

Faculty of Graduate Studies: Thesis, Dissertation, Project, and Capstone Guidelines



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Introduction

Your thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone represents the culmination of your academic work in the Faculty of Graduate Studies at Concordia University of Edmonton (CUE). It also represents the quality and depth of your learning at CUE.

These guidelines will assist you in the preparation of your thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone to ensure that your work is properly formatted and will be available to other students and researchers at CUE and elsewhere. Your supervisor will be involved in the final preparation of this document, but in the end it is **your** responsibility to ensure that your final document meets all of the requirements outlined in this guide, your supervisor and committee, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies at CUE.

Carefully review the following guidelines before you begin preparing your document. Doing so will prevent time-consuming revisions and reformatting problems that can make all of the difference in meeting the timelines for convocation. (Please see **Appendix A.**)

Structure of Thesis, Dissertation, Project, and Capstone Documents

All CUE graduate students submitting thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone documents should consider including the following elements in their final submission:

- Title Page (required)
- Prefatory Pages (optional)
- Signed Approval/Signature Page (required)
- Dedication Page (optional)
- Abstract (required)
- Preface (optional)
- Acknowledgements (optional)
- Table of Contents (required)
- List of Tables (required, if tables included in the main body of the document)
- List of Figures (required, if tables included in the main body of the document)
- Reference List / Bibliography (required).

All CUE graduate students are expected to follow and implement the specific style guidelines that apply to their respective disciplines and students should work with their supervisors to ensure that their final submissions meet the requirements of their academic discipline. (See the next section of this document for more details.)

Program-Specific Style Guidelines

When finalizing theses, dissertations, projects, or capstone documents, all CUE graduate students are expected to follow and implement the style guidelines that apply to their respective disciplines, as well as the **CUE Checklist for Submission of Documents (see Appendices B and P)**.

The specific style requirements for every graduate program at CUE are as follows:

- **Environmental and Public Health:** CSE (Council of Science Editors) style
- **Educational Leadership:** APA (American Psychological Association) style
- **MISAM and MISSM:** APA (American Psychological Association) style, IEEE Reference style, or another style as assigned by the primary advisor to the final research project
- **Psychological Assessment:** APA (American Psychological Association) style

Please work with your supervisor(s) to ensure that you are following the correct style and citation requirements for your thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone document.

For more complete information about the style and citation guides that apply to your particular graduate program, please consult the CUE library guide located at

<https://concordia.ab.ca/library/help/citation-guides/>

Copyright

Graduate students should understand their rights as creators of copyrighted works and their responsibilities as users of copyrighted works. The following is a brief summary of a complex area of the law and is not a substitute for legal advice, which may be necessary in certain circumstances.

Copyright law grants creators of the following types of works the right to profit from and control the use of their works. It also extends certain rights to users of these works:

- *Literary works* (e.g. books, articles, theses, dissertations, tables, computer programs and any other written, text-based works, whether fiction or nonfiction);
- *Dramatic works* (e.g. screenplays, scripts, DVD recordings, and YouTube videos);
- *Musical works* (e.g. sheet music and sound recordings); and
- *Artistic works* (e.g. photographs, diagrams, charts, maps, paintings and other visual works)

Creators' Rights

Creators own the copyright in their works unless they assign (i.e. transfer) their copyright to another person or entity, such as a publisher. Copyright owners have the right to profit from their works by controlling activities related to their works, such as the reproduction and distribution of their works. Even if creators assign their economic rights to another person or entity, creators retain moral rights in their works, such as the right to be associated by name with their works, and the duration of copyright is determined by the life of a work's creator. In Canada, copyright in most creative works lasts for the duration of the creator's life plus 50 years, after which the work moves into the public domain and can be used freely. In many other countries, copyright lasts for the life of the creator plus 70 years.

User's Rights

Users can reproduce an insubstantial portion of a copyrighted work without the copyright owner's permission as long as the author is credited. A short quotation that is clearly attributed (cited) in a thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone document is not an infringement of copyright.

However, including an entire table, figure, photograph, or lengthy quotation from an article or book in a thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone document may be considered a substantial portion that

requires the written permission of the copyright owner unless the reproduced portion falls within the Copyright Act's fair dealing exception. This exception allows users to copy a substantial portion of a copyrighted work without the copyright owner's permission or the payment of royalties if the copying is fair when assessed according to the Supreme Court of Canada's six-point fairness test (CCH Canadian Ltd. v. Law Society of Upper Canada). This test requires users to consider the following factors to determine fairness:

- Purpose of the copying (research, private study, education are "fair" purposes)
- Number of copies of the work that will be made (the more copies made and the wider their distribution the less fair the copying)
- Amount of the work copied (copying a small portion of a work is more fair than copying a large portion)
- Nature of the work (copying an unpublished work may be considered more fair than copying a published work)
- Availability of alternatives to copying (copying an out-of-print work may be considered more fair than copying a readily available work)
- Economic impact of the copying

A fair dealing analysis is not always straightforward. Making a photocopy of an entire journal article in preparation for writing a thesis, dissertation, project or capstone document will probably be viewed as fair dealing and not an infringement of copyright because the purpose is to support research, the number of copies is limited to one, and the economic impact on the copyright owner is negligible. Including that same content in the appendix of a thesis, dissertation, project or capstone document, however, may be considered copyright infringement and not fair dealing because the copyrighted material will be distributed worldwide when it is added to the institutional repository, potentially affecting the copyright owner's economic rights, among other rights.

There are other instances where a substantial portion or all of a work can be used without written permission. Users can reproduce and use part or all of an entire work that has moved into the public domain. Users can also reproduce a substantial portion or all of a third-party copyrighted work if it explicitly states that it can be used for specific purposes without the permission of the copyright holder. Some government publications, for example, explicitly state that they can be reproduced in

whole or in part for non-commercial use. Publications with certain categories of Creative Commons licenses also allow broad use with minimal restrictions; it is critical to read and comply with all requirements of a Creative Commons license. The following guidelines may also be helpful:

- [CAUT Guidelines for the Use of Copyrighted Material](#)
- [Fair Dealing Policy for Universities \(Universities Canada\)](#)

When to Obtain Written Permission to Include Copyrighted Works

Graduate students need to obtain written permission from the copyright owner (who may or may not be the creator of the work) if they plan to include a substantial portion of a third-party copyrighted work in their thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone document unless it falls into one of the following categories:

- The portion meets the requirements of the fair dealing exception described above;
- The work from which the portion is taken contains an explicit statement indicating that reproduction without the copyright owner's permission is allowed; or
- The work from which the portion is taken is licensed under a Creative Commons license that explicitly allows reproduction without the copyright owner's written permission.

Examples of the types of copyrighted materials requiring written permission include, but are not limited, to the following:

- **Images** such as photographs, tables, figures, graphs, maps, and drawings obtained from copyrighted sources such as journal articles, books, websites, or other published or unpublished copyrighted sources. Note that altering an image in any way (e.g. cropping it, resizing it, modifying its colour, adding arrows or other visual call outs, etc.) requires the copyright owner's or creator's permission.
- **Long quotations or excerpts from written works** such as books, journal articles, newspaper articles, magazine articles, and industry standards, as well as translations of public domain works when the translator has not been dead for 50 years.
- **Testing instruments** such as surveys, questionnaires, forms and standardized tests.

This list is not exhaustive. Graduate students who are unsure as to whether or not permission is

required to include a particular type of third-party copyrighted work in their thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone document should consult [CUE's Campus Copyright Officer](#).

Because graduate work deposited in CUE's institutional repository will be accessible in countries where copyright lasts longer than it does in Canada, graduate students who intend to include substantial portions of works that have moved into the public domain in Canada but have not yet moved into the public domain in countries that operate under the "life + 70 years" rule must ensure that they obtain written permission to reproduce such works in their thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone document.

How to Obtain Written Permission to Include Copyrighted Works

Identifying the copyright owner and determining how and where to submit a permission request may or may not be straightforward. Large publishers often include a permissions link on their website that explains the permission request process and includes a fillable request form, but smaller publishers and authors who have retained the copyright in their works may be difficult or impossible to contact, and may not have an established procedure for negotiating permission to use their works. It is important to provide the copyright owner with as much detail as possible. Make sure the following information is included in the permission request:

- The purpose of the request (i.e. indicate that you wish to include the specified work in a thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone document that will be added to CUE's institutional repository and Library and Archives Canada's online theses collection, both of which are accessible worldwide);
- The specific details of what will be reproduced (i.e. the title of the specific portion or item you wish to use, the title and publication details, including the ISBN or ISSN, of the larger work from which the portion is taken, and the specific page number or page range of the portion); and
- An offer to include a permission statement of the copyright owner's choosing.

Submit permission requests as far in advance as possible to give copyright owners adequate time to respond, and to allow for alternate arrangements to be made in the event that a copyright owner refuses to respond to or grant a permission request. If a permission request is ignored or denied, or if

the royalties asked for are in excess of what a graduate student is willing to pay, the copyrighted work in question must be removed from the thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone document.

Students with specific questions about the process of obtaining written permission to use copyrighted material should contact [CUE's Campus Copyright Officer](#). Responsibility for identifying and contacting the copyright owner, negotiating and obtaining written permission to use a substantial portion of a copyrighted work, and paying any royalties ultimately rests with the graduate student.

Graduate Students as Copyright Owners

A thesis, dissertation, project or capstone document is an original expression of ideas in a fixed form; it is, therefore, a copyrighted work and **the student is the copyright owner**.

Graduate students are required to provide the Faculty of Graduate Studies with:

- two unbound paper copies of their thesis, dissertation, or project document,
- a PDF copy of their thesis, dissertation, or project document, and
- a signed non-exclusive, worldwide license granting CUE the right to add the thesis, dissertation, or project document to the institutional repository, and in the case of a thesis or dissertation, to upload it to the [Library and Archives Canada online theses collection](#), making the work publicly available in countries that have different copyright laws and protection than Canada.

The non-exclusive nature of the license enables a student to grant another publisher the right to distribute the work. A graduate student still retains the copyright in the thesis, dissertation, project or capstone document after signing the non-exclusive, worldwide license.

Further Information on Copyright

Graduate students are encouraged to consult the following sources of information on copyright and to contact the Campus Copyright Officer regarding specific questions related to copyright:

- the Government of Canada's [Copyright Act](#)
- the Canadian Intellectual Property Office's [Guide to Copyright](#)
- University of Alberta's Copyright Office's [Copyright Issues: Preparing Your Graduate Thesis](#)

Signed Approval/Signature Page

This page must be included in your thesis, dissertation, project, or capstone document, and it must include the following information:

- the title of your work, which is centered, UPPERCASE and in BOLD letters;
- your name as author, which is centered, UPPERCASE and in BOLD letters;
- the names and most recent degrees of the committee members (including your supervisor), as well as the name and most recent degrees of CUE's Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies;
- the signatures of the committee members and CUE's Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies;
and
- the date.

Please see **Appendix C** for a sample Signed Approval / Signature page.

Appendix A: Timelines for Graduation

Please confirm registration and complete these activities
well in advance of the deadlines listed below.

Thesis / Dissertation
(Students must plan a minimum of 12 months to complete this activity.)

Activity	Spring Graduation & Convocation	Fall Graduation	Winter Graduation
Name of external examiner forwarded to Dean of FGS for approval and invitation to participate	Oct. 1	Mar. 1	July 1
Final draft to supervisor and all members of thesis / dissertation committee	Nov. 15	Apr. 15	Sept. 1
Final draft of thesis /dissertation approved by committee and submitted to FGS for forwarding to an external examiner (at least one (1) month prior to defense)	Dec. 1	May 1	Sept. 15
Thesis /dissertation oral defense	Jan. 15	June 1	Oct. 15
Signed thesis / dissertation Oral Defense Report to FGS	Jan. 30	June 15	Nov. 1
Final draft of thesis /dissertation with two (2) sets of signature pages signed by committee along with recommendation for the Award of the Degree form to FGS (for formatting approval and signature of the Dean of FGS)	Feb. 15	June 30	Nov. 15
Application for Graduation	See Academic Schedule	See Academic Schedule	See Academic Schedule
One (1) final unbound copy of thesis / dissertation sent for approval to Dean of FGS	Mar. 25	July 25	Dec. 8
Once the thesis /dissertation has received final approval from the Dean of FGS, the student must provide to the FGS the following: i) two (2) official copies; ii) an electronic version; iii) a completed Permission Form to Host, Photocopy, and Lend Culminating Activity form ; and iv) if necessary, a completed Withhold Request Form	May 1	Aug. 15	Dec. 17

Note: A Thesis / Dissertation Defense will NOT be scheduled in August or December.

Note: If a student wants a bound version of the thesis /dissertation for personal reasons, then he or she will require an additional set of original signatures pages, and will make their own arrangements for the binding and the related costs.

Project
(Students must plan a minimum of 8 months to complete this activity.)

1. All MISSM and MISAM Projects

Activity	Spring Graduation & Convocation	Fall Graduation	Winter Graduation
Approval of student supervisor 3rd week of the term where Research Methods II is taken.	Nov. 1	Mar. 1	Sept. 1
Approval of proposal; and submission of final draft of document to instructor of Research Methods II and Final Research Project	See Instructor of Research Methods II and Final Research Project	See Instructor of Research Methods II and Final Research Project	See Instructor of Research Methods II and Final Research Project
Application for Graduation	See Academic Schedule	See Academic Schedule	See Academic Schedule
Once the Research Project has received final approval from the Master's Policy Committee of the Program, the student must provide to the FGS the following: i) two (2) official copies; ii) an electronic version; iii) a completed Permission Form to Host, Photocopy, and Lend Culminating Activity form; and iv) if necessary, a completed Withhold Request Form	Not later than 48 hours after the end of the final exam period	Not later than 48 hours after the end of the final exam period	Not later than 48 hours after the end of the final exam period

2. All Projects except MISSM and MISAM Projects

Activity	Spring Graduation & Convocation	Fall Graduation	Winter Graduation
Approval of student supervisor, committee and proposal	Nov. 1	Mar. 1	Sept. 1
Final draft of document to supervisor	Jan. 15	May 15	Oct. 15
Final draft of document with signature page signed by committee along with the recommendation for the Award of the Degree form to FGS (for APA formatting approval and signature of the Dean of FGS)	Feb. 15	June 30	Nov. 15
Application for Graduation	See Academic Schedule	See Academic Schedule	See Academic Schedule
One (1) final unbound copy sent for approval to Dean of FGS	Mar. 25	July 25	Dec. 8
After the Research Project has received final approval from the Program Coordinator, the student must provide to the FGS the following: i) two (2) official copies; ii) an electronic version; iii) a completed Permission Form to Host, Photocopy, and Lend Culminating Activity form; and iv) if necessary, a completed Withhold Request Form	Apr. 15	Aug. 15	Dec. 17

Note: If a student wants a bound version of the project for personal reasons, then he or she will require an additional set of original signatures pages, and will make his or her own arrangements for the binding and the costs related there.

Appendix B: Sample Signature/Approval Page

← 1.5" →

← 1" →

**EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS FOR ALBERTA TEACHERS
DURING THE LOUGHEED YEARS**

SANDRA WHITTEN

Approved:

Supervisor: John Smith, Ph.D. Date

Committee Member: Jane Smith, Ph.D. Date

Dean of Graduate Studies: R.J. McLeod, Ph.D. Date

Appendix C: Checklist for Submission of Final Documents

Submission

- Document initially submitted: in hard copy prior to formal approval
- Follow formal approval document submitted: two official copies and an electronic version containing one separate file with Abstract and one separate file with the Document (in PDF format).

Title Page

- Correct Formatting

Signature Page

- Correct Formatting
- Signed by Supervisor and Committee Member(s)

Abstract

- No indentation (all one paragraph)
- 250 word maximum

Paper

- One side of paper only
- Standard-sized (8.5" X 11") high quality white bond
- Document should be formatted as per requirements provided in the course outline for Final Research course.

Canadian spelling preferred; British and American are acceptable but be consistent