Graduating with Research Distinction: Thesis Requirements in Arts and Sciences

1. Students in good standing who maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA may complete a thesis (or creative project) and graduate with research distinction. For further information about the thesis option, see http://undergraduateresearch.osu.edu/thesis.

2. At the time of graduation, students must have a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 on at least 60 graded Ohio State (semester) credit hours to graduate with research distinction.

3. The Department of Mathematics has different requirements from those listed below (graduate-level course work must be taken in addition to the approved major program; contact the math department for details).

4. A student may complete a thesis within his/her major or in other disciplines, provided the student has a faculty research advisor serving as his/her project advisor (the faculty research advisor may be tenure-track, clinical, research, or auxiliary faculty). Lecturers and others who do not have tenure-track faculty status may not serve as the designated project advisor.

5. The academic unit that sets and enforces the thesis requirements will be the faculty project advisor’s home department (or school). Check with each academic unit for details. If the advisor’s home department does not offer undergraduate courses, the requirements of the student’s major apply.

6. To qualify for graduation with research distinction, the student must submit a Thesis Application to Ed Quinn in the Arts and Sciences (ASC) Advising office, 100 Denney Hall. The Thesis Application must be signed by the faculty project advisor; this ensures that all parties have a common understanding of the proposed plan to complete a thesis for a given graduation deadline. The Thesis Application must be approved by Ed Quinn before the student registers for thesis (4999) course work and begins the research.

7. The Thesis Application must be submitted to Ed Quinn, 100 Denney Hall, at least one term before your graduating term.

8. Students must register for at least 4 research thesis (semester) credits, using course number 4999. (Note: Psychology requires enrollment in a 4999 course sequence.) Under semesters, course number 4998 will designate general undergraduate research credits, and course number 4999 will designate research thesis credits. (Other options may include 2998/2999 and 3998/3999, depending on the academic unit.) If your department does not offer 4999 at the time you need to enroll, select 4999H instead.

9. Acceptable standards for the written paper of the research thesis or project will be determined by the academic unit. Note that in some departments in which the thesis is a project or performance (e.g., Art, Architecture, Music), some written component is also required.

10. A satisfactory oral defense of the thesis or project is required. The oral defense will last one hour and will be evaluated by a committee of at least two faculty members, one of whom must have tenure-track status. The chair of the oral defense committee is the faculty project advisor. Including a third faculty committee member is optional. For definitions of other faculty appointments, see http://trustees.osu.edu/rules/university-rules/rules5/ru5-19.html.
11. The Certification for Graduation form confirming successful defense of the thesis or project will be submitted by the thesis committee chair to Ed Quinn in 100 Denney Hall. Documentation of any authorized exceptions to the requirements for graduating with research distinction also must be provided by the thesis committee chair to the coordinator, Ed Quinn, a minimum of two weeks prior to graduation.

12. For the transcript designation, a student who completes a thesis in his/her major will graduate with research distinction in [the major]. Students who complete approved interdisciplinary research may substitute the interdisciplinary field for the major in the transcript designation. Others will simply graduate with research distinction.

13. The approved thesis or project written component will be submitted to the Ohio State Knowledge Bank no later than the last day of the graduating term. If confidentiality is desired, the thesis can be embargoed when it is submitted. Instructions for submissions of Undergraduate Research Theses to the Knowledge Bank are available at http://go.osu.edu/kb-research-theses-instructions.

OTHER INFORMATION:

Links to Web sites of Departments with Other Requirements


Psychology: undergrad.psy.ohio-state.edu/html/honors.php

Work on the Project

The faculty project advisor is responsible for overseeing the entire project. The student and faculty member should establish mutually acceptable guidelines for frequency of consultation, submission of preliminary drafts, and deadlines for submitting work. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in termination of the project.

If the faculty member will be absent during any part of the project, s/he must appoint another faculty member to supervise the project during that period, and the coordinator, Ed Quinn should be informed of this appointment. If the student will be conducting research off campus, the student and faculty member should devise mutually acceptable guidelines for maintaining contact and reporting progress. In some cases, this might include the designation of an "on-site" advisor, and the coordinator, Ed Quinn should be informed of these arrangements. The project advisor also should inform the student if it appears that his/her research will require approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for human subjects research or approval of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) for animal subjects research.
Completion of the Thesis and Oral Defense

If it appears that the work, while satisfactory, will not be of such superior quality to qualify for graduation with research distinction, the student and faculty member may agree to continue the project as regular independent study or to terminate the project. The coordinator, Ed Quinn, must be notified of the decision not to complete the project for graduation with research distinction. If the project is not completed, the faculty advisor may still judge that sufficient work has been done to merit a grade of "S" (or, in the case of Psychology, a passing letter grade) in the 4999 course hours.

In most cases, completion of the thesis and oral examination will take place during the semester in which the student graduates, but earlier dates are acceptable in most departments. When the faculty member determines that the project is complete, s/he will convene a two-member examination committee, as noted above. The examination must include a one-hour oral defense. Both members of the committee must be present at the oral examination (video-conferencing is allowed if necessary).

The faculty member should inform the student well in advance of specific departmental requirements with regard to written examinations, major area or course work requirements, and his/her expectations for the oral examination. While there is no single format which would do justice to all disciplines, it is encouraged that the examining committee broaden the scope of the examination beyond a simple review of the thesis. In this manner, the integrity and rigor of the examination process will be maintained and enhanced.

After satisfactory completion of the oral examination, the examining committee will certify the student as qualifying for graduation with research distinction. The certification form must be returned by a specified date (usually a minimum of two weeks before graduation) to the Research Distinction coordinator, Ed Quinn, in 100 Denney Hall. The form will be sent via email to all approved candidates.

Final Copy and Title Page of the Thesis

**Deadline**: The thesis must be submitted electronically to the University Libraries’ Knowledge Bank no later than the last day of final examination week of the term in which the student will graduate.

**Manuscript Format**: We do not require any particular manuscript format and leave that decision to the project advisor, who is familiar with the practices of the discipline.
Title Page: The title page for the thesis should follow the example below:

Religious Pilgrimage in Medieval England: 1100-1300

Research Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for graduation

“with Research Distinction in Medieval and Renaissance Studies” in the undergraduate colleges of
The Ohio State University

By
Jane Doe

The Ohio State University
June 2011

Project Advisor: Professor John Smith, Department of History

Please note: Students pursuing graduation with research distinction by completing a thesis in an area outside the major field should not include the area of distinction on the title page. Using the example above, if the student was not majoring in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, she would have written, “Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for graduation with Research Distinction in the undergraduate colleges of The Ohio State University.”

Graduation

Candidates for graduation with research distinction still must submit the standard Application for Baccalaureate Degree. This application should be submitted through an appointment with the research distinction coordinator, Ed Quinn, by calling (614) 292-6961, one term prior to the expected date of graduation.

Candidates who file a graduation application with Ed Quinn in 100 Denney Hall and complete all requirements for the Thesis will have the appropriate designation inscribed on the diploma.

Any questions should be directed to Ed Quinn, Thesis Coordinator, (614) 292-6961, quinn.142@osu.edu. To schedule an appointment for general inquires, call (614) 292-6961. The Thesis Application as well as further information and a list of Frequently Asked Questions can also be found on the http://undergraduate research.osu.edu/thesis.