

Guide 4: Embargoes & Restrictions

Consideration	Recommended Action				
	Choose Traditional Publishing	Place an embargo of 6-months, 1 year, or 2 years	Do NOT choose third-party distribution	Restrict from Google/search engines and harvesters	See your institution's technology transfer or research officer. Consult with your advisor and graduate dean.
Likely submission to a peer-reviewed journal	✓	✓	✓		
Interested/potential interest by an academic or commercial press	✓	✓	✓		
Ethical need to prevent disclosure	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Patentable rights in the work/ other commercial potential	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

University Policies

Many universities enforce explicit policies regarding the delayed release (embargo) and/or restriction of dissemination of dissertations and thesis. These policies may also apply to the delay or restricted shelving of a copy of your work in the university library. Such policies serve the scholarly convention of sharing one's research with others. Simply put, you are not contributing to your field or to general knowledge if others cannot examine the results of your scholarly work.

When you instruct us to embargo or restrict dissemination of your dissertation or thesis, we assume that you are complying with the policies of your institution.

University policies generally require that you petition for permission to embargo or restrict the dissemination of your dissertation or thesis. You will need to substantiate the reason for your request, and receive approval from the required persons and/or authorities. Considerations that are likely to be deemed reasonable for granting permission to embargo and/or restrict dissemination include:

- Patentable rights in the work or other issues in which disclosure may be detrimental to the rights or interests of the author.
- The ethical need to prevent disclosure of sensitive or classified information about persons, institutions, technologies, etc.
- The interest of an academic or commercial press in acquiring the rights to publish your dissertation or thesis as a book*.
- Content that is likely to be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal*.

Your Decisions

We provide you additional choices about dissemination and restriction that your university may not be concerned about, as long as you are fully informed of your options. These involve the extent to which you make your dissertation or thesis available to non-academic readers, through our own distribution channels, third-party distributors, and major search engines such as Google and Google Scholar.

For example, if you wish your work to be available to the largest potential population of interested readers, both general and academic, you would choose Open Access Publishing with immediate release, opt to have it available through third party retailers for sale to the non-academic reader, and not restrict access by Google and other search engines. You will choose this option if you feel that society has an interest in and a right to view the results of the research it supports by funding higher education. You should not choose this option if considerations such as those described above would make such wide access a detriment to your scholarly, professional, or personal future.

Internet search engines are quickly becoming a key tool for all of academia, and we believe graduate works should be easy for researchers to find. Therefore, if you need to limit dissemination of your work, you will need to exclude it from the data that we provide to select internet search engines. We provide you the ability to "opt out" of such exposure through the Publishing Agreement. PLEASE NOTE, however, that internet search engines are likely to find your dissertation or thesis **through other access points, especially through the library or institutional repository** at your graduate institution. If you truly need exclusion from search engines, you will need to petition for restriction at your graduate institution in addition to restricting such access through ProQuest/UMI

***Publishing with UMI® Dissertation Publishing: Effects on publishing your content elsewhere**

The first thing to remember is that YOU own your copyright; unlike most scholarly publishers, ProQuest/UMI does NOT acquire copyright when we publish your dissertation or thesis. You are free to re-publish your work in whole or in part, with whomever you choose without asking our permission.

Some authors are concerned that journals and other publishers will not accept content that has been published in or as a dissertation or thesis. This concern is less valid in the case of peer-reviewed journals, and potentially more valid in the case of commercial book publishers. While every case is unique, here are some general rules of thumb in examining this issue with regard to your own work:

- In most cases, you will not be submitting your dissertation or thesis *as is* to a peer-reviewed journal (unless it is a journal that publishes a monograph series). Most often, the content submitted for journal publication is an excerpt, chapter, or section of your dissertation or thesis. At the very least, it would be a significantly shorter distillation of your graduate work. The content is likely to be rearranged and reformatted to fit the style of the journal to which you submit. Finally, the content is likely to be revised and updated through the peer-review process and finally the editorial process if it is accepted. All of these processes mean that the material as finally published by a journal is substantively and substantially refined and therefore different from the content that is published as your dissertation or thesis. For this reason, journals are not historically concerned about your content having appeared and been distributed as a published graduate work. This is particularly true in the STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).
- Academic presses, monograph publishers, and commercial presses are more likely to consider your dissertation or thesis as a book. This is more often the case with the humanities, social sciences, and arts. Still, even if not peer-reviewed, the editorial process that turns your graduate work into a book is likely to change it substantially. The key in this consideration is whether the content changes substantively; i.e., is there a real difference in the content that makes the press comfortable with investing its resources in producing a book from your dissertation/thesis. Historically, presses have not been terribly concerned that distribution of your graduate work would harm potential sales as a book. However, as dissertations and theses have become widely available over the internet through libraries, consortia and institutional repositories as well as from our subscription database, more presses may look more carefully at the question of marketability.

As with exercising caution around open access, you should seek the advice of well-established mentors in your field if you feel that your future ability to publish dissertation/thesis content might be jeopardized by wide dissemination. If you decide that it might, you will want to take one or more of the precautions shown in the table above.