



THE ELECTRONIC THESIS AND DISSERTATION (ETD) PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

All University of Miami graduate students with a dissertation or thesis requirement must complete an electronic thesis or dissertation (ETD) that will become part of the [Scholarship@Miami ETD Repository](#). The ultimate goal of this process is for each graduate student to produce one final PDF of their manuscript that is uploaded to the Scholarship@Miami ETD repository by the end of the semester in which they wish to graduate.

The ETD process can be painlessly navigated by planning ahead. Besides knowing what the ETD deadlines are for the semester in which you want to graduate, it is helpful to know what is expected in the preparation of your final thesis, dissertation, or doctoral/lecture recital essay. Information about preparing the ETD is available in the “[Formatting the ETD](#)” section of the ETD Web site and the document and the document titled “[Organization, Formatting, and PDF Conversion Guidelines for Theses, Dissertations, and Doctoral/Lecture Essays](#).”

THE ETD PROCESS

At the start of the semester in which you plan to defend, visit the [ETD Web site](#), for general information about preparing your ETD and completing your submission. ETD deadlines, formatting guidelines; downloadable templates for formatting the unnumbered front matter, table of contents, and landscaped figures/tables; forms; links; and information about preparing the final PDF of your manuscript are posted on the ETD Web site.

Plan Ahead for Your Defense and Submission

Know what the ETD deadlines are for defending and submitting your ETD so you can graduate on time. Talk to your advisor/committee early in the semester about scheduling a date for the defense of your dissertation, doctoral essay, or thesis.

Below are the ETD submission deadlines for a desired graduation date in the next three semesters:

ETD Submission Deadlines Per Desired Graduation Semester

Semester You Wish to Graduate	Deadline to Defend ¹	Deadline to Submit Full Draft for Formatting Review ²	Deadline to Complete Formatting Review and Produce Final PDF & Submit 3 Required ETD Forms ³	Deadline for Completion ⁴
Fall 2026	Nov. 6, 2026 ¹	Nov. 16, 2026 ²	Dec. 2, 2026 ³	Dec. 9, 2026 ⁴
Spring 2027	Mar. 26, 2027 ¹	Apr. 9, 2027 ²	Apr. 28, 2027 ³	May 5, 2027 ⁴
Summer 2027	June 25, 2027 ¹	July 9, 2027 ²	July 23, 2027 ³	July 30, 2027 ⁴

¹ **Deadline to Defend:** All defenses for students expecting graduation in a particular semester must take place by the date noted in the above table. All students must notify the Graduate School of the defense date by filling out the [Defense Notice form](#), before the day of defense. Students defending after noted last date to defend are not eligible to graduate in that semester. The graduation date will move to the next semester, no exceptions.

² **Deadline to Submit Full Draft for Formatting Review:** By 5:00 pm, close of business on the date noted in the above table, the student must submit to the Sr. Editor of Programs of the Graduate School for review the full draft of a thesis, dissertation, doctoral essay, or lecture recital essay draft consisting of (1) unnumbered front matter; (2)

lower-case Roman numeral page number front matter; and (3) chapters, references, appendices, etc., formatted per Graduate School formatting guidelines. The main content of the full draft due on this day is expected to be nearly final. Students may continue to make minor revisions to the draft after this date, but no new data or sections should be added at this stage. Students who do not submit a full draft for review by the date noted above will be informed that the graduation date will move to the next semester, no exceptions.

³ **Deadline for Producing Final PDF:** By 5:00 pm, close of business on the date noted in the above table, the formatting review must be completed, final PDF produced, and the [Certificate of Defense Approval Form](#), the [ETD Final Content Approval Form](#) and the [ETD Availability Agreement Form](#) must be submitted to the Graduate School by the date noted in the above table. The Graduate School must have on file all three forms fully signed for the student to receive permission from the Sr. Editor to upload the final ETD in the Scholarship@Miami repository. Students who do not produce the final PDF and submit the Certificate of Defense Approval Form, ETD Final Content Approval Form, and the ETD Availability Agreement Form by the date noted in the above table will have the graduation date moved to the next semester, no exceptions.

⁴ **Deadline for Completion:** By 5:00 pm, close of business on the date noted in the above table, students expecting graduation in a particular semester must have met all requirements associated with the Deadline for Producing the Final PDF (see above); uploaded the final PDF in the Scholarship@Miami repository; and completed online items, if required (doctoral students only). Students who do not meet the requirements outlined herein by the date noted above will be informed that the graduation date will move to the next semester, no exceptions.

Fill out the Defense Notice Form

When you have decided on a firm defense date, time, and location, please go to the Graduate School Web site to prepare the [Defense Notice Form](#). The information on the Defense Notice Form will be posted as a public event on the [Graduate School Web site](#). This form requires the signature of the student and main advisor. Please note that the defense must take place by the last day to defend deadline noted in the above calendar.

Submit a Predefense Draft for Review to the Sr. Editor (optional)

Students who want a head start on formatting issues in the ETD can request an optional predefense draft review of the manuscript from the Sr. Editor of the Graduate School. The predefense draft of your document can be sent to the Sr. Editor at grad.dissertation@miami.edu.

The predefense draft sent to the Sr. Editor for review should contain the major sections of the document formatted per Graduate School formatting guidelines. Documents can be submitted as (1) one Word file of the entire manuscript; (2) the entire manuscript separated into no more than 4 Word files; (3) one PDF of the entire manuscript (preferred). Electronic files can be e-mailed to grad.dissertation@miami.edu. If the draft in Word or PDF file is too large to send by e-mail, send a **One Drive, Box, Google Docs, Sharepoint, Dropbox, etc.**, link, to the Sr. Editor so the file can be downloaded.

The Sr. Editor will review your manuscript to make sure it conforms to the [Graduate School's formatting guidelines](#). If revisions are needed, the Sr. Editor will e-mail comments to you regarding revisions to make.

Certificate of Defense Approval Form

Please fill out the [Certificate of Defense Approval form](#) on the Graduate School Web site. Fill in the name and e-mail address of each of your committee members and the Program Director. Once completed, each committee member will receive notification that he/she must electronically sign the form to confirm your successful defense of the thesis, dissertation, doctoral essay, or lecture recital essay after you have defended. This form, when electronically signed by all committee members and the Program Director, is your proof that you passed the defense. All signees should electronically sign the form after the defense has been held, not before the defense date.

Post-Defense Formatting Reviews by Sr. Editor

After you have successfully defended, make any changes recommended by your committee in the draft in addition to those requested by the Sr. Editor if you received an optional predefense review of the manuscript, then submit the revised, post-defense draft to the Sr. Editor to begin the post-defense review at grad.dissertation@miami.edu.

The Sr. Editor will review the manuscript to make sure it conforms to the [Graduate School's formatting guidelines](#), and e-mail comments to you regarding revisions if any are needed. The Sr. Editor can review a post-defense draft in the form of (1) one Word file of the entire manuscript; (2) the entire manuscript separated into no more than 4 Word files; (3) one PDF of the entire manuscript (preferred). If the draft in Word or PDF file is too large to send by e-mail, send a **One Drive, Box, Google Docs, Sharepoint, Dropbox, etc.**, link, to the Sr. Editor so the file can be downloaded.

Several iterations of review at this stage of the process may be needed before a manuscript is deemed final, so factor that in when planning the amount of time this stage might take. The goal is to correct all formatting issues in the original word processing file(s), after which the final file(s) will be converted into one final PDF of the entire manuscript that must be approved for upload to the Scholarship@Miami ETD repository.

Do not upload your document in the Scholarship@Miami repository until you have been instructed to do so by the Sr. Editor.

FORMATTING HELP: The ETD Formatting Support Team can assist with formatting the final document. The team helps with the technical aspects of Microsoft Word formatting, offering guidance and troubleshooting support for common and complex formatting issues such as

- Pagination and layout inconsistencies (page breaks, margins, etc.)
- Table of Contents formatting errors
- Setting up headings and applying consistent styles
- Converting a Word document into a properly formatted PDF

To schedule an appointment, please use the following form, [Electronic Thesis & Dissertation Formatting Assistance](#). You can also contact the ETD Support Services via email at dfs@miami.edu. Someone will respond to your message within 24-48 hours.

Produce the Final PDF for Upload in the Scholarship@Miami Repository

No further edits recommended by the Sr. Editor? You will be instructed by e-mail to make one final PDF of your manuscript, if you have not already done so, for upload in the Scholarship@Miami ETD repository.

Please note that for preservation reasons, the final PDF uploaded in the ETD repository must be an archival PDF that has all the fonts embedded and subset fonts in the final PDF file that is uploaded in the Scholarship@Miami ETD repository. Producing the final PDF can be done using Adobe Acrobat Pro.

If you need assistance making a PDF that meets this technical requirement, please contact the ETD Formatting Support Team to schedule an appointment using the following form, [Electronic Thesis & Dissertation Formatting Assistance](#).

Access to Adobe Acrobat Professional

You can download Adobe Acrobat Pro, free of charge, by accessing the link <https://www.it.miami.edu/students/index.html#discover1>, and downloading Adobe Creative Cloud to your computer.

Uploading the Final PDF in ETD Repository

Three Required ETD Forms: All Master's and Doctoral Students

The following three forms are required to complete every ETD submission. The three forms can be accessed on the [Graduate School Web site](#).

You are required to submit these three forms to the Graduate School before you will be given permission to upload the final PDF in the Scholarship@Miami repository. The Sr. Editor will confirm that the three completed forms have been received by the Graduate School before sending you the permission-to-upload e-mail.

(1) Certificate of Defense Approval Form

The [Certificate of Defense Approval form](#) can be accessed on the Graduate School Web site. Fill in the name and e-mail address of each of your committee members and the Program Director. Each committee member will receive notification that he/she must electronically sign the form to confirm your successful defense of the thesis, dissertation, doctoral essay, or lecture recital essay after you have defended. This form, when electronically signed by all committee members and Graduate Program Director, is your proof that you passed the defense. As noted, signees should sign the form after the defense has taken place, not before the defense date.

(2) Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Final Content Approval Form

(NOTE: The [ETD Final Content Approval form](#) documents the committee's approval of the final content of the ETD.. Fill in the name and e-mail address of each of your committee members and the Program Director. Each committee member will receive notification that he/she must electronically sign the form to confirm his/her approval of the final thesis, dissertation, doctoral essay, or lecture recital essay. The Program Director will be the last person to sign the form. This form, when electronically signed by all committee members and the Graduate Program Director, is your proof that the committee approved the final document.

(3) Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Availability Agreement Form

The [ETD Availability Agreement form](#) lets the Graduate School know what online availability option you and your main advisor want for your final PDF in the Scholarship@Miami repository. When you've produced a final PDF that's been approved by the Sr. Editor, you should discuss with your main advisor which online availability option to select for your thesis or dissertation before completing this form. The three availability options are (i) Open Access or (ii) Embargo.

Doctoral Students Only (Ph.D., D.M.A., and Ed.D. Students only)

(4) Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) Survey

Ph.D., D.M.A., and Ed.D. students must complete the SED Survey online, <https://sed-ncses.org>. The SED Survey is administered by an independent organization that collects information about every student in the U.S. who receives a Ph.D. degree. Make sure you cc the Graduate School, grad.dissertation@miami.edu, with an e-mail informing us that you filled out the SED Survey. A forwarded copy of the e-mail confirmation you received from SED upon completion will also be accepted.

(5) UM Exit Survey

Ph.D., D.M.A., and Ed.D. students must complete the UM Exit Survey online. The Sr. Editor will send you the link to the UM Exit Survey by separate e-mail at the time you receive the permission-to-upload email.

ProQuest/UMI Publication Agreement: Optional for Master's and Doctoral Students

Master's and doctoral students interested in having their ETD published in a second outlet in addition to the UM ETD database may wish to submit the final PDF to ProQuest/UMI Dissertation Publishing. The ProQuest/UMI publication agreement is submitted online. Information about this will be sent to students when they are ready to upload the final PDF in the UM ETD repository.

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Your Copyright: To Register or Not to Register

You do not need to register with the Copyright Office in order to retain copyright in your work. Copyright is automatic once a work is in fixed form.

For some, however, there may be benefits to registering your work. You are required to have registered your work if you were to try to sue for infringement of copyright. Registration also allows you to sue for statutory damages (rather than just actual). However, this is often more of a concern to authors of creative or other original work.

If you deposit your ETD with ProQuest, ProQuest will make an offer to register your copyright for a handling fee. The University of Miami does not require that you register your dissertation with the U.S. Copyright Office. The decision to copyright belongs to the student. If you want to copyright your dissertation, you can accept ProQuest's offer to handle the copyright of your work for a fee, or you can register for the copyright of your work yourself by directly contacting the Copyright Office: <https://copyright.gov/registration/>.

See the Libraries' page on copyright here: <https://library.miami.edu/copyright/>.

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The Graduate School requires that your final document be in electronic format only. If you would like a bound copy of your document, you can print the hard copy from the final PDF you produced because it is formatted for binding. Please contact grad.dissertation@miami.edu for referrals to binders UM students have engaged.

If you print the bound volume from the final PDF of your document, make sure you ask the binder to print the manuscript on one side of the paper only because your document is formatted for one-sided printing.

Because the 1.5-in. left margin in the final PDF you produced is wider than the 1-in. top, right, and bottom margins in the document, a bound volume printed on both sides of the page will result in a volume that is not uniform in appearance due to the 1.5-in. left margin. You won't be happy with the way the bound volume looks if it is printed on both sides of the paper due to the offset left margin.

ProQuest:

Students who choose to deposit their ETD with ProQuest will have an opportunity to order bound copies from ProQuest when the ProQuest agreement is completed online, however, **please DO NOT order bound copies from ProQuest**. ProQuest will print the text from the final PDF you submit for the bound volume, but ProQuest will print the text on both sides of the paper only without letting you know this at the time you place the order. Unfortunately, ProQuest refuses to remove its offer to bind documents from its Web site.

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