

Instructions for Masters Thesis Preparation and Defense

The following instructions are basic guidelines to be used in the preparation of your thesis. Please also review your departmental handbook and contact your graduate school coordinator for clarification or questions.

Thesis Advisor

In the Coulter School of Engineering, each graduate student is assigned a thesis advisor during the first semester.

University Requirements

The Coulter School of Engineering requires all Master of Science students to complete a thesis. It must be defended orally to a committee consisting of a minimum of three faculty members. This committee is recommended by the thesis advisor and approved by the chair of the candidate's department.

Responsibilities of the Student in Preparing a Thesis:

The content of the thesis should follow all ethical guidelines and represent original work as required by the university. This includes the following

- **Code of Student Conduct**, which prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication, plagiarism and aiding and abetting of a dishonest act.
(<http://www.clarkson.edu/studentaffairs/regulations/v.html>)
- **Intellectual Property Policy**, which applies to graduate students and the work produced by graduate students. Details of the IP policy are included on the University's web site
(http://www.clarkson.edu/dor/documents/IP_Policy_092505.pdf)
- **Copyright Laws**, which pertain to how to avoid infringing on someone else's copyright and how to protect the student's own copyright. The book by Kenneth Crew¹ thoroughly addresses copyright law and should be consulted for detailed explanations. Some general guidelines include:
 - The thesis may include quotations, pictures, charts, standard tests, or other materials created by other authors. Permission to use such materials from the copyright owner is often required before borrowing the "expression" of other works. Giving full credit and citations **does not** exempt the thesis author from the obligations of copyright law. Copyright law provides a right of "fair use" that allows limited copying-such as short quotations-without consent. However, **the student is required to obtain proper permission from the copyright owner for the following materials** that might be included in a thesis or dissertation²:
 - Long quotations from pre-existing materials that extend for more than one and one-half single-spaced pages.
 - Reproduced publications. Examples include copies of standard survey instruments or questionnaires, and the student's OWN journal articles already published.
 - Unpublished materials. Extensive reference to unpublished works raises a variety

¹ Crew, K.D., Copyright Law and Graduate Research: New Media, New Rights and Your Dissertation, ProQuest Information and Learning, Ann Arbor MI, 2002. Available for free download http://www.proquest.com/products_umi/dissertations/copyright/

² From PQ/UMI® GradWorks Guide F2006. http://www.il.proquest.com/products_umi/dissertations/submitted_authors.shtml

of issues about copyright and about privacy and access to collections.

- Graphic or pictorial works. For example, copies of graphs or schematic diagrams included in your dissertation from previously published works.
 - Computer Software. Dissertations embodied in new media, such as on a website or on CD-ROM, may incorporate reader programs or other application software to make the new work accessible or useful. Reproducing such programs to accompany your dissertation will almost invariably require permission. Consult any license agreement, including those for “Shareware,” that may apply to the programs, and prepare to seek permission from the copyright owner.
 - Sources located on the Internet. Easy availability does not change copyright status. Materials on the Web are protected by copyright just as if they appeared in a book or on tape.
- Copyright permissions are generally given readily for student’s use of their own works. However fees are sometimes charged for permission to use materials originally generated by a different author. See **Exhibit C** for a sample letter requesting permission to use copyrighted material.
 - Receipt of permission to use copyrighted materials needs to be noted in the thesis or dissertation. For example, a footnote stating: “Reproduced (or “Reproduced in part”) with permission from [FULL REFERENCE CITATION]. Copyright [YEAR] [COPYRIGHT OWNER].”
 - Materials on the internet are automatically copyrighted by the person posting the materials. Care should be taken in posting research results prior to their publication elsewhere since some journals consider materials posted on the web to be “prior publication” and will not consider the manuscript for journal publication. Consult the author guide for the journals pertinent for publication of the student’s research prior to posting information on the web. This includes conference publications or presentations that conference organizers might post on the web as well.
 - Copyright laws pertain to MS theses as well as PhD dissertations. The rules are enforced for PhD dissertations when they are submitted to ProQuest/UMI[®]. Although this same enforcement does not happen for MS Theses, it is still expected that they obtain required permissions for the use of copyrighted materials in their theses. In addition to complying with the laws, enforcing this requirement also helps to teach our students about the appropriate use of intellectual property.
 - The thesis author automatically and immediately owns the copyright of materials in the thesis (or has obtained permission to use the material by current copyright holders). However, students can include a copyright notice in their thesis/dissertation. The notice, which can be included on the page just after the title page should state: “Copyright [YEAR], [STUDENT NAME]”, OR “© [YEAR], [STUDENT NAME].” Registering the copyright with the Library of Congress is technically optional. However, you have limited rights to protect your copyright (e.g., to file an infringement lawsuit) unless it was registered before the infringement occurred.

Preparation:

Thesis copy should be printed on a laser printer. The text of the thesis should be double spaced with the exception of long quotations. A one and one-half (1½) inch margin on the left-hand side and one (1) inch margin on all other sides is required. Print should appear on only one side of the paper.

Each page in your thesis should be assigned a number. Page numbering may be done on the top right-hand corner or bottom center; numbering should be consistent throughout the thesis. For the preliminary pages, generally small Roman numerals are used (i, ii, iii). The numbering begins with ii; the title page counts as page i, but the number does not appear. The remainder of the thesis, including text, illustrations, appendices, and bibliography are numbered in Arabic numerals (1,2,3).

The University requires that the title page of the thesis be in the format shown as Exhibit A. All students are required to include a signature page signed by the appropriate committee members (see Exhibit B).

If actual photographs are used in the thesis, original photos are required in both copies submitted to the graduate school coordinator. Photographs should be dry mounted, secured to the page using a glue stick.

Digital photographs and all graphics must be included at a high (600 dpi) resolution. Fuzzy graphics will not be accepted. The use of color in graphics is acceptable as long as black and white reproduction of the graphic can still be interpreted.

Numbers and captions for figures should appear under the figure. Figures bound horizontally should be placed such that the top is at the bound edge of the thesis. Horizontally bound figures should be captioned on the edge opposite the bound edge of the thesis.

Table captions should be included above tables.

Common order of the thesis contents are:

- Title Page
- Committee Signature Page
- Abstract
- Acknowledgments
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables
- List of Illustrations
- Text
- References
- Appendices

Thesis Defense

You or your advisor/department are responsible for making arrangements for a room and advertising of your thesis defense. Thesis copies should be submitted to committee members 10 working days prior to the scheduled defense date so a proper review can be made.

Submitting your Thesis

Once all corrections have been completed and the committee, departmental and school signatures obtained, two copies of the signed final thesis are to be submitted to the Graduate School for the Graduate Dean's signature. The original will not be signed by the Dean and will not be accepted as a copy. The Department should also receive one copy of the final thesis to be kept in the Departmental library. The departmental thesis copy must be bound in an appropriate manner. The thesis must also be submitted on CD ROM to the CSOE Graduate Coordinator. The CDs should contain two files: (1) the complete thesis (title page through appendices), and (2) the title page and abstract only.

The following completed items are obtained from the Departmental Graduate Coordinator and are to be submitted with the final thesis copies:

- A Graduate Student Completion Notice

- Final degree program form
- Withdrawal form (including International Withdrawal Form if an International student)
- Termination form

Exhibit A – Title page for master's thesis

CLARKSON UNIVERSITY

<TITLE>

A Thesis

By

<Name>

Department of <XXX>*

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Science, <XXX>**

Date

Accepted by the Graduate School

_____, _____
Date, Dean

*Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering or replace "Department of ____" with "Center for the Environment" for ESE or "Coulter School of Engineering" for Engineering Science.

**Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Engineering Science, Environmental Science and Engineering.

Exhibit B – Signature page

The undersigned have examined the thesis/dissertation entitled "**Thesis Title**" presented by **Name**, a candidate for the degree of **Master of Science (Degree**)**, and hereby certify that it is worthy of acceptance.

Date

Advisor

Examining Committee*

Examining Committee

* Please type each Committee Member's name under their signature line.

Exhibit C: Sample Letter requesting permission to use copyrighted materials³

[letterhead stationery or return address]

[Date]

[Name and address of addressee]

Dear _____:

[Optional beginning sentence: This letter will confirm our recent telephone conversation.] I am completing a doctoral dissertation at _____ University entitled "_____." I would like your permission to reprint in my dissertation excerpts from the following:

[Insert full citation and description of the original work.]

The excerpts to be reproduced are: [insert detailed explanation or attach copy].

The requested permission extends to any future revisions and editions of my dissertation, including non-exclusive world rights in all languages, and to the prospective publication of my dissertation by UMI. These rights will in no way restrict republication of the material in any other form by you or by others authorized by you. Your signing of this letter will also confirm that you own [or your company owns] the copyright to the above-described material.

If these arrangements meet with your approval, please sign this letter where indicated below and return it to me in the enclosed return envelope. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

[Your name and signature]

PERMISSION GRANTED FOR THE
USE REQUESTED ABOVE:

[Type name of addressee below signature line]

Date _____

Instructions for permission letters:

- Be sure to include your return address, telephone and fax numbers, and date at the top of the letter.
- Spare no effort in confirming the exact name and address of the addressee. Call the person to confirm the copyright ownership.
- State clearly the name of your university and your dissertation's title.
- Describe precisely the proposed use of the copyrighted material. If necessary or appropriate, attach a copy of the quotations, diagrams, pictures, and other materials. If the proposed use is extensive, such as the general use of an archival or manuscript collection, describe it in broad and sweeping terms. Your objectives are to eliminate any ambiguities and to be sure the permission encompasses the full scope of your needs.
- The sample signature form at the end of the sample letter is appropriate when an individual grants the permission. When a company, such as a publishing house, is granting permission, use the following signature format:

PERMISSION GRANTED FOR THE USE REQUESTED ABOVE:

[Type name of company]

By: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

³ From: Crew, K.D., Copyright Law and Graduate Research: New Media, New Rights and Your Dissertation, ProQuest Information and Learning, Ann Arbor MI, 2002. http://www.proquest.com/products_umi/dissertations/copyright/