

**PROPOSED POLICY TO FORMALIZE MANUSCRIPT-BASED THESES AND
DISSERTATIONS FOR THE BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT**

PREPARED BY DRS. SAM LOKER AND ROB MILLER, 17 FEBRUARY 2004

**APPROVED BY THE BIOLOGY GRADUATE POLICY COMMITTEE AND FACULTY,
17 FEBRUARY 2004**

**TO BE SUBMITTED TO
THE SENATE GRADUATE COMMITTEE ON 19 FEBRUARY 2004**

The principles underlying this proposed policy are:

- 1. publishing peer reviewed manuscripts remains the prime measure of scholarship;*
- 2. an environment should be created that encourages graduate students to strive to publish their work;*
- 3. modern biology depends upon collaboration and it is accepted that most graduate students will have colleagues and collaborators that appear as co-authors on their publications;*
- 4. waiting for all work to be published before students can use the manuscript-based style thesis or dissertation will unnecessarily delay awarding of the degree, hence manuscripts in preparation or in review for publication should be included;*
- 5. time is better spent preparing manuscripts for publication rather than writing a traditional style thesis or dissertation, if the intent is to ultimately publish the work; and*
- 6. the approved examination committee is the best judge of the acceptability of the student's work for fulfilling the requirements of the degree.*

Proposed Policy on Format for M.S. Thesis and Ph.D. Dissertation in Biology

All Plan I M.S. students and doctoral students are required to prepare a thesis or dissertation respectively, as part of the fulfillment of the degree requirements. There are two acceptable, alternative formats for the thesis or dissertation: the traditional and the manuscript-based. The latter is often referred to in the Department as a "hybrid" thesis or dissertation. Students may opt to use either style. However, approval of which style is used will be obtained from their major professor and the members of their examination or dissertation committee prior to preparing the thesis or dissertation.

For either style, the rules and regulations established by the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) regarding format (Front Matter, Text, Reference Matter, paper

dimensions, margins, etc.) must be adhered to. The OGS guidelines are available at <http://www.unm.edu/~grad/manuscripts/guidelines.html>.

Traditional Thesis or Dissertation

The traditional thesis or dissertation is a single manuscript, authored solely by the student, presenting original research performed by the student. The text section is typically subdivided into: Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, References, and Appendices (optional).

Manuscript-based Thesis or Dissertation

A manuscript-based thesis or dissertation is a collection of manuscripts or articles formatted for publication and presented as separate chapters of a single thesis or dissertation. This style must satisfy the following guidelines:

1) the articles or manuscripts must report original research that is primarily the student's or to which the student contributed significantly. The student must be the first author on at least one of the manuscripts in their thesis or dissertation. The inclusion of a particular manuscript in the thesis or dissertation will be with the approval of the student's advisor and the members of the examination committee;

2) the manuscripts must be articles published in a peer-reviewed national or international journal and/or manuscripts prepared for publication in a peer-reviewed national or international journal. This guideline allows for a single thesis or dissertation to consist of a mixture of published and unpublished material;

3) the chapters may be in the format style for the journal to which they are intended. However, the student's advisor and the members of the examination committee have the option to require re-formatting of chapters to a single uniform style;

4) the names of all co-authors on multi-authored manuscripts will be included. If one or more of the manuscripts are already published at the time the thesis or dissertation is submitted, the article's citation will be provided at the beginning of each chapter.

5) Students should consult OGS regulations regarding issues related to copyright. Students are responsible for obtaining permission to use a published, copyrighted manuscript in their thesis or dissertation from the journal in which the paper is published. Students are advised to consult the policies of the journal regarding release of copyright for use in theses and dissertations. Many journals openly state in their policies and guides to authors that published manuscripts may be used for theses and dissertations without obtaining additional permission.

6) the completed thesis or dissertation will contain:
a) an abstract that collectively summarizes the individual manuscripts or chapters;
b) a general introduction that lists the individual manuscripts and describes how each chapter or manuscript relate to a general theme of the thesis or dissertation is

recommended. The student should seek the advice of their faculty mentor and members of their thesis examination or dissertation defense committee on the content of the introduction.

c) the articles or manuscripts as separate chapters;

d) a conclusion or summary that provides an overview of the collective findings reported in the separate chapters is recommended at the discretion of the committee;

e) an optional appendix containing any additional material that will not be submitted for publication may be included or a literature review section, as appropriate.