual property without cooperating with the university to determine how the intellectual property is to be shared and credited. If a student intends to use the research output they should contact the [Office of Research](#) in order to guide their use and dissemination of the research. The student holds copyright over the thesis and provides a limited license to the university to make the thesis widely available to the public. To enable development of the Intellectual Property, the release of the thesis to the public via Spectrum [can be deferred with an approved embargo](#).

Scholarly Conventions

The thesis is a product of the student's work but will likely include references and quotations from the works of other authors and scholars. It is required to cite any material from other sources in accordance with the conventions governing the presentation and citation of scholarly work. The Library has useful [Citation and Style Guides](#). Students should consult their supervisor as to the appropriate citation style and practice in their discipline. Some suggestions to facilitate writing a thesis would include reading a thesis in the discipline. Students are encouraged to speak to their supervisor (and committee) for advice. Also, [GradProSkills](#) offers workshops on planning and writing theses.

Sequence of Contents

Title Page

A standard title page is required for all theses. The title page has no page number.

Signature Page

The signature page has no page number.

A **blank copy** of the signature page (with examiners' names and titles) must be included in the **final electronic** thesis for deposit on Spectrum.

A Master's signature page is designed to contain the signatures of the members of the Examining Committee and must be prepared by the student. Master's students must verify the signature page for format and accuracy with their graduate program assistant.

Doctoral students' signature pages are prepared by the Thesis Office and provided to the Chair of the defence for signature at the defence. The Thesis Office will provide a blank copy to the student for inclusion in the thesis upon request.

Abstract

The page must be numbered page iii.

Each Master's thesis must include an abstract with the thesis title, the author's name, and a text not exceeding 250 words. Each PhD thesis must include an abstract with the title of the thesis, the name of author, the degree sought, 'Concordia University,' the year in which the degree is to be granted, and a text not exceeding 350 words.

Acknowledgements or Dedication

This page must follow the Abstract and numbered in roman numerals.

Normally an Acknowledgement or Dedication is included to recognize the help, assistance and support that students have received.

Contribution of Authors

This page must follow the Acknowledgements and numbered in roman numerals.

Table of Contents

This page must be numbered in roman numerals and include all headings after the Table of Contents.

Format Guidelines for All Theses

Technical Regulations for Initial Submission

Page Format

The thesis must be on letter-sized pages, 8.5 x 11 inches. It must be single spaced, in a standard font (preferably Times New Roman size 12, but Arial size 11 or similar fonts are acceptable), with a 1.0-inch (2.5 cm) margin all around. Please note that charts, tables, figures, appendices, references, and all other pages must conform to the required technical regulations.

Page Numbering

Pages must be numbered consecutively, as must be chapters, sections, etc., in accordance with the above-mentioned style manuals, or according to standard conventions used in technical work. Consistency in numbering must be maintained throughout the work (including appendices). All pages between the Abstract (inclusive) and Chapter One (exclusive) must be numbered with roman numerals starting with the Abstract as page iii. The text of the thesis (Introduction) must begin with page 1 (Arabic numerals).

Nonstandard Theses and Thesis Components

If students find it necessary to depart from the forms described in the above-mentioned styles, the format used must conform to standard usage in their field and be acceptable to the supervisor and the Thesis Office. Students should seek and obtain written approval for non-standard thesis formats from the Thesis Office prior to beginning work on the thesis.

Where the size of drawings, charts, and computer tables does not remain within the normal margins to be used, the margins may be reduced to 0.5 inch on the right and 1 inch on the left.

Examination of the Thesis – Printed Copies

Some examiners may request printed copies for examination. In all cases, it is the student's responsibility to provide printed copied of their thesis as appropriate.

Thesis Process: Master's Route

The Master's thesis process normally consists of three or four components: (i) the initial Master's submission; (ii) the examination of the Master's thesis; (iii) the defence* (oral presentation and questioning) of the candidate; and (iv) the final submission.

*An oral defence of a Master's thesis is not required by the School of Graduate Studies. Some graduate programs may elect to have an oral defence as part of the Master's thesis examination process. Please see individual program entries in the Graduate Calendar for more details.

Initial Master's Submission

Appointing an Examination Committee

The Graduate Program Director appoints an Examining Committee, in consultation with the thesis supervisor.

Timing of the Initial Submission

A Master's thesis should generally be submitted **no fewer than two and no more than five weeks** before the Examining Committee is required to evaluate the thesis.

The student must submit an electronic copy of their thesis to their Graduate Program Assistants for distribution to the Examining Committee. Please check with your graduate program as there may be additional program-specific regulations related to submission and evaluation of the Master's thesis. Once an external examiner has been approved, there can be no communication between the external and the candidate until the defence is over.

Thesis Process: Doctoral Route

The Doctoral process consists of five components: (i) the initial doctoral submission; (ii) the examination of the doctoral thesis; (iii) the oral presentation; (iv) the questioning of the PhD candidate; and (v) the final submission.

Appointing an Examination Committee and Setting the Examination Date

The Graduate Program Director appoints an Examining Committee, in consultation with the thesis supervisor. The Doctoral Thesis Examination Committee Form lists the members of the Examining Committee, the name and address of the external examiner, and the preferred date and time (see next) for the oral examination, along with the external examiner's CV. Once an external examiner has been approved, there can be no communication between the external and the candidate until the defence is over.

The examination date must be set **a minimum of 6 weeks** from receipt of the thesis **as well as** the [Doctoral Thesis Examination Committee Form](#) submitted by the student's program. In the case of the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science, SGS recommends submitting the forms **8 weeks** in advance, as approval by the Associate Dean of the student's faculty is required.

Please note: it is possible, and recommended, to establish the Examination Committee and submit the form in advance of the thesis submission. The form may also be submitted without a finalized date (usually a range of dates is specified). In these cases, knowledge of the composition of the Examination Committee allows the Thesis Office to prepare for the examination and thesis distribution in advance. The Thesis Office must be informed of the finalized date. The Thesis Office will distribute the thesis to the Examination Committee, which must have the thesis for at least one month prior to the examination.

Setting an Examination Time

Students should be aware that it is not recommended to schedule an examination after 3 PM, as

there will be no technical support after 5 PM. Graduate Program Assistants and students should also take into consideration the travel time constraints of the examiners (especially the external) and the potential impact of bad weather/road conditions when setting the examination time, i.e., will the examiner be able to get to/from the examination if the travel conditions are poor?

Initial Doctoral Submission

The student makes formal submission of the thesis to the Thesis Office. At this stage, the thesis must be in its final version and ready for defence.

The following documents are also required:

- [Theses Non Exclusive License form](#). This signed form grants Library and Archives Canada a non-exclusive license to make the thesis available to interested persons;
- [Doctoral Thesis Submission form](#);
- A copy of their up-to-date CV.

Once the thesis has been submitted, the formal thesis examination process has begun.

Students will receive an email with a checklist advising them of corrections, if any, required to their PDF/A formatted thesis. If additional paper copies are required by any of the Examination Committee members, the Thesis Office will notify the student that he/she must provide them directly to the examiner.

An electronic copy of the thesis is available at the School of Graduate Studies until seven (7) days prior to the date of the defence for examination by any member of the University. Contractual and/or legal obligations may necessitate restricting the thesis to those who have signed an undertaking of confidentiality.

The Thesis Office distributes electronic copies of the thesis for the examination. The thesis must be in the hands of the external examiner for at least **one month prior to the defence date**.

External examiners are required to submit a two-page report to the Thesis Office at least one week before the exam.

All examiners provide an evaluation of the thesis and complete an Examiner's Evaluation of a Doctoral Thesis form and a Thesis Ranking Form. Examiner reports and ranking forms must be submitted to the Thesis Office one week before a doctoral thesis defence. They are sent together with the examination dossier to the Chair of the Examination.

The Examining Committee

The Examining Committee consists of at least five members, of whom at least one must be from a department or program within the university other than the candidate's (external-to-program examiner), and one from outside the University (external examiner). The candidate's supervisor is a member of the Examining Committee. Co-authors, (or collaborators), involved in any research outcomes reported in the thesis cannot be part of the Examination Committee, except for the supervisors.

Electronic invitations and copies of the thesis are sent from the Thesis Office by email to all

examiners on behalf of the Dean of Graduate Studies. An examiner evaluates a thesis by completing an Examiner's Evaluation of a Doctoral Thesis form and a Thesis Ranking Form. The reports are sent together with the examination dossier to the Chair of exam. Examining committee reports are forwarded to the supervisor in advance of the defence whenever possible; these reports are not to be shared with the student prior to the defence. The student will be notified by their supervisor of any negative reports received.

Doctoral Examination

The Thesis Office announces the upcoming defence on the [Events Calendar](#).

The thesis defence is an oral examination conducted by the Chair of the Examining Committee, who is considered a delegate of the Dean of Graduate Studies. Any member of the University can attend a doctoral defence, unless otherwise restricted by contractual and/or legal obligations, which may necessitate that all participants in a thesis defence sign an undertaking of confidentiality.

The candidate first presents the thesis orally with whatever aids are required to make an effective presentation. Normally, this presentation last thirty to forty (30-40) minutes. The student should consult with their supervisor and program to determine the normal and acceptable practices in the discipline. The candidate is then questioned on the thesis and oral presentation by the Examination Committee. Any member of the University who has submitted questions to the Thesis Office in advance of the defence may be recognized by the Chair. The Chair also has the discretion to recognize questions on the presentation from the audience. The Chair adjourns the examination when the Examining Committee decides that further questioning is unnecessary. The examination normally should not exceed two hours.

The Chair presides over the Examining Committee during its deliberations in camera, but takes no part in the decision. The decision of the Examining Committee is based both on the thesis and on the candidate's ability to defend it. It is the responsibility of the Chair to see that the report on the examination and the signature pages are prepared before the committee adjourns.

Restructuring of the Doctoral Examination Committee

Once the Examination Committee for a PhD oral defence has been struck, the composition may only be altered with the approval of the School of Graduate Studies. Should students have reasoned grounds for changing membership of the Examining Committee, they must submit a written request outlining these reasons directly to the Graduate Program Director, who will make a recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies. In all cases, the Dean of the School of Graduate studies makes the final decision.

In circumstances in which a supervisory relationship cannot continue, students may request either an alternate supervisor or an administrative supervisor for purposes of the defence. Said request should be submitted to the Graduate Program Director, who will make arecommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Notwithstanding possible delays in time to completion, every effort should be made by the program, supervisor, etc. so that a student is not penalized if a change in supervisor becomes necessary.

Examiners Who Cannot Attend Doctoral Defences

Any member of the Examining Committee who cannot attend the doctoral defence must submit

their written report and a list of questions to be raised on their behalf to the Dean of Graduate Studies at least two weeks before the defence. The Graduate Program Director will then appoint a proxy examiner (who may not be a member of the Examination Committee) to carry this report to the examination. Where possible, the delegate should be familiar with the student's field and able to judge the student's thesis defence. The delegate will read questions on behalf of the absent member at the examination and vote on their behalf. The original examiner may provide a recommended, but non-binding, vote on the thesis to the proxy examiner.

Video/Teleconferencing Exams

Concordia University's tradition has always been to encourage that all examiners be present for examinations in order to allow interaction between the candidate and the examiners. However, supervisors and Graduate Program Directors must be aware of the option of holding exams via videoconference or teleconference when necessary. With a number of equipped rooms available on campus, this kind of examination can be arranged. Normally, the candidate must be present for the examination. In exceptional cases, the candidate may attend the examination via video/teleconferencing.

The Thesis Office can make arrangements for videoconferencing exams for doctoral defences. For Masters' defences (when applicable), it is the program's responsibility to make those arrangements.

The thesis committee may use videoconferencing software (e.g., Skype, Zoom), if it wishes; however, if such software is not supported by the University, it is also necessary to make arrangements for a teleconference to insure that the defence can proceed in the event that the videoconferencing session fails.

Negative Thesis Reports (prior to defence)

Negative reports for doctoral defences must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies. The School of Graduate Studies will communicate with, and forward the report to, the Supervisor and the Program Director. The student will be informed of the negative report by the Supervisor. After conferring with the Supervisor, the student must decide whether or not to proceed to defence. If the student decides to go to defence, the defence proceeds as planned. The student is not entitled to see the report contents until after the defence. If the student decides not to proceed to defence, he or she is entitled to receive copies of all reports. The defence must be rescheduled. The Supervisor must advise the School of Graduate Studies in writing that the defence is not proceeding.

Decision for Master's and Doctoral Theses

For Master's theses, the decision is reported on the Master's Examining Committee Report and sent to the Thesis Office. For PhD theses, the decision is reported on the Doctoral Thesis Examination - Examining Committee Report. The Oral and Written thesis Ranking Forms must also be returned to the Thesis Office after the defence for purposes of thesis prizes or awards, archiving, and inclusion on the student's transcript.

The Master's and PhD Examining Committees can render one (1) of four (4) decisions, subject to a vote of majority by all members of the committee.

The thesis can be:

- I. **Accepted as submitted** which may include corrections that do not require the supervisor's approval.
- II. **Accepted with minor modifications**, defined as corrections which can be made immediately and to the satisfaction of the supervisor.
- III. **Accepted with major modifications**. The Report from Examining Committee shall include a precise description of the modifications along with a date for their completion of no more than six months. The Examining Committee shall examine the modified thesis and, by majority vote, determine if the modifications specified in the Examining Committee Report have been completed to the Examining Committee's satisfaction. If they have, the thesis may be accepted, and the supervisor will confirm the Examining Committee's approval to the Thesis Office. It is not necessary for the Examining Committee to reconvene. If the Examining Committee is not satisfied that the specified modifications have been made, then the Examining Committee must reconvene to decide if the thesis is rejected or an additional period of modifications is to be granted. The Chair shall report in writing to the Dean of Graduate Studies the outcome of the Examining Committee meeting.
- IV. **Rejected**. This notation is used for a thesis for which the Examining Committee is not prepared to request either minor or major modifications, i.e., where the work shows serious deficiency, or its validity is in question. Such a thesis may be re-submitted only once, in revised form. Such a resubmission can only be made six (6) months or more from the date of the original defence. Formal re-submission of a thesis follows the same procedure as an initial submission.

Decision Impasse

If the Examining Committee for a Master's thesis is unable to reach a decision concerning the thesis, it is the responsibility of the Graduate Program Director to resolve the impasse.

If the Examining Committee for a PhD defence is unable to reach a decision concerning the thesis at the time of the defence, it is the responsibility of the Chair to determine what is required by the Examining Committee to reach a decision. The Chair must also make the necessary arrangements to fulfill any requirements of the Examining Committee and promptly call another meeting, as well as inform the student that the Examining Committee's decision is pending. The student is not normally required to be present at the second meeting of the Examining Committee.

Thesis Modifications

Student makes required modifications along with any required format changes for final submission. The thesis supervisor has the authority to grant approval when the required minor modifications have been made by the student. The Thesis Supervisor oversees required major modifications and insures that they are submitted to the Examination Committee for approval.

Final Submission

Students must submit the final version of the thesis electronically using [Spectrum](#), Concordia University's Research Repository, by April 1 for Spring convocation, or by September 1 for Fall

convocation. Students are encouraged to submit before this date in order to have sufficient time to overcome any difficulties and facilitate graduation.

The final version must contain all revisions required by the Examining Committee and all formatting revisions required by the Thesis Office. The electronic submission must be in **PDF/A** format (archival PDF). A guide to preparing your thesis for deposit in Spectrum can be found [here](#). Any non-text material that cannot be uploaded onto Spectrum must also be provided to the Thesis Office in a DVD/media format for deposit in the library. To deposit the thesis, students must log on to [Spectrum](#) using their Concordia Netname and password, and follow the instructions using the **HELP** button. They will be provided with detailed instructions.

At the time of depositing the thesis into Spectrum, students are asked to acknowledge and agree to a non-exclusive license. This license stipulates that the student owns the copyright to the thesis. By agreeing to this license, Concordia University and Library and Archives Canada (through participation in the Theses Canada Program) will preserve and make the thesis widely available, usually via the Internet and other searchable databases. Theses in Spectrum are electronically harvested and made available by Library and Archives Canada once the thesis is authorized to be made publically available. Students may request a deferment on the publication of their thesis.

Upon final submission of their thesis, the student shall be deemed to have granted the University a non-exclusive, royalty free license to reproduce, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the internet, loan, and distribute the thesis worldwide for non-commercial purposes, in any format.

Please refer to the [University's Policy on Intellectual Property](#).

The student's program or department is responsible for ensuring that the Examiner Evaluation Forms, the Examination Report and the completed Signature Sheet are forwarded to the Thesis Office by the above dates. The Office of the Registrar is notified by the Thesis Office that the student has completed all thesis requirements for the degree in order to be processed for graduation.

Once the final submission of the thesis has been made, GSST renders a decision on whether the student has fulfilled the requirements of the degree based on the Examining Committee Report and its own records of the student's progress in their assigned program of study. When GSST has determined that the student has fulfilled the requirements of the degree, it shall request that the Dean of Graduate Studies recommend to the Council of the School of Graduate Studies that the degree be awarded. The Council of the School of Graduate Studies shall make a recommendation to Senate for the awarding of the degree. Once the recommendation has been passed by Senate, the digital version of the thesis may be made available to the public via [Spectrum: Concordia University's Research Repository](#).

Common Problems Encountered in the Final Submission

- 1- The thesis is in PDF and not PDF/A format.
- 2- Signature page: no signature page, or names entered in the wrong field.

- 3- Thesis title is in ALL CAPITALS.
- 4- Title page is not formatted correctly.
- 5- Pagination problems: non-continuous, incorrectly numbered or Arabic vs. Roman numerals.
- 6- Incorrect program name/department title indicated on Spectrum form.
- 7- Incorrectly formatted Abstract.
- 8- PDF file name not correct.
- 9- Copyright symbol not present/correct.

ProQuest, Dissertations and Thesis Database

ProQuest is a company that provides access to a wide variety of information, including theses, for researchers, governments, and businesses via its databases. All students may upload their thesis to ProQuest Dissertations and Theses if they choose. Some programs require that the final version of the thesis be uploaded to ProQuest. Students must inquire if their program has this requirement. To find out how to upload your thesis, go to [Proquest](#).

Final Grades & notations on transcripts

The final grade given for the thesis is “Accepted” or “Rejected.” “Accepted with Minor Modifications” is converted to “Accepted” after corrections have been made. “Accepted with Major Modifications” is converted to either “Accepted” or “Rejected,” depending on whether the required modifications have been satisfactorily completed within the prescribed deadline. Note that in the case of a rejected thesis that is re-defended, the original grade of “Rejected” will remain on the student's transcript. A new entry for the thesis examination will appear when the re-submitted thesis is examined.

Beginning in 2012, student records and transcripts will also show the results of the oral and written rankings. The transcript will only display rankings of “very good,” “excellent,” and “outstanding.” The internal student records will display all of the possible rankings.

At any time, the Dean of Graduate Studies may bring before the Council of the School of Graduate Studies any matter that may affect the acceptance of the thesis or the awarding of the degree.

Procedure for re-submission

Formal resubmission of the thesis follows the same procedures as the initial submission.

Binding (if applicable)

Concordia’s Digital Store provides binding services for a fee. Students may have copies bound by the Digital Store for themselves or if the department/supervisor requires a bound copy. The Library does not require a bound copy of the theses.

Deferment

If there is good reason for delaying public access to a thesis, an approved embargo may be placed on the publication of the thesis in Spectrum. The deferment may be approved for up to

two (2) years; however, under exceptional circumstances, and with written justification to the Thesis Office, it may be renewed. Continuing obligations per the terms and conditions of a research agreement may be sufficient justification for a deferment of publication of the student's thesis.

In the event of a deferment, it is understood that the University's license to communicate, loan, and/or distribute the thesis shall only take effect as of the expiry of the deferment period. Please refer to the [University's Policy on Intellectual Property](#).

Appendices

Sample Pages

Sample English Ph.D. Title Page

Ultra Low Energy Communication Protocol for Implantable
Wireless Body Sensor Networks

Fariborz Fereydouni-Forouzandeh

A Thesis
In the Department
of
Electrical and Computer Engineering

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Electrical and Computer Engineering) at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

September 2010

© Fariborz Fereydouni-Forouzandeh, 2010

La couleur de la ruine et la salpêtre de la Bastille Topographie
de la patine architecturale au siècle des Lumières

Nicolas Gaudreau

Thèse
présentée
au
Département d'histoire de l'art

comme exigence partielle au grade de
philosophae doctor (Ph.D.)
Université Concordia
Montréal, Québec, Canada

Octobre, 2005

© Nicolas Gaudreau, 2005

Sample English Master's Title Page

On Intolerance and Immigration: Understanding Perceptions of Intra- and
Extradiversity in Denmark and Canada

Malene Bodington

A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Sociology and Anthropology

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts (Sociology) at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

April 2010

© Malene Bodington, 2010

Sample French Master's Title Page

La femme sujète et l'homme en mutation : un dialogue entamé.
Une étude de la sexuation dans quatre romans québécois contemporains

Virginie Lavallée

Mémoire
présenté
au
Département d'Études françaises

comme exigence partielle au grade de
maîtrise ès Arts (Littératures francophones et resonances médiatiques)
Université Concordia
Montréal, Québec, Canada

Mars 2008

© Virginie Lavallée, 2008

Sample English Master's Signature Page

**CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
School of Graduate Studies**

This is to certify that the thesis prepared

By: David Welch

Entitled: Exploring the Transfer System. Validating a Process Model with a
Business Training Intervention

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts (Educational Technology)

complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the final Examining Committee:

_____ Chair

Chair's name

_____ Examiner

Examiner's name

_____ Examiner

Examiner's name

_____ Supervisor

Supervisor's name

Approved by _____

Chair of Department or Graduate Program Director

_____ 2011

Dean of Faculty

UNIVERSITÉ CONCORDIA
École des études supérieures

Nous certifions par les présentes que le mémoire rédigé

par Angela Asomba-Tarer
intitulé Analyse sociologique de la traduction française par Béatrice Commengé
de Delta of Venus d'Anaïs Nin

et déposé à titre d'exigence partielle en vue de l'obtention du grade de

Maîtrise ès Arts (Traductologie)

est conforme aux règlements de l'Université et satisfait aux normes établies pour ce qui est de l'originalité et de la qualité.

Signé par les membres du Comité de soutenance

_____ Président

nom

_____ Examineur

Nom d'examineur

_____ Examineur

Nom d'examineur

_____ Directeur

Nom du directeur

Approuvé par:

Directeur du département ou du programme d'études supérieures

_____ 2011

_____ Doyen de la Faculté

ABSTRACT

Meaning-making dynamics within and across workgroups: An inquiry into the creation and movement of usable knowledge in a long-term care facility in Ontario

John James Conklin, Ph.D.

Concordia University, 2009

This dissertation reports the results of a qualitative investigation of the meaning-making patterns that occur in a group of caregivers in a long-term care home. The research design included an ethnographic component to reveal the overall meaning-making dynamic in the site, and a case study focusing on a specific improvement initiative. Data was gathered over a three month period through observation, interviews, and documents. Data analysis included the creation of analytic memos, categorizing and theming, and the development of a meaning-making map to depict systematic interactions. The findings suggest that research participants have developed systemic patterns of meaning making that allow them to create experiences of coherence, purpose, identity, and competence. Eight meaning-making themes emerge from the analysis to reveal a workplace where emphasis is placed on immediate concerns and priorities, and where long-term planning and change are problematic. Caregivers begin each day by creating a coherent picture of their workplace, and they engage in brief, pragmatic interactions throughout the day to maintain their shared understanding of the unfolding context around them...

Sample Master's Abstract

ABSTRACT

On the Illusory Nature of Sustainable Development:
A Case Study of a Montreal Suburb

Peter Graham

An apparent paradox attaches to the concept of sustainable development: as general levels of education, technology, and scientific knowledge have increased, so has the ecological impact of humanity and the likelihood of large-scale anthropogenic catastrophe for human populations. This paradox can be at least partially explained as the result of perceptual and cognitive illusion. Human perception, cognition and meaning systems are always to some extent “inherited” as a path-dependent “traditionality”. This difference between the world “as it is” and “as we know it” creates an illusion and a false sense of impunity to act in the world . . .