

Appendix 1

Proposed Standards for Examining Dissertations*

An acceptable dissertation completed in partial fulfillment of the PhD degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison must have the following attributes, as recognized by the student's dissertation committee:

- 1) **Focus:** A dissertation must clearly articulate a research problem or problems, a question or questions. It must specify the limits of the dissertation's investigation with respect to theory, knowledge, or practice within the field of study.
- 2) **Appropriateness:** The methods and techniques applied in the execution of the dissertation must be recognized as appropriate to the subject matter and as fitting, original, and/or aesthetically effective.
- 3) **Clarity:** The dissertation should communicate complex ideas in a form and manner that is clear and understandable to area specialists and, as appropriate, to readers beyond the specialty area.
- 4) **Durability:** The description of the research and its major conclusions should be in a durable form (written or otherwise capable of being permanently archived).
- 5) **Novelty:** The dissertation should embody scholarship that makes a substantive contribution to the field of study. The ideas, concepts, designs, and/or performances should move beyond the current boundaries of knowledge within the field of study.
- 6) **Connectedness:** The dissertation should demonstrate a professional level of familiarity with, and understanding of, contemporary work in the field.
- 7) **Quantity:** The dissertation should demonstrate an appropriately comprehensive investigation of the student's research area or artistic form.
- 8) **Documentation and Replicability:** Documentation in the dissertation should be sufficiently thorough and of an appropriate standard and made available to ensure that the dissertation provides a useful starting point or reference for subsequent researchers, scholars and/ or artists.
- 9) **Professionalism:** A dissertation should reflect high ethical and professional standards.

*In developing these criteria, we drew on "The University of Melbourne Additional Information for Examiners when a Candidate is Submitting a Dissertation and Creative Work for an MPhil or Masters by Research Degree." Available at: http://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1465213/ExaminersInformationCreativeArts.MPhil-and-Masters.pdf Accessed: April 9, 2016. In addition, we drew on the graduate level learning goals adopted by the UW-Madison Graduate Faculty Executive Committee on November 14, 2014. Available at:

http://provost.wisc.edu/assessment/documents/GS_Dean_Memo_to_Grad_Programs_re_Grad_Learning_Goals_12_19_14.pdf Accessed: April 9, 2016.