

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

In the past, theses and dissertations consisted of written texts produced and bound in paper, archived, and made available through the university library. There are limitations of written text that can be overcome by using an electronic format.

Computers and other technologies are widely available for use in scholarship, research, and creative work required for masters and doctoral degrees. Theses and dissertations in an electronic format can include appended, non-text materials such as program source code, photographs, audio recordings, graphical output, etc., to more fully document and present student research and scholarship.

Today, using standard computer software, it is possible to produce documents that include such features as enhanced graphics, sound, color photographs, and animation. Since many new technologies and research tools are computer-based, it makes sense that the format of theses and dissertations will include these new technologies. This format is referred to as "Electronic Theses and Dissertations," or "ETD".

An ETD is a document available in an electronic form suitable for machine archives and worldwide retrieval. It differs from paper formats in that ETDs provide a technologically advanced medium for expression. They may be prepared using many word processor or document preparation systems and may include multimedia objects. ETDs are less expensive to prepare and they consume virtually no library shelf space. Also, they can be available to anyone browsing the World Wide Web.

ETD's were initially accepted at BYU in May 2002. Each semester, more and more theses and dissertations were submitted as an ETD.

As of September 2009, all theses and dissertations at BYU are required to be submitted as ETDs. If you write your document using styles in Word or in different word processing software, it is rather simple to convert your document to the format acceptable for submission as an ETD.

What are the benefits of ETDs?

Benefits of electronic submission and archiving of theses and dissertations include:

- Many others (not just your committee) will actually read your research!!
- The results of research presented in theses and dissertations are more accessible to scholars all over the world via the World Wide Web.
- The message of a thesis or dissertation may be better conveyed electronically than in a paper document. Creative possibilities are expanded by allowing color diagrams and images, hyperlinks, audios, animations, videos, spreadsheets, databases, etc., to be integrated into an electronic document.
- The University is able to fulfill its responsibilities of recording and archiving theses and dissertations and save money. Also, ETDs reduce the need for library storage space.

How are ETDs Created?

Students submit their thesis or dissertation as a PDF (portable document format) file. PDF files are generated using Adobe Acrobat software, which retains all formatting information and allows the addition of multimedia objects. Documents prepared with many widely used software programs and document preparation systems can be converted easily to PDF format. Some of the popular document preparation systems used include Microsoft Word (most common), LaTeX, as well as other applications that can output to a print file (postscript), which

can be easily converted to PDF file format.

How are ETDs Accessed?

ETDs are available (if allowed by the student author) using the following methods:

- Access through the Internet by linking to BYU's collection for browsing and even linking directly to specific ETDs.
- All ETDs will appear in the BYU library catalog. People searching the library catalog can easily find theses or dissertations by subject and link directly to them.
- Search engines allow full-text searching for specific ETDs.
- Anyone seeking a specific ETD can search the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations collection.
- Universal Microfilm Inc. has a service listing more than 2 million dissertations and theses. http://www.proquest.com/products_umi/dissertations/

Are ETDs Freely Available?

Students may determine the level of public access to their theses and dissertations. BYU allows the following levels of access (each should be considered carefully, taking into consideration patent, publishing and other proprietary issues):

Immediate Release

This allows worldwide access to the entire work through the World Wide Web. This option is strongly recommended.

Delayed Release

This delays release of the work for up to one year for publication or other personal reasons. After a one year delay, the work will automatically be released for worldwide access under the Immediate Release option.

Secured Access

This secures the work for patent and/or proprietary purposes for a period of one or more years. The university will determine, with guidance from the student and advisor, whether the restriction is for patent (or similar) purposes and will so designate the ETD. At the end of secured period, the author may request an extension for an additional period of time. At the end of the secure period, the ETD will be released for worldwide access under the Immediate Release option above.

Are There Copyright and Intellectual Property Issues?

One important aim of the ETD program is to properly manage intellectual property rights associated with research performed at BYU. This is accomplished by: (1) documenting the student author's intellectual property rights by depositing his or her work in BYU's digital repository and (2) determining whether the student's work is released a) immediately to the public, b) delayed for one year, or c) held in "secured access" status for a specified period of time to acquire patent or other rights.

There may be legitimate circumstances for restricting distribution of a thesis or dissertation for a limited time in order to protect the intellectual property rights of students. Fostering respect for others' intellectual property rights involves providing student authors with timely and accurate information about the use of copyrighted materials and the need to obtain permission for use.

Where Can I Get More Information?

Information is available on the ETD Web site at <http://etd.byu.edu/>. Click any of the buttons on the left side of the page or the "submit" icon.

There is a wealth of information on creating the PDF, bookmarks, etc on this website.

Below are links to several Web sites containing valuable information on ETDs as well as links to many additional ETD Websites.

- **Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD) at** <http://www.ndltd.org/>
- **NDLTD Digital Library of ETDs at** <http://www.theses.org/>
- **Virginia Tech Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Initiative at** <http://etd.vt.edu/>

(8/23/2010)



Electronic Theses

and

Dissertations

<http://etd.byu.edu>

BYU

BRIGHAM YOUNG
UNIVERSITY

Instruction for printing and using the following PDF document as a brochure

Print the following ETD (Electronic Theses and Dissertations) brochure, which is in PDF landscape format for creating a three-fold brochure. Turn one page upside down then, using a copy machine, copy the pages using the single-sided to double-sided option. Fold the single page twice so that the title and BYU logo are the front of the brochure with the other two folds behind.