



Guidance for Dissertations and Theses Containing Previously Published Works

A thesis presents substantive and original work by the author. If a student would like to include original material in their thesis that has appeared previously in publications that they authored or co-authored, the following guidelines should be followed:

- The thesis should reference the published essays or paper(s), and the student should verify that they have permission to use copyrighted material (text, figures, data) in the thesis.

If the previous publication has co-authors that are in addition to the student's primary research advisor, then the thesis committee members are the deciders if the student's contributions either solely or collaboratively are sufficient for the dissertation. The following guidelines are recommendations for the student and for the thesis committees.

- There should be some significant part of the work that the student took the lead on.
- The student should describe in the thesis their personal contributions to the work in a paragraph at the beginning of the chapter.
- The previous publication in its entirety can be included in the theses (assuming the correct copyright permissions have been obtained).
- If the published paper was co-authored by multiple students, then there should be discussions among the students and their advisors so there is a common understanding about these considerations (such as what the personal contributions were and who took the lead).

Additionally, while two common formats of dissertations have been the treatise format or a format containing a collection of stand-alone chapters under an umbrella theme, this does not have to be the case. Academic programs and dissertation committees are welcome to consider theses that are a collection of published essays or papers that contribute to more than one thematic area. For example, if a student has published essays or papers that individually make substantive contributions, then the dissertation committee may decide that the total contributions of these papers are sufficient for the dissertation even though they may not be collectively substantive in a single thematic topic area. *This option may be very beneficial to a student who had to switch topics or advisors during their studies.*