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Georgia State University Policy

2.10.16 Electronic Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations

Approved on: 04/19/2012

By: Senate

Effective Date: 04/19/2012

Policy Summary

The University requires all students who produce a master´s thesis or doctoral dissertation in fulfillment of his/her degree to upload the final version of these documents to ScholarWorks@Georgia State University as a condition of the award of the degree.

Applicability/Eligibility

Students

Administration of Policy

Mandating Authority:
University Senate

Responsible Office(s):
University Library
Senate Library Committee

Responsible Executive(s):

Background: None

Committee Members: None

Full Policy Text

In order to insure that all master´s theses and doctoral dissertations produced at Georgia State University are captured, preserved, and appropriately made available, the University requires all students who produce a master´s thesis or doctoral dissertation in fulfillment of his/her degree to upload the final version of these documents to ScholarWorks@Georgia State University as a condition of the award of the degree.1 Programs requiring extra time to submit master´s theses or doctoral dissertations will have no more than five years to meet the submission requirement.

Rationale or Purpose

Georgia State University (GSU) began collecting electronic master´s theses and doctoral dissertations in 2005. Electronic master´s theses and doctoral dissertations (ETDs) contribute to worldwide graduate education and unlock the underutilized results of graduate education for the scholarly community. The Electronic Master´s Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation initiative at GSU has several purposes, including making available many scholarly works that were previously inaccessible or available only through inter-library loan.

The main goals of GSU´s Electronic Master´s Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation initiative include the following: having graduate students learn about electronic publishing and digital libraries, applying that knowledge as they engage in their research and build and submit their own ETDs; creating a comprehensive digital library by collecting, cataloging, archiving, and making ETDs accessible to scholars worldwide; unlocking the potential of its intellectual property and

products, and improving, through more effective sharing, the dissemination of graduate research results.

When the initiative began at GSU, the University Library stopped collecting print copies of master´s theses and doctoral dissertations. Since 2005, the only library copies of these materials are digital and they reside in ScholarWorks@Georgia State University. In addition, students are asked to submit their doctoral dissertation to UMI/ProQuest for inclusion in the international database, *ProQuest Dissertations & Theses*.[2] However, there is no way for the University Library to track whether this is taking place and a 2011 audit of doctoral dissertations produced at GSU since 2006 showed that out of 1,128 doctoral dissertations produced, 16% (181) are not in ScholarWorks@Georgia State University, and 17% (194) are not in the ProQuest database. Though there may be valid reasons for some small number of these documents not being stored in the ScholarWorks@Georgia State University, the absence of so many suggests a need to move this initiative to a more broadly-accepted practice that has the support of the University Senate.

Policy History

None

Cross References

None

Appendix

None

Additional Information

1The results of a CNI survey in 2008 showed that of the 88 US higher education institutions contacted, 43% mandated ETDs for both doctoral and master´s students, 53% mandated ETDs for doctoral students only. Within Georgia, the University of Georgia and Georgia Institute of Technology both require ETD submissions. Emory does not mandate ETDs, however, since fall 2010, all Emory theses and dissertations produced by Emory are available only in their electronic form. 2According to ProQuest, "this database is the world´s most comprehensive collection of dissertations and theses from around the world, spanning from 1861 to the present day."

Additional Helpful Resources