Writing Your Own Success: Theses and Dissertations at Georgia Tech

Presented by
Office of Graduate Education

Georgia Tech

About Me

- Thesis and Dissertation Coordinator since 2005
- BA in English and MA in English- Editing and Publishing
- DocuSign and IThenticate point person for OGE
- Processes on average 300 MS theses and PhD dissertations per semester

Georgia Tech

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)

RCR Training for Master's Thesis Students

- Required for any master's student who is pursuing a thesis. Options to satisfy the requirement include completing **online RCR training** OR **a graduate-level RCR course.**
- Must be completed before submitting Request for Approval of Master's Thesis Topic Form
- More information available: https://rcr.gatech.edu/masters-policy

RCR Training for Doctoral Students

- Applies to all doctoral students except those with a catalog year prior to 2011-12.
- Must complete **online RCR training** within 60 days of first doctoral semester: https://rcr.gatech.edu/online-training
- Must ALSO complete a **doctoral RCR course**, preferably within the first year of the doctoral program: https://rcr.gatech.edu/doctoral-course-requirement

Master's and doctoral students who are funded as a GRA *by a covered NSF or NIH grant or by a USDA-NIFA grant will also require RCR training; the type of training and/or the timeline may differ from that of the degree requirement. Refer to https://rcr.gatech.edu/compliance-masters or https://rcr.gatech.edu/compliance-doctoral for more information.*

Georgia Tech

For more Information about RCR

Doctoral Students

https://rcr.gatech.edu/doctoral

Master's Students

https://rcr.gatech.edu/masters-students

Contact:

Judy Willis

RCR Program Administrator

Graduate and Postdoctoral Education

Georgia Institute of Technology

Phone: 404.894.4764

judy.willis@gatech.edu

The RCR Program

Georgia Tech

Reminder: Graduate Policy on Advisement

- To allow greater flexibility for departments to determine who can serve on committee
- To be inclusive of diverse faculty titles at Georgia Tech
- To clear up confusion on the eligibility of non-tenure track faculty to serve as primary thesis advisors
- To be in accordance with peer institutions who use the term “Graduate Faculty” versus “Academic Faculty”
- Links:

GA Tech Catalog: Theses and Dissertation Policy on Advisement

Policy on Advisement: Doctoral Students

- *Who can be the Thesis Advisor?*
  - Graduate Thesis Faculty
  - If the thesis advisor is an Adjunct Faculty or part-time faculty member, then there must be a co-advisor who is a full-time member of the Graduate Thesis Faculty
- *Who is Part of the Thesis Advisory Committee?*
  - The Thesis Advisor (Chair)
  - At least three total members including the Thesis Advisor
  - A majority must be Graduate Thesis Faculty
- *Who is part of the Examination Committee (i.e. for the defense)?*
  - At least five members including the Thesis Advisory Committee
  - At least one faculty member external to the unit (either within GT or external to the Institute)
  - At least three members of the Graduate Thesis Faculty

- All related PhD forms (Candidacy and Certificate of Approval) have been updated to include space for co-advisors if necessary.

Georgia Tech

Policy on Advisement: Master's Students

- *Who can be the Thesis Advisor?*
  - Graduate Thesis Faculty
  - If the thesis advisor is an Adjunct Faculty or part-time faculty member, then there must be a co-advisor who is a full-time member of the Graduate Thesis Faculty

- *Who is Part of the Thesis Advisory Committee?*
  - The Thesis Advisor (Chair)
  - Graduate Thesis Faculty-a minimum of two members.
  - A majority must be Graduate Thesis Faculty

- All related MS forms (MS Topic and Certificate of Approval) have been updated to include space for co-advisors if necessary.

MASTERS STUDENTS

Georgia Tech

Graduation Checklist: Master's Thesis Students

Before submitting your final thesis:

Submit the following items to the Office of the Registrar:

- Online Application for Graduation (OAG)
- Approved Program of Study form (if necessary)

- Complete the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training for master's thesis students.

- Register for the appropriate number of thesis hours.

- Minimum of one hour if in last semester (only allowed once) or submit Waiver of Enrollment with thesis by the end of the registration period.

Georgia Tech

Graduation Checklist: Master's Thesis Students

Before submitting your final thesis (continued):

- The Request for Approval of Master's Thesis Topic form must be approved by the Office of Graduate Education.
- Should be submitted at least a semester prior to graduation.
- If RCR training isn't completed by the time the form is submitted, then it will not be processed. The form will be returned to the department.
- Provide a one-page biography page, which will be used for any external review committee members.

Georgia Tech

Graduation Checklist: Master's Thesis Students

Once the preliminary review is complete:

- Check your format with the Graduate Thesis Office at least 10 days prior to the deadline via email as a PDF to thesis@grad.gatech.edu
- Adhere to format in the manual available on the Theses and Dissertations portion of the Graduate Education website (www.grad.gatech.edu).
- Submit the following forms (via DocuSign) available on the Theses and Dissertations portion of the Graduate Education website:

    - Certificate of Master's Thesis Approval signed by all committee members (on same page). E-Signatures via Docusign are preferred.
    - Waiver of Enrollment Form (if applicable).
    - SMARTech agreement form.
    - Request for Withholding of Thesis/Dissertation form (if applicable).

Georgia Tech

Graduation Checklist: Master's Thesis Students

Once the preliminary review is complete (continued):

- Submit your information and a PDF of your thesis to http://thesis.gatech.edu. This electronic format allows for those searching for your document to access it via Georgia Tech's online digital repository (formally known as SmarTech).
    - Supplemental documents can be included such as data, images, and spreadsheets.
    - To embargo your publication for a year, your advisor should complete a withholding form, and you'll select the "one year embargo" option when uploading your document.

- Make any changes to the electronic document (if Graduate Education notifies you any corrections need to be made).

Georgia Tech

Graduation Checklist: Master's Thesis Students

Once the Office of Graduate Education has all of the pre-presentation and master's presentation-related documents, they will approve your thesis and let the Office of the Registrar know that you are eligible to…

GRADUATE!

Georgia Tech

Ph.D STUDENTS

Georgia Tech

Graduation Checklist: Ph.D. Students

Before submitting your final dissertation:

- Register for the appropriate number of thesis hours.
    - Minimum of one hour if in last semester (only allowed once) or
    - Submit Waiver of Enrollment with thesis by the end of the registration period.
- Complete both online and in-person Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training for doctoral students.

Georgia Tech

Graduation Checklist: Ph.D. Students

Before submitting your final dissertation (continued):

- Complete Online Application for Graduation (OAG) and Request for Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy form (Ph.D. minor letter, announcement of defense presentation, and one-page bio or vita for any external review committee members).

- Submit the following forms available on the Theses and Dissertations portion of the Graduate Education website (www.grad.gatech.edu):
    - Certificate of Dissertation Approval form (signed by all committee members). E-Signatures via DocuSign are preferred.
    - Survey of Earned Doctorates form.- submit PDF to thesis@grad.gatech.edu
    - SMARTech/Repository agreement form.
    - ONE copy of abstract and cover page. (if in a joint program, add the additional university. i.e. Emory and Georgia Tech)- can be submitted as a PDF to thesis@grad.gatech.edu

- Schedule and pass oral presentation.

Georgia Tech

Doctoral Minors

The Doctoral Minor requirement consists of:

- Minimum 6 hrs. of courses (for catalog years 2022-2023 forward)
- Minimum 9 hrs. of courses (for catalog years earlier)

- Must not be pass/fail courses. (C or higher)

- Courses should be at the 6000 level or above, but the use of certain 4000 level courses may also be approved

- Courses taken at other institutions may be included in the minor
- Minors must be completed to graduate. Ideally, students should submit the MINOR at the time of the Admission to Candidacy and no later than when applying for the OAG.
- Note: Minors do not appear on the final transcripts.

Georgia Tech

Graduation Checklist: Ph.D. Students

Once the preliminary review is complete:

- Submit your information and a PDF of your thesis to http://thesis.gatech.edu . This electronic format allows for those searching for your document to access it via Georgia Tech's online digital repository (formally known as SmarTech).
    - Supplemental documents can be included such as data, images, and spreadsheets.
    - To embargo your publication for a year, your advisor should complete a withholding form, and you'll select the "one year embargo" option when uploading your document.

- Make any changes to the electronic document (if Graduate Education notifies you any corrections need to be made).

Georgia Tech

Graduation Checklist: Ph.D. Students

Once the Office of Graduate Education has all of the pre-dissertation and dissertation-related documents, they will approve your thesis and let the Office of the Registrar know that you are eligible to…

GRADUATE!

DocuSign: GT's E-Signature Platform

The majority of PhD and MS forms are available via DocuSign. PhD forms (abstract, cover, SED certificate should be emailed to thesis@grad.gatech.edu)

These forms are **STUDENT** driven: Student must have all pertinent information to send these forms the correct routing.

Log into DocuSign with your gtAccount@gatech.edu format email (ex: gburdell123@gatech.edu) and use the BLUE COMPANY LOGIN button.

External recipients are allowed. DocuSign just requires a valid name and email address. Also, if they have an address with their university, please use associated DocuSign email.

You can look up addresses via the GT Account Lookup Icon on Esignature.gatech.edu

Please check with your department/academic unit regarding signing responsibilities for School Chair, Major Advisor, and Graduate Coordinator for respective forms.

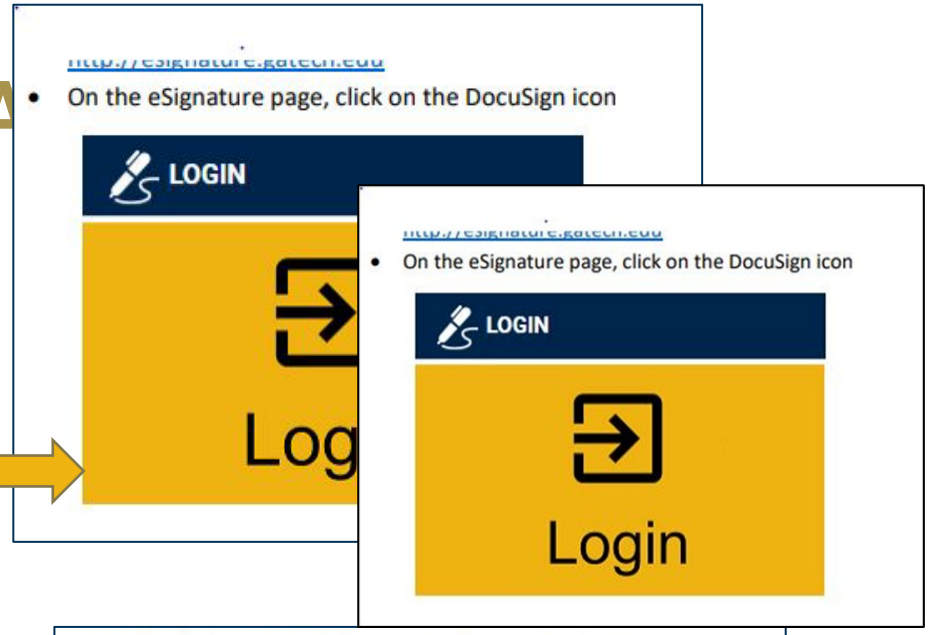
Visit
http://esignature.gatech.edu

Georgia Tech

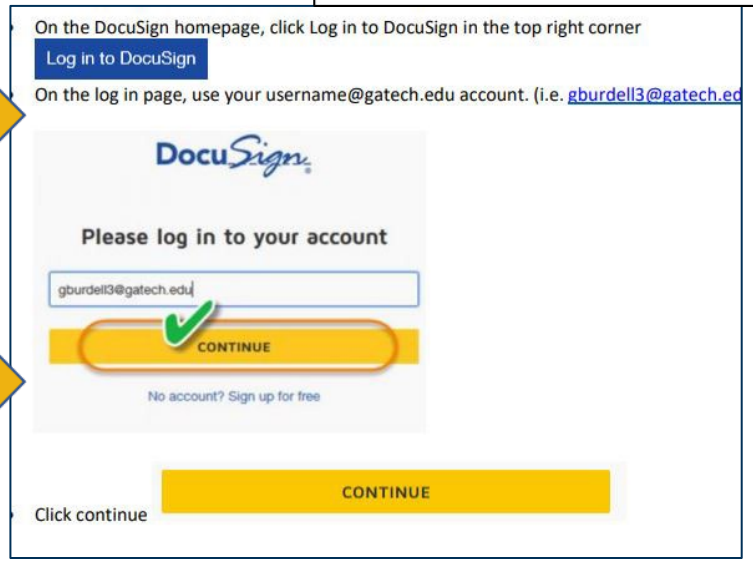
DocuSign: A

Setting up DocuSign

- Log into eSignature.gatech.edu and click the DocuSign Icon.



- Log in with your Username@gatech.edu account.

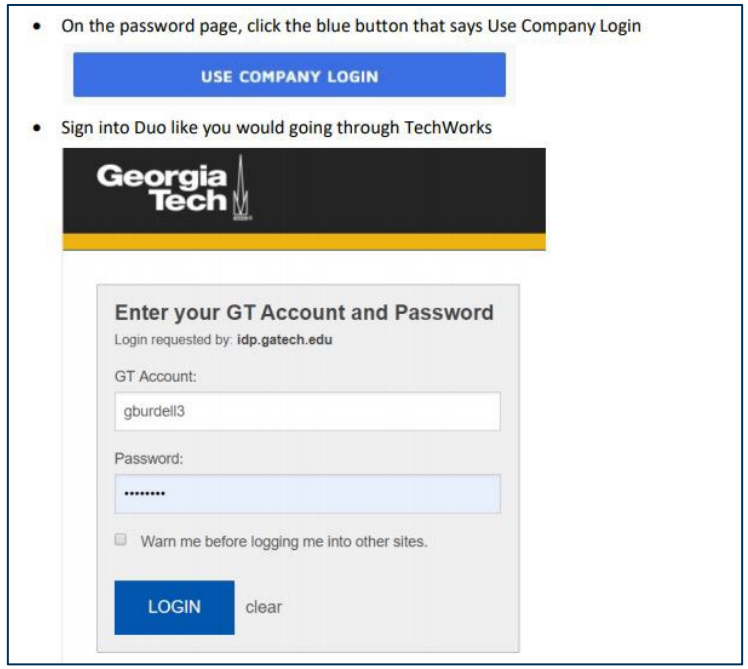


- Click yellow "Continue" button.

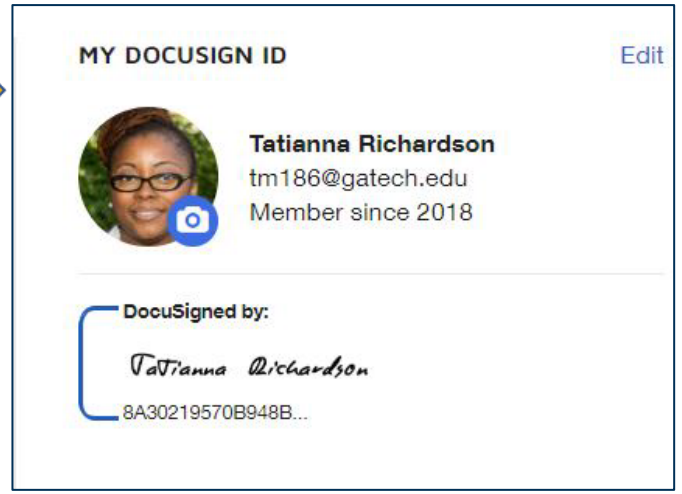
DocuSign: A Few Basics

Setting up DocuSign

- On the password page, click the **blue** Company Login button. (Sign into DUO if necessary)



- Create your Docusign ID/Signature

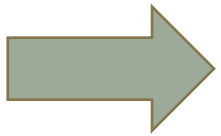


Georgia Tech

DocuSign: A Few Basics

Students: Accessing Forms

- All DocuSign forms are available on our OGE Site
- Forms that are not DocuSign or not OGE forms are indicated as such.
- DocuSign forms can be sent to committee members outside of GT. If they already have a DocuSign for their university, please have them use that address associated with DocuSign for all forms.



Forms for Master's and Doctoral Students

- Thesis/Dissertation Announcement Example (PDF)
- Request for Withholding of Thesis/Dissertation (DocuSign)
- Letters of Completion located on the Office of the Registrar's website
- SMARTech Repository Agreement (DocuSign)
- Redaction/Thesis Page Substitution Form (PDF)
- Thesis Errata Request (PDF)

Forms for Master's Students

- Request for Approval of Master's Thesis Topic (DocuSign)
- Certificate of Thesis Approval (DocuSign)

Forms for Doctoral Students

- Request for Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy (DocuSign)
- Certificate of Thesis Approval (DocuSign)
- Survey of Earned Doctorate Form (Qualtrics)
- Purpose and Use of the Survey
- Confidentiality of Survey Data
- Doctoral Minor Form (DocuSign)
- Dissertation Abstract Example (PDF)

Additional Forms

- Enrollment Waiver (DocuSign)
- GRA/GTA Late Hire Approval Request Form (DocuSign)

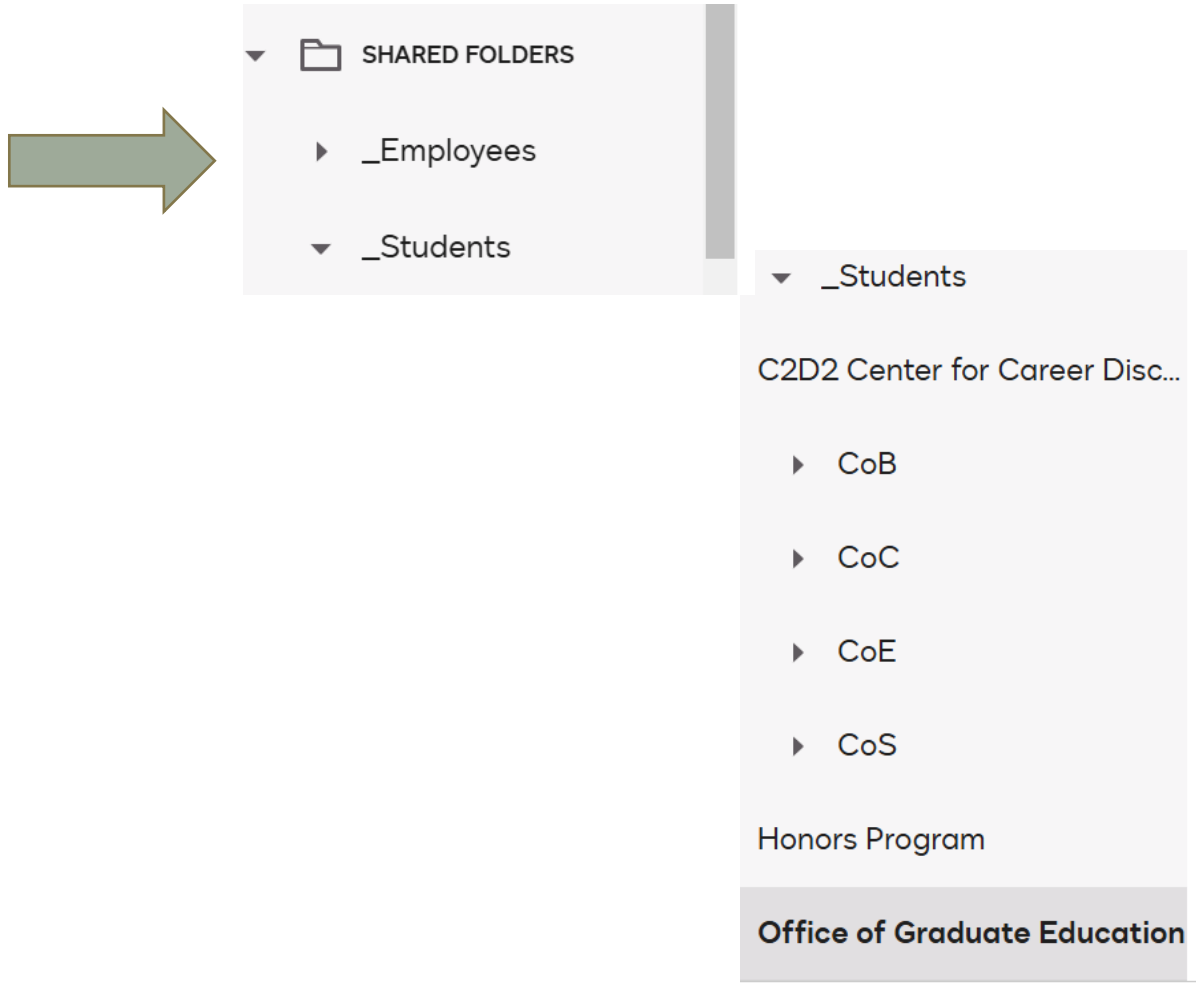
Georgia Tech

DocuSign: A Few Basics

Students and Staff: Accessing Templates

- If you need to send ONE template to a student to complete, go to Shared Folders➔Students➔Office of Graduate Education

- All OGS-related PhD and MS Forms are available via DocuSign



Enrollment during Last Semester

Things to remember:

Check your DegreeWorks for any missing documentation or requirements.

Reactivate degree petition via the OAG if necessary.

All students must be enrolled in a minimum of three hours during their last semester. Enrolling for one hour of thesis is allowed only during last semester.

Students who completed all requirements in the previous semester and don’t need to enroll during their final semester may submit an Enrollment Waiver Form.

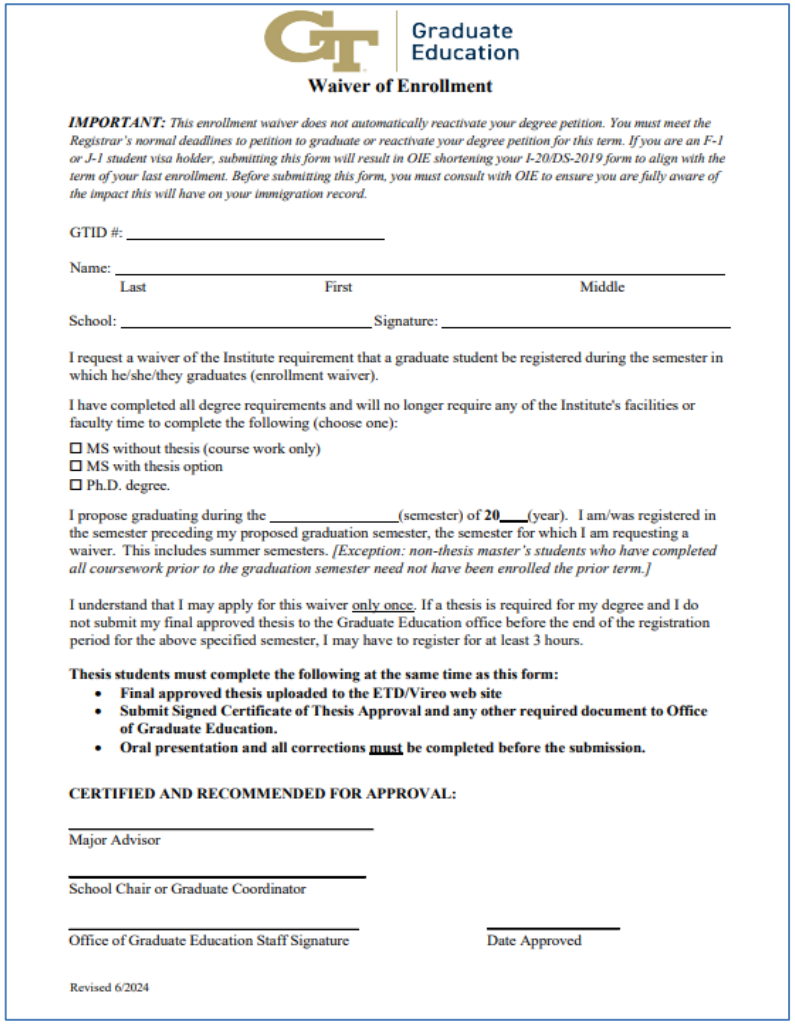
Enrollment Waivers

What it is:

- A provision which allows Thesis and Non-thesis students to complete their requirements without having to enroll
- PhD and MS Thesis students: must complete requirements by the close of registration for the semester in which they are applying the waiver/intend to graduate
- Must been enrolled in the previous semester (summer included)
- Can be used after 1 hr enrollment.
- Waivers for MS and PhD thesis students will ONLY be processed once the thesis is submitted, defense completed, and all forms received.

What it is not:

- It is not a Tuition Waiver form
- It is not a form to excuse not enrolling for a semester (including summer). Students actively working on their thesis/dissertation should be enrolled properly each semester.



Graduate Education

Waiver of Enrollment

IMPORTANT: *This enrollment waiver does not automatically reactivate your degree petition. You must meet the Registrar's normal deadlines to petition to graduate or reactivate your degree petition for this term. If you are an F-1 or J-1 student visa holder, submitting this form will result in OIE shortening your I-20/DS-2019 form to align with the term of your last enrollment. Before submitting this form, you must consult with OIE to ensure you are fully aware of the impact this will have on your immigration record.*

GTID #: _____

Name: _____
Last First Middle

School: _____ Signature: _____

I request a waiver of the Institute requirement that a graduate student be registered during the semester in which he/she/they graduates (enrollment waiver).

I have completed all degree requirements and will no longer require any of the Institute's facilities or faculty time to complete the following (choose one):

☐ MS without thesis (course work only)
☐ MS with thesis option
☐ Ph.D. degree.

I propose graduating during the _____(semester) of **20**___(year). I am/was registered in the semester preceding my proposed graduation semester, the semester for which I am requesting a waiver. This includes summer semesters. *[Exception: non-thesis master's students who have completed all coursework prior to the graduation semester need not have been enrolled the prior term.]*

I understand that I may apply for this waiver only once. If a thesis is required for my degree and I do not submit my final approved thesis to the Graduate Education office before the end of the registration period for the above specified semester, I may have to register for at least 3 hours.

Thesis students must complete the following at the same time as this form:

- **Final approved thesis uploaded to the ETD/Vireo web site**
- **Submit Signed Certificate of Thesis Approval and any other required document to Office of Graduate Education.**
- **Oral presentation and all corrections must be completed before the submission.**

CERTIFIED AND RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL:

_____
Major Advisor

_____
School Chair or Graduate Coordinator

_____ _____
Office of Graduate Education Staff Signature Date Approved

Revised 6/2024

Georgia Tech

One Hour Rule & Reduced Course Loads

- *Students may enroll in 1 credit hour **ONE TIME PER DEGREE** in the last semester of graduation.*
- *Students who have enrolled for one hour only more than one time per degree must enroll for the normal minimum of three hours in the semester of graduation.*
- *Please note that these exceptions do not alter the credit-hour load a student must take to meet financial aid, fellowship or assistantship eligibility, etc .*
- *Enrollment Waivers do not activate degree petitions. Students must reapply or have an active OAG.*
- *If students are F-1 or J-1 student visa holder, submitting the enrollment waiver form will result in OIE shortening their I-20/DS-2019 form to align with the term of their last enrollment. Before submitting this form, students must consult with OIE to ensure they are fully aware of the impact this will have on their immigration record.*
- *Students intending to enroll in the Student Health Insurance Plan must be enrolled in **a minimum of four credit hours** to participate in the plan.*
- *Students should address any questions or concerns regarding enrollment during the last semester to the Graduate Education Thesis Office before the end of registration; no additions or changes in registration are allowed after the close of registration.*

Georgia Tech

Copyright and your Thesis

- Using copyrighted work
- Copyright in your own work

Georgia Tech

What is Copyright?

- Literally, the right to copy (or share, disseminate, etc)
- Granted to: Original creative work (of a human) fixed in a tangible means of expression (digital or physical).

Using copyrighted work

- The holder of the copyright in any given work can grant permissions, for example to re-use or re-distribute the work.
- Most common question: “Do I have to get permission to re-use _____ in my thesis?”
- The common answer: IT DEPENDS

Do I need permission to re-use?

YOU DON'T NEED PERMISSION FOR *(BUT you need to CITE!)*

- Quoting someone else's words
- Paraphrasing someone else's writing
- Summarizing someone else's work
- Referring to someone else's work

YOU MAY NEED PERMISSION FOR THINGS LIKE:

- Images
- Diagrams
- Photographs
- Code
- Songs/Lyrics
- Long passages

Fair Use

Section 107 of the Copyright Act: The fair use of a copyrighted work...for the purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching...scholarship, or research is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered...include:

- **Purpose of re-use** (for example, use for scholarship favors fair use).
- **Nature of original work** (for example, if the work you're using is factual in nature rather than creative)
- **Amount of original re-used** (the less used, the stronger the case for fair use).
- **Effect of re-use** on original's market value (use of something that is sold in the marketplace is not a strong fair use case).

(For more information contact the Scholarly Communications Librarian at etd@library.gatech.edu or the Office of Legal Affairs at asklegal@gatech.edu.)

Georgia Tech

Fair Use

Some good resources to help evaluate whether a use is “fair use”

- https://www.lib.umn.edu/copyright/fairthoughts
- https://copyright.columbia.edu/basics/fair-use/fair-use-checklist.html
- http://librarycopyright.net/resources/fairuse/toc.php

Georgia Tech

Using my own copyrighted work

“Can I use the journal article I wrote as a chapter in my thesis?”

- If you signed away your copyright when you published, then check the agreement you signed with your publisher.
- If the agreement doesn’t specifically mention those rights, contact the publisher to obtain permission.

Georgia Tech

Copyright in the Finished Thesis/Dissertation

How do I get copyright for my thesis/dissertation?

- You automatically have copyright for life plus 70 years after your death.
- You have all of the rights of dissemination or transfer. (Georgia Tech only gets the license to post a copy in SMARTech — it doesn't hold any other permissions.)
- You don't have to register your thesis, but you get more legal protection if you do. (Register at the Library of Congress registration site.)

Your thesis will go into SMARTech, where anyone can discover and access your document. Other authors must contact you first for re-use permissions — unless you use Creative Commons Licensing.

Georgia Tech

Creative Commons Licensing

- Creative Commons licenses help creators (licensors) retain copyright while allowing others to copy, distribute, and otherwise reuse their work.
- You can specify non-commercial reuses only.
- Licenses work around the world and last as long as applicable copyright lasts.

Find more information at https://creativecommons.org/licenses.

Georgia Tech

What else can I do with my thesis?

Remember, you own the copyright to your thesis! You can disseminate it however you want!

- Submit to any thesis database!
- Print a copy!
- Give it to your friends!
- Post it on a website! Post it on a lot of websites!
- Link to it on social media!

Georgia Tech

Submitting Datasets with your Thesis or Dissertation

Submitting your data and code will:

- Ensure reproducibility of your work
- Demonstrate your value as a top notch researcher
- Allow others to build upon your work
- Comply with applicable federal funding agency requirements (if any)
- Enable you to find the materials later in your career
- Give your faculty advisor peace of mind that they can find the materials after you've graduated

How to Submit

Did your data involve human subjects or other sensitive materials?

If yes, do not deposit, the library CANNOT accept sensitive/restricted data.

Are your data files larger than 512MB?

- If you answered “no” : submit your dataset, code, scripts, and other supplemental materials via Vireo, right along with your thesis or dissertation.

- If “yes” contact repository@library.gatech.edu, for more guidance:

Georgia Tech

Documentation of Datasets

All datasets, no matter how you submit them, should be accompanied by additional documentation.

If you don’t already have materials describing your dataset, use our template to create a “README.txt” file

Georgia Tech

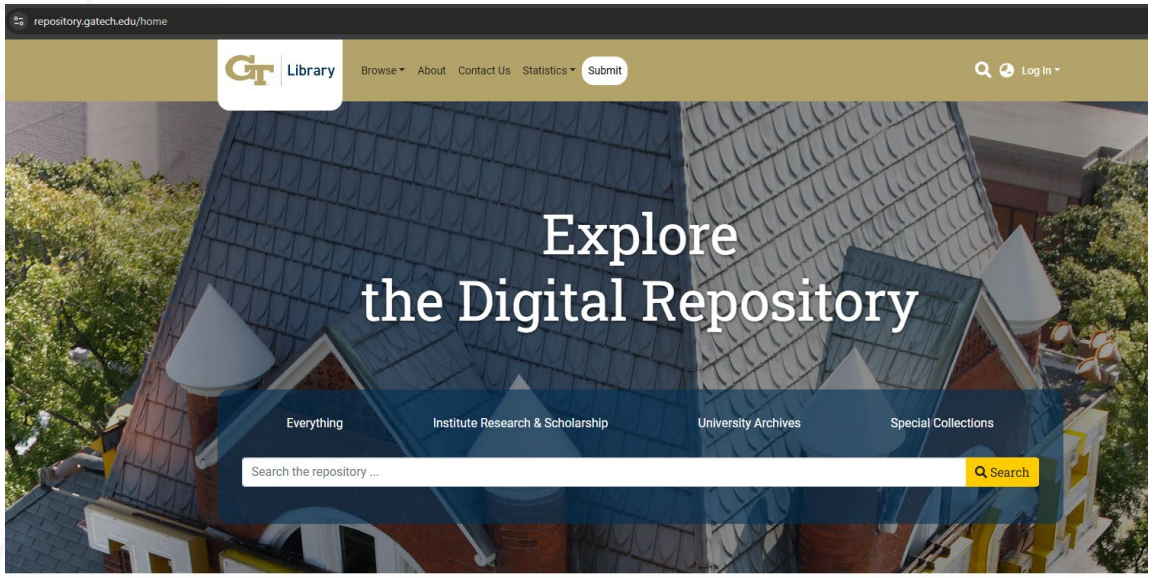
For More Information

Fred Rascoe
Scholarly Communication Librarian

fred.rascoe@library.gatech.edu

Georgia Tech

Why the Tech Repository?



Institute Research & Scholarship (SMARTech)

University Archives

Special Collections

- GA Tech's Institutional Repository
- Mission
- Why use the IR?
  - Increases visibility for research and projects.
  - Supports grant & funder compliance.
  - Provides metrics & impact data.
  - Builds a professional scholarly presence.
- What can you deposit?
  - Research publications (journal articles), posters, presentations, datasets, conference papers, and other non-ETD scholarly outputs.
- Permissions, copyright, and open-access.
  - There is a statement at the bottom called "Repository License Agreement" which states that GT and GTRC requires certain permissions from the author.
  - But by accepting the license, you do not give up the copyright to your work.

Vanesa Evers, she/they
Institutional Repository Librarian
Georgia Institute of Technology
vanesa.evers@library.gatech.edu

Georgia Tech

ProQuest ETD Dissemination Program

In 2014, GA Tech discontinued their relationship with ProQuest

- **Cost of service**
- **Distributions and sales of scholarship**

After evaluation, GA Tech will resume ProQuest access of PhD dissertations Fall 2025*

- Web of Science + ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (PQDT) Global
- Automated retrieval of information that doesn't disrupt workflow of OGE or GT Library's Repository
- Students can opt out by contacting ProQuest

Benefits for Students

- No fees or extra work on the student's part
- the largest editorially curated repository of
- dissertations and theses in the world
- Wider amplification of scholarship
- Supplemental files and Date sets also archived
- Students who are withheld still have embargos honored
- Inclusion in intensive research projects for text and
- data mining
- • Intellectual property protection against plagiarism
- • Maintain currency of research through the linking
- to various media types
- • Generate income through royalty payments
- • Order printed copies and other author services at
- discounted rates.

For more information on ProQuest
[ETD Dissemination Program FAQs]

Georgia Tech

iThenticate

- Compares written works against an extensive database of more than 45 billion web pages and 130 million content items, including restricted-access scholarly works
- The service can identify similar or matched content, allowing authors to catch unintended duplication or uncited references prior to submitting a paper for publication.
- Faculty have access, check with your advisor
- NOTICE! Be aware that your document can be put through the system

Georgia Tech

Redactions and Errata

All changes to a document after it has been submitted to SMARTech must have prior approval from both the advisor and the Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Faculty Development.

Redaction and Errata forms can be found in the Theses and Dissertation Forms section of the Graduate Education website (http://grad.gatech.edu/theses-dissertations).

Georgia Tech

Pathways to Graduation Canvas Site

- The purpose of the Pathways to Graduation Canvas site is:
  - to be a permanent yet malleable repository of graduation resources from campus partners focused on master's thesis and PhD students
  - to promote and support the well-being of our graduate students throughout the completion of their dissertation or thesis
  - to mitigate the stressors of students' to graduate
  - to create a better roadmap to degree completion

- Pathways to Graduation Canvas Site: Self-Enroll in Course

Georgia Tech

Deadlines

Deadlines are published at least a year in advance.

Link: Deadlines

Semester	Thesis Deadline with Enrollment Waiver*	Initial Format Check	Thesis/Required Forms Due (MS and Ph.D.)
Summer 2025	May 16, 2025 at 3 p.m.	July 18, 2025	July 25, 2025 at noon
Fall 2025	August 22, 2025 at 3 p.m.	November 21, 2025	December 5, 2025 at noon
Spring 2026	January 16, 2026 at 3 p.m.	April 17, 2026	April 24, 2026 at noon
Summer 2026	May 22, 2026 at 3 p.m.	July 17, 2026	July 24, 2026 at noon
Fall 2026	August 21, 2026 at 3 p.m.	November 20, 2026	December 4, 2026 at noon

Georgia Tech

Virtual and In-Person Appointments

Office of Graduate Education offers virtual appointments for thesis/dissertation students.

Appointments are 30 minutes maximum

Access available

https://gradapp.gatech.edu/portal/thesisanddissertation_vNew

Georgia Tech

For More Information

Tatianna Richardson, Academic Program Manager I
Thesis and Dissertation Coordinator
Office Location: (Hours 8 AM- 4 PM)
631 Cherry Street
Room 318, Savant Building
Atlanta, GA 30332
Email: thesis@grad.gatech.edu
Website: www.grad.gatech.edu

Helpful Links:

GT Repository (Theses and Dissertations)

Commencement

All Forms: Thesis and Dissertation

Thesis Manual

ProQuest Information

GA Tech Catalog: Theses and Dissertation Policy on Advisement

Georgia Tech

A Brief Satisfaction Survey

See QR CODE on SLIDE:

Please fill out this survey regarding our Thesis Information Session by **September 25th.**

Georgia Tech