

THESIS & DISSERTATION MANUAL

**Virginia Commonwealth University
Graduate School**

**Approved by the Graduate Council
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THESIS AND DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS

I. PREPARATION OF THESIS/DISSERTATION

A. Introduction

This manual serves as a guide to prepare graduate theses and dissertations submitted by all schools within Virginia Commonwealth University. It describes the desired format and appearance of the traditional print thesis/ dissertation, the arrangement of the contents, and procedures concerning duplication, binding, and microfilming. Information concerning electronic submission has been added. Questions concerning the content of the thesis and its organization should be discussed with the student's thesis/ dissertation advisor and advisory committee (and the graduate program director, if appropriate).

It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with all of the rules and procedures that apply to thesis/ dissertation preparation and final committee approval. A checklist in Appendix 1 helps to ensure that all thesis/dissertation procedures have been completed.

B. Print Technical Specifications

1. Paper

It is important to use a white, permanent, durable paper for the original and the photocopies. Do not use erasable paper, correcting tape, or correction fluid. No corrections should be made on the paper copy at all. A 20-lb. neutral pH bond paper is the standard for all archival documents.

Most American paper companies were producing acid-free papers by 1995. Even though the paper is not labeled "acid free" or "pH neutral" or "thesis/dissertation quality", the paper will meet the requirements for permanence and durability. Papers labeled bond, photocopier, laser, text, or opaque papers are acceptable. Special finishes and cotton content have no relevance to permanence or durability and should be avoided.

Choose a paper with grain parallel to the binding edge. Books bound on the 11" side have the grain running along the 11" side. Most commercially produced paper has grain running along the longer edge. It may not be marked on the packaging but this is called "long grain" paper. "Short grain" papers have the grain running along the short edge and "short grain" is often marked on the packaging. Paper bound against the grain will warp in the binding process.

Paper comes in a variety of weights and textures that correspond to the paper's thickness. The weight and texture of the paper is indicated on the packaging label. Generally, 20-lb. bond paper is used and commercially bound by gluing the single sheets together using a nonyellowing, permanent but flexible adhesive. This binding process cannot accommodate paper heavier than 24 lb. or text blocks thicker than 2-inches (50mm). A 20-lb. bond paper is the standard for all archival documents and best for the binding process. Adhesion problems occur when different types of papers are mixed, such as photographic film paper with bond.

Theses and dissertations thicker than two inches have two options: 1) to oversew in one volume, thus requiring a margin width of 1½-inch on all sides; or 2) to divide into parts, thus incurring an additional binding charge for the work. Papers heavier than 24 lb. must be oversewn. The maximum spine width for oversewing is 5-inch (125mm). If the text is divided into two or more parts, additional signature pages and table of contents must be included to be bound in the front of each of the parts. The spine information will indicate the part number after the title.

2. Special/Mixed Formats

Special papers, fold-out sheets, or other mixed formats included in the text should be clearly indicated on a separate sheet titled "Special Instructions" submitted on top of the signature page, with one sheet of "Special Instructions" per title. This will prompt the Libraries to identify the special formats and pass on appropriate instructions to the commercial binder. Other special formats could include computer diskettes, slides, maps, and other attendant materials to the text. Usually a pocket is constructed inside the back cover to enclose these materials. Additional charges may apply to some formats, and others may be rejected for commercial binding. It may not be possible to bind unusual sizes and paper folds. The VCU Libraries is not responsible for binding nontraditional or unusual formats but makes every effort to collect and preserve works in nontraditional formats. The Libraries Preservation Department staff are available to consult with students on special formats.

3. Photographs

Students who submit theses and dissertations for binding with original photographs must be aware of problems that may arise in the binding process. The added bulk of mounted photographs results in a binding unsuitable for easy use and longevity. A blank page inserted before each page with a mounted photograph helps prevent the pages from curling. The best alternative is to reproduce photographs with high quality digital photocopying, a service available from most commercial copy services. This is recommended especially when many photographs accompany text. Original photographs must be professional-quality black and white. Black and white photographs are necessary for clear capture on microfilm and are expected to last up to 100 years. Color photography has a life expectancy of less than 25 years. Most photographs will reproduce acceptably on positive microfilm but will lack clarity on xerographic copies made from the microfilm. If photographs must be mounted, glue sticks or spray mount adhesives clearly labeled as nonacidic and nonyellowing must be used. Other types of adhesives break down over time, causing deterioration to the paper and photographs. Students should check with the Chair of their thesis/dissertation committee to determine which medium is appropriate for their projects.

4. Typing

All textual material should be typewritten or laser printed with resolution at or exceeding 600 dpi. Type produced by dot matrix and ink jet printers are not acceptable for clarity or for permanence. Inks from dot matrix and ink jet printers fade quickly.

Standard font size is 12-point or 10 characters per inch and should be used throughout the thesis/dissertation. A standard typeface such as Courier or Times Roman should be used. Nonstandard type-faces such as script are not acceptable. Italics are permitted for mathematical expressions and scientific names of genera, species, and the like. Special symbols may be drawn in black India ink. If students anticipate publication of their theses or dissertations, they should consider the medium of publication likely to be used when preparing the thesis/dissertation manuscript. For example, lettering on original graphs and drawings should be large enough so that it can be reduced effectively for publications.

The text of the manuscript should be double spaced, but long tables, long quotations (defined as 100 words, or as stipulated within the student's discipline and applied consistently), footnotes, and multi-line captions should be single-spaced.

Students are encouraged to provide sample pages of their theses/dissertations to their advisors (and the graduate program director, if appropriate) to ensure that manuscript requirements are met.

5. Margins

Margins around the text on a page must be 1¼ inch. All tables and figures should conform to the margin requirements. Photographic reduction is acceptable and may be necessary. Text or graphics should never cross these margins.

6. Pagination

Every page on which any text, figure, table, or drawing appears is counted and numbered with the following exceptions: the signature page and the cover sheet preceding the appendices; the title page and the abstract are counted but not numbered.

All numbers are placed without punctuation in the upper right-hand corner, 1 inch (25mm) from the top edge and 1¼ inch (32mm) from the right margin, except on the first page of chapters, where the number is centered 1 inch from the bottom edge. The preliminary pages are numbered consecutively in lower case Roman numerals placed in the upper right-hand corner. The first page to be numbered will be the first page following the title page, and it will be number **ii**. The text and reference pages are numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals, beginning with **1** on the first page of the text.

Authors must ensure that texts are complete and that all pages are in the correct order in all copies. Neither the Libraries nor the bindery will collate pages.

7. Footnotes

Footnoting practices differ widely among the disciplines. Students should follow the practice most commonly used in their disciplines or the instructions of their thesis/dissertation advisors following approved departmental policy. If footnotes are used, they usually are placed on the pages they annotate and should be separated on the page from the text by a line extending two inches from the left margin. If the discipline requires footnotes with a chapter, then the footnotes are to be indicated by a superscript and numbered consecutively using Arabic numerals. The first line of the footnote is to be indented. If the footnote is more than one line in length, typing is to be single-spaced. When more than one footnote is used on a page, footnotes should be separated by a double space. The specified margins and font must be maintained when footnotes are used.

8. Tables and Figures

The word “table” designates tabulated numerical data used in the body of the thesis/dissertation and in appendices. The word “figure” designates all other nonverbal material, such as illustrations, charts, graphs, maps, photographs, drawings, and diagrams.

Tables and figures are numbered in separate series. Each table and figure, including any in the appendix, must be numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals in its own series. The captions for figures and tables must be identical with those used in the list of tables and the list of figures in the preliminary pages. Table titles are typed above the table and figure titles are typed below the figure.

Oversized tables, graphs, and figures that cannot be reduced in size should be folded in from the fore edge at least ¼” so it will not be trimmed in the binding process. Be sure to include a note labeled “Special Instructions” with information about the folded pages. See Section I.B.2. “Special/Mixed Formats.”

Microfilming is a black-and-white photographic process. For this reason, illustrative material drawn or computer-generated in black will reproduce satisfactorily, while colors will appear as slightly varying shades of gray. Lines on graphs should be identified by labels or symbols rather than colors. Shaded areas (such as countries on a map) will have better contrast if cross-hatching is used instead of color.

In addition to being filmed as 8½ x 11 sections, each oversize map will be filmed as one exposure at the end of each dissertation, reduced and reproduced by xerographic process, and inserted at the back of the dissertation paper copies.

C. Electronic Theses and Dissertations

VCU accepts electronic theses and dissertations (ETD). Departments and Advisory Committees may require printed copies and it is up to the student to understand the policies and procedures of the departments and committees.

When the student's Advisory Committee approves the work, the student is responsible for turning in a completed original signature sheet to the Libraries. The ETD will not be approved until the Graduate School receives the completed signature sheet.

See <http://etd.vcu.edu> for more information.

D. Formatting Help

A template with pre-set margins, pagination and arrangement of contents is available at <http://www.library.vcu.edu/services/binding.html> along with additional help guides for formatting text. The template is a guide only. Students must follow the department's style sheet for capitalization, underlining, and citation.

E. Arrangement of Contents

The thesis/dissertation typically includes the following parts arranged in the order given below. Students must follow the department's guidelines for content and formatting.

1. Front flyleaf (blank)
2. Approval sheet (Mandatory)
3. Copyright page (Recommended)
4. Title page (Mandatory)
5. Acknowledgment or dedication page
6. Table of Contents (Mandatory)
7. List of tables/figures/abbreviations/symbols
8. Abstract (Mandatory)
9. Body of thesis or dissertation (chapters)
10. Reference material or bibliography
11. Appendices
12. Vita
13. Back flyleaf (blank)

1. Approval Sheet/Signature Page (Mandatory)

The function of the approval sheet is to enable the student's director, committee, and the dean of the school, or the dean's representative, to indicate that the work satisfies the thesis or dissertation requirement for the particular degree. It includes the title of the thesis or dissertation, the student's name, and places for the prescribed signatures (see Appendix 2A). The signatures on two copies should be originals and rendered in black ink.

Theses and dissertations that do not have the signature page completed by the student's entire committee, School/College Dean and the Dean of the Graduate School cannot be accepted by the VCU Libraries and will be returned to the school or department.

2. Copyright Page

Copyright is vested upon creation of any original work. Although it is not required, students may indicate copyright with a separate sheet following the prescribed copyright form (see Appendix 2B). See also Section IV. "Microfilming and Copyrighting."

3. Title Page (Mandatory)

The title page is counted as page **i**, but the number is not typed on the page. The title should be centered with the first line of the title beginning two inches from the top of the page. Words are underlined in the title only when they themselves are titles or when they are scientific terms that customarily are underlined. The title should use descriptive words that will ensure electronic retrieval. Use word substitutes for formulae, symbols, and superscript.

The partial fulfillment statement should begin two lines below the title. The final line of the title page shows the date that the thesis/dissertation was approved by the committee. It is typed at the bottom margin, 1¼ inch from the bottom of the page. The student's name and degree information and the thesis/dissertation director's name, title, and department should be situated evenly within the remaining space (see Appendix 2C).

4. Acknowledgment Page

An acknowledgment page expressing the student's recognition of and appreciation for any special assistance is optional, but customarily included. If it is used, the word **Acknowledgment** should be centered without punctuation two inches from the top of the page. The text of the acknowledgment should begin on the fourth line below. This page should be numbered as **ii** (See Appendix 2D).

5. Table of Contents (Mandatory)

The contents page should be headed **Table of Contents**, with the heading centered without punctuation two inches from the top of the page; the listings begin at the left margin four spaces below the heading. The Table of Contents lists all material following the Contents page. The titles of chapters or parts or sections must be listed and worded exactly as they appear in the body of the thesis or dissertation. The page number for the start of each part is listed flush against the right margin on the same line as the last word of the division heading. Any space between the last word of the title of a part and the page number can be filled with a dot leader (see Appendix 2E).

6. Lists of Tables/Figures/Abbreviations

The format for the List of Tables and the List of Figures is the same as for the Table of Contents (see Appendix 2F). The List of Abbreviations or symbols should follow the form normally used in the student's discipline and approved by the school dean.

7. Abstract (Mandatory)

The abstract is an essay summary of the thesis/dissertation: a statement of the experiment or problem, the procedure followed, the results, and the conclusions. The abstract of a doctoral dissertation should follow scrupulously the instructions given here, since it will be published in Dissertation Abstracts International without revision or editing. The maximum length for a dissertation abstract is 350 words; for a thesis, it is 150 words. It should be a succinct account allowing readers to make an accurate decision as to whether the full contents will aid their review.

The heading **Abstract** is centered two inches from the top of the page. The title of the dissertation, typed in all capital letters, begins at the left margin four lines below the heading. The student's full name and degree are typed two lines below the title. The partial fulfillment statement, which should follow exactly the pattern of the partial fulfillment statement on the title page, is typed two lines below the student's name. **Virginia Commonwealth University** should be typed two lines below the partial fulfillment statement, followed by the year in which the degree is granted. The name, title, and department of the major director, again following the pattern of the title page, is typed two lines below the name of the institution. The body of the abstract, typed and double-spaced, begins on the fourth line below the major director information (see Appendix 2G). Include pertinent place names, full names of people

and other proper nouns that are useful in electronic retrieval. Diagrams, charts, tables, or other illustrated materials and formulas or equations must not be included in the abstract. Display symbols, as well as foreign words and phrases, clearly and accurately. Include transliterations for characters other than Roman and Greek letters and Arabic numerals as well as accents and diacritical marks.

As with the Title Page, the Abstract page is assigned a number, continuing the consecutive Roman enumeration begun with the Title Page, but the number is not typed.

8. The Text Body

The text, the body of the thesis or dissertation, is to be typed and double-spaced using one side of each page. Chapters will begin a page. The heading for the division should be centered without punctuation two inches below the top of the page, the next beginning four lines below the heading. The pages of the text are numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals from the first page of the text through the bibliography and the vita. More specific information on the format and appearance of the document appears in Sections I.B.5-9.

9. Reference Material or Bibliography

The reference section should begin with a cover sheet headed **Bibliography** or **List of References** or **Literature Cited** or other heading as determined by the discipline, centered without punctuation. This page is counted and numbered. The heading is repeated on the first page of the bibliography itself, two inches from the top, centered, and without punctuation. The list of sources begins four spaces below the heading.

The sources themselves frequently are arranged in alphabetical order by the author's last name or the first major word of the title of anonymous publications, but some disciplines may suggest a different grouping of sources. The precise content of the entry should be determined by the discipline, but the intent is to provide all of the information necessary for the reader to locate and consult the sources. Regardless of the form used, each citation should include the title of the article, author's name, the journal in which it is published, the volume number and year, and pages. Format of literature citations should conform to those used by the major journals in the investigator's specific field. Entries should be double-spaced with single spaces within entries.

Because the thesis/dissertation is considered a professional contribution, students should follow the method of annotation used in their disciplines. Most scientific journals publish instructions to authors on required manuscript style and format. The three style manuals listed below are commonly used and can be helpful references. When contradictions arise, however, the style manual approved by the school normally takes precedence.

Campbell, William Giles, and Stephen Vaughan Ballou. Form and Style: Theses, Reports, Term Papers. Latest Edition, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Turabian, Kate. A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. Latest Edition, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Latest Edition.

Except where specifically contradicted by The Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Manual, students should follow the style manual used in their disciplines.

10. Appendix(es)

The appendix provides a place for supplementary material that is not necessary to the text. Tables too detailed for text presentation, technical notes, schedules, forms, case studies, and illustrative material are common appendix materials. Each category of material should be

given a separate number or letter following the same consecutive sequence. Appendixes can be titled descriptively at the discretion of the author but if one is titled, all must be.

The heading **Appendix** (followed by a letter or number) should be centered two inches below the top of the page. If a descriptive title is used, it is centered two lines below the heading. Text or illustrative material begins four lines below the title. Each page of an appendix is numbered.

11. Vita

The vita is a brief biographical sketch of the writer, giving date and place of birth, statement of present citizenship, education (institutions attended), degrees and honors, accomplishments, the titles of publications, teaching or professional experiences, and any other relevant data (see Appendix 2H). This section should be headed **Vita** with the word centered two inches below the top of the page and the text beginning four lines below. The page is numbered.

F. Exception to Guidelines

The thesis/dissertation manual provides a general set of guidelines approved by the University Graduate Council. However, the student's thesis/dissertation committee is the final arbiter concerning the thesis/dissertation's final acceptability. The committee's responsibility includes approving style and format, and technical and professional competency.

G. Number of copies

Students must confirm the number of required print copies (if any) for each committee member's review. Students must also confirm the number of required print copies (if any) and the process for turning in print copies to the department. Some schools require students to turn in final unbound copies to the Dean's Office while others prefer students to turn in copies directly to the VCU Libraries. Unless the student is submitting electronically, the VCU Libraries requires one print copy of a thesis and two print copies of dissertations. Authors may have up to ten personal copies bound.

The original must be identified clearly by the word "Original" written in soft pencil on the back of the title page. The original will be sent for microfilming and held in the Special Collections and Archives on the appropriate campus.

H. Forms

Ph.D. candidates are required to publish with ProQuest (formerly UMI) and complete the necessary forms. Master's candidates have the option to publish with ProQuest. Forms are available through ProQuest by emailing disspub@umi.com, department dean's offices, and the VCU Libraries web page <http://www.library.vcu.edu/services/binding.html>. The VCU Libraries manages the contract with ProQuest Publishing Services and collects the forms.

Students who are turning in work for binding must complete the VCU Libraries Processing Form, also found at <http://www.library.vcu.edu/services/binding.html>. Check the web page for additional forms that may be required.

I. Charges for Print Theses and Dissertations

The VCU Libraries manages binding, publishing, and distribution of theses and dissertations. The author is responsible for all charges associated with printing, binding, microfilming, and electronic submission. See VCU Libraries Thesis and Dissertation Services page at <http://www.library.vcu.edu/services/binding.html>

1. Binding

Copies will be bound by the VCU Libraries' binding contractor. Personal copies of theses or dissertations requiring more than one volume per copy (i.e., more than two inches thick) will be charged accordingly, although authors may request that a single oversewn volume up to five inches be used instead with no additional charge. All bindings will be black buckram with letters stamped in gold foil. No other colors are available. Use the Processing Form at <http://www.library.vcu.edu/services/binding.html> to determine current charges.

2. Shipping

The VCU Libraries will ship bound copies to the author if paid in advance. Copies will be sent via the VCU Libraries' contract shipper and insured up to \$100. The VCU Libraries will not ship outside the United States. VCU Libraries is not responsible for work lost in the mail service. Authors must include a destination address in the Processing Form.

3. ProQuest (formerly UMI) Charges for Dissertations

ProQuest provides publishing and preservation services for theses and dissertations worldwide. The company's thesis and dissertation databases have been designated a "Library of Record" by the U.S. Library of Congress and will be kept in perpetuity.

a. Required Services

VCU requires that all dissertations be published with ProQuest according to charges set by ProQuest. ProQuest's "Full Publishing Service" includes the creation of a microfilm master of the dissertation or thesis, and the preparation and listing of the abstract in Dissertations Abstracts International (DAI). The DAI subject databases are widely available to many professional society and research center websites.

Doctoral students must complete a form called the ProQuest Doctoral Dissertation Agreement Form. Copies of the forms are available through ProQuest by e-mailing disspub@umi.com, department dean's offices, and the VCU Libraries web page <http://www.library.vcu.edu/services/binding.html>. The VCU Libraries manages the contract with ProQuest Publishing Services and collects the forms. Photocopies of the form are acceptable but signatures must be original.

b. Optional Services

ProQuest offers optional services to authors, which are paid in addition to VCU Libraries charges and must be accompanied by the ProQuest Dissertation Agreement Form signed by the author. See <http://www.library.vcu.edu/services/binding.html>.

4. ProQuest (UMI) Charges for Theses

VCU does not require master's thesis publication with ProQuest; however, the service is available to those desiring it. All ProQuest charges for theses are optional. The ProQuest "Full Publishing Service" includes the creation of a microfilm master of the thesis, preparation of the abstract, and listing in Master's Abstracts International.

Masters students requesting publishing must complete a form called the ProQuest Thesis Agreement Form. Copies of the forms are available through ProQuest by e-mailing disspub@umi.com, department dean's offices, and the VCU Libraries web page <http://www.library.vcu.edu/services/binding.html>. The VCU Libraries manages the contract with ProQuest Publishing Services and collects the forms. Photocopies of the form are acceptable but signatures must be original.

ProQuest offers optional services to authors, which are paid in addition to VCU Libraries charges and must be accompanied by the ProQuest Thesis Agreement Form signed by the author. See <http://www.library.vcu.edu/services/binding.html>.

J. Payment

1. Online Processing Database

Students must register their thesis or dissertation online and get a statement of charges for processing and binding from the Libraries' Online Processing Database at <http://www.library.vcu.edu/services/binding.html>. The information provided allows faster processing and accurate cataloging of the work.

2. Payment at VCU Libraries Business Office

The VCU Libraries Business Office is located on the second floor of Cabell Library, Room 201. Students must pay all fees at the time the theses or dissertations are delivered with MasterCard, Visa, Discover, cash, check or money order (payable to "VCU Libraries"). The University Cashier's Office will not accept payment for theses and dissertations.

3. Payment by Department or School

Departments that pay for a portion of the library process or binding charges must authorize all thesis/dissertation charges to accounts with a memo on department letterhead, including the name of the student, the account number to charge, and the authorizing contact person and phone number. Students will bring the memo to VCU Libraries at the time of payment and receive a receipt to return to the paying department. The charge will be processed through the on-line IDT system.

K. Distribution of Bound Copies

VCU Libraries will send departmental and author copies to the department or school after they are bound unless shipping has been paid for in advance. It is the responsibility of the department or school to distribute the copies to the author and to the committee chair or thesis/ dissertation supervisor. Bound copies will not be released to anyone other than the department or author without written notification to the VCU Libraries Preservation Office.

VCU Libraries will retain two copies of a dissertation and one copy of a thesis. In both cases, the original will be housed in Special Collections and Archives. The second copy of a dissertation will be placed in the library stacks of the appropriate campus for circulation.

L. Access

1. Library Catalog and Shelving

VCU Libraries will provide access to all VCU theses and dissertations through its online catalog. The primary copy will be housed in Special Collections and Archives as an archival copy, and will be for building use only. The copy will be maintained in the Cabell Library if produced on the Monroe Park Campus or in the Tompkins-McCaw Library if produced on the Medical College of Virginia Campus. The second copy of a dissertation will be available for circulation in the open stacks of the appropriate campus.

2. Special Collections and Archives

Special Collections and Archives (SCA) accepts requests to photocopy portions of VCU theses and dissertations. The VCU Libraries provides access, regardless of format, in accordance with current Copyright Acts and Laws.

3. ProQuest

All dissertations submitted for degrees from Virginia Commonwealth University will be sent to ProQuest for microfilming and scanning <http://www.umi.com/hp/Support/DServices/>. Microfilming is an option for theses. Abstracts from all dissertations are published in Dissertation Abstracts International (DAI). Abstracts from theses are published in Masters Abstracts International (MAI). By creating a microfilm master, works become available to the research community on demand. Researchers can obtain copies of works in print, or on positive microfilm or microfiche. Print copies are made from reproducing the microfilm negative. The finished book is approximately 6½" x 8¼".

ProQuest adds dissertations to Dissertation Abstracts Online, which electronically reproduces the full text of dissertation and master's abstracts published by UMI since July 1980. ProQuest's computerized search and retrieval system will cite works in response to any inquiry using search terms included in the title or abstract. ProQuest agrees to pay a royalty of 10% on all sales, providing sales exceed \$10 in a calendar year.

As DAI indexes keywords of the title, it is desirable that the dissertation title meaningfully describe the content of the dissertation. Authors must choose a subject category selected from the ProQuest "Subject Categories" listing for DAI subject access. Authors can choose up to five additional keywords and two additional subject categories to enhance access to their work. This information is indicated on the ProQuest Agreement Form.

To expand access to graduate research, UMI Dissertations Publishing has distributed subject segments of the UMI dissertation abstract database and ordering information to many professional society and research center websites. The entire database and ordering information have been available through on-line providers such as OCLC, Dialog and STN for over a decade. Authors can update address information for royalty tracking by e-mailing disspub@umi.com.

4. Electronic Theses and Dissertations

VCU ETDs are stored on a dedicated server and are available at <http://etd.vcu.edu>. ETDs are also available in the VCU Libraries Catalog.

M. Further Information

Inquiries for further information on technical specifications may be addressed to:

*Patricia Selinger (patricia.selinger@vcu.edu)
Head of Preservation Department
828-1096*

II. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OF DISSERTATION (CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE)

A. Requirements

The thesis or dissertation requirements may differ for individual schools and departments. Graduate students are advised to check with the appropriate individuals in their schools to determine specific requirements and to review the degree requirements as listed in the VCU Graduate and Professional Programs Bulletin.

B. Thesis or Equivalent, Non-Thesis

Master's candidates may have a thesis (or its equivalent in the form of a research project, performance, exhibit, or other production) requirement. In some departments, Master's degree candidates may elect a non-thesis option. In such cases, the department may allow a candidate to

change from the thesis to the non-thesis option (or vice versa) once. Such action requires written approval of the department head and the faculty advisor and/or student's advisory committee.

C. Dissertation

All Doctoral candidates are required to prepare dissertations.

D. Acceptance for Defense

Students are encouraged to take an original copy of their theses/dissertations to the chairs of their committee to have the copy checked for format errors before reproducing the documents. Copies are prepared according to standards approved by the students' schools. These copies are to be provided in temporary binders.

Following general acceptance of a document's format, style and readiness for final defense by the advisory committee, the final defense is scheduled. The final defense examination schedule is distributed by the student's advisory committee to the university community (Appendix 3).

E. Final Approval

At the time of the defense, a thesis or dissertation must be approved by members of a student's advisory committee with no more than one negative vote. A committee member's approval is given by signing the cover page of the document. A disapproving committee member should elect to provide a written dissenting opinion to be bound with the thesis.

III. DUE DATES FOR THESIS OR DISSERTATION

The student's faculty committee will determine the dates of the oral defense and submission of drafts to the committee. Ordinarily, one week will elapse between the final oral examination, making final typing corrections, and submitting the final, ready-to-bind copies to the Dean for signature. The student should allow for this period in planning to meet the university deadlines posted in the VCU Graduate and Professional Programs Bulletin. The thesis or dissertation copies, (ready for library binding) are due in the Dean's office no later than the deadline for final oral examination set by university administration and posted in the university calendar as published in the VCU Graduate and Professional Programs Bulletin under "Conferral of Degree Dates" for August, December, and May. Some schools require that degree completion forms be submitted with the thesis or dissertation. A school may set an earlier date. Students should be aware of all forms necessary for graduation required within their schools. Submission of the thesis or dissertation to the Dean's office means it has been defended successfully as judged by the student's committee and department chair.

IV. MICROFILMING AND COPYRIGHTING

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by

(Student's name in full,
Student's degrees with
Institutions and dates)

Director: Thesis/ Dissertation director's name,
Title, and department

Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, Virginia
Month, Year

APPENDIX 2D

SAMPLE: ACKNOWLEDGMENT PAGE

Acknowledgment

The author wishes to thank several people. I would like to thank my wife, Kathy, for her love, support and patience during the past eight or so years it has taken me to graduate. I would like to thank my parents for their unending love and support. I would also like to thank Dr. Anderson for his help and for his direction with this project. Last but not least, I would like to thank City Stores, Inc. and my manager John Bellinger for allowing me to use this subject for my thesis.

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SAMPLE: ABSTRACT

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(Abstract, typed and double-spaced, starting at this point, continuing on text page, if needed.)

APPENDIX 2H

SAMPLE: VITA

Vita

Kelly Angelica Smith was born on May 26, 1970, in Lancaster County, Virginia, and is an American citizen. She graduated from Jefferson High School, Kilmarnock, Virginia in 1986. She received her Bachelor of Arts in English from Hollins College, Hollins, Virginia in 1990 and subsequently taught in the public schools in Roanoke for three years. She received a Master of Arts in English from University of Richmond in 1993.

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