Recommendations (approved 1-13-14) from UCGS:

UCGS Sub-committee on Academic Research Policy: 21st Century Theses and Dissertations


1. The Graduate School should reduce all formatting requirements needed for microfilming.

2. Additional supplementary materials should be accepted for submission to Proquest (following Proquest criteria) with the approval of the dissertation/guidance committee chair. There should be no formatting requirements for supplementary materials. The MSU Library may store supplementary materials per their collection criteria.

3. A public abstract that precedes the disciplinary abstract is optional and strongly encouraged. Units encouraging or requiring a public abstract must describe this in their Graduate Handbooks.

4. Public abstracts should be posted on the department/program/school website. This is up to the discretion of each unit.

5. Each unit should define an acceptable “thesis” and/or a “dissertation” for the discipline in the Graduate Handbook.

The Academic Programs catalog U-level descriptions:

Master’s thesis--none

Doctoral dissertation: “original research upon which a dissertation which makes a significant contribution to knowledge is to be prepared and published”

http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=111#s399
6. For a thesis or dissertation that consists of one or more chapters that are already published papers:

   These chapters must be introduced with the list of all authors, citation for the publication, and include a copy or notation of the written permission from the publisher (who generally holds the copyright) to reprint the article.

   If multiple articles make up the document, these must be “tied together” with a required general introduction and summary/discussion.

   The dissertation/guidance committee chair will decide any further requirements.

7. Graduate program faculty are strongly urged to consider the appropriateness of including a chapter in a thesis or dissertation that is a published paper, but that a student did not write him/herself.

8. Revision of the academic programs catalog regarding the final oral defense of the dissertation: http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=111#s401

   Addition of the highlighted sections:
   The final oral examination in defense of the dissertation is conducted and evaluated by the guidance committee and, at the discretion of the dean of the college, by one appointed faculty member whose voting status is determined by the college. Other interested faculty members and members of the public may attend the presentation portion of the examination without vote. Only Guidance committee members may attend the examination portion of the defense per individual unit guidelines. The dissertation and the student’s performance on the final oral examination must be approved by a positive vote by at least three–fourths of the voting examiners and with not more than one dissenting vote from among the Michigan State University regular faculty members of the guidance committee.