

# **TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY**

## **GRADUATE SCHOOL**

### **POLICIES FOR MULTI-ARTICLE DISSERTATIONS**

#### **Introduction**

This policy outlines the Graduate School policies and procedures for a multi-article dissertation. The chief objectives of the multi-article dissertation are to:

- Support doctoral students who are interested in publishing their research prior to or immediately after graduation;
- Offer students guidance and mentoring in the publication of their research;
- Support students who are interested in pursuing careers in higher education; and
- Assist students in immediate application of their programmatic research foundations.

#### **Definition of Multi-Article Dissertation**

The multi-article dissertation allows PhD candidates to build the PhD dissertation around two or more related papers that are considered to be of publishable quality by the student's dissertation committee. The final number of papers is to be determined by the student's dissertation committee or department.

This option differs from the traditional dissertation in format rather than content or quality. The expectations of rigor for a final and approved dissertation remain the same as the traditional style.

#### **Inclusion of Co-Authored Articles**

Given the collaborative nature of scholarship in many disciplines, doctoral students may be involved in co-authored articles and projects. One of the main purposes of the dissertation is for the student to demonstrate the capacity for independent scholarship. For this reason, only papers that are the student's original idea and wherein the student is the lead author may be included. The student must be substantially involved in study design, data analysis, and especially writing, for any article included in the multi-article dissertation. In the case of articles with multiple authors, the student must submit the Coauthor Permission Form and preface each paper with information detailing the contribution of each listed coauthor to the creation of the publication.

#### **Conflict of Interest in Co-Authorship with Committee Members**

Co-authorship with the student's Major Professor or Advisory Committee members is common, but represents a potential conflict of interest wherein committee members serve in dual roles as authors and reviewers. Committee members are to be aware of their influential positions with respect to students and faculty colleagues. Faculty members therefore should make every effort to avoid conditions that could impair professional judgment in the evaluation of the dissertation. The Dissertation Chair and all Committee members must follow Texas Woman's University policy on authorship when negotiating authorship for any papers included in the dissertation, [UPR 02.440 Authorship in Scholarly or Scientific Publications](#).

While not a Graduate School policy, the Graduate School highly recommends that when possible the Dissertation Committee should be formed such that at least one member that has no connection with any of the articles included in the multi-paper dissertation. A committee so formed would allow for the dissertation committee to consist of at least one committee member without a potential co-author conflict of interest.

### **Publication Timing of the Articles**

No more than one of the papers used in the multi-article dissertation may be submitted for publication prior to submission of the dissertation prospectus to the Graduate School or committee approval of the dissertation proposal/prospectus. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the dissertation committee, department chair, and graduate school. This ensures that the dissertation committee has an adequate opportunity to provide input on the rationale, method, and rigor of the dissertation.

However, any of the included papers may be in preparation for publication as long as the student has been the lead author of the narrative content and the research has been completed while a student enrolled in the doctoral program. The original purpose for writing these manuscripts may or may not have been to satisfy current graduate degree requirements. In order for the graduate school to provide assistance to students with copyright related to publication, the student must preface each paper with information detailing the state of publication (i.e., not yet published, submitted for review, accepted for publication, previously published) and an appropriate citation.

Students may submit any, or all, of the papers for publication prior to the dissertation defense. To ensure that reputable and relevant journals are targeted when preparing (and eventually submitting) articles, students must consult with the Dissertation Chair and Committee. Ultimately, the Dissertation Committee (not journal editors or reviewers) will determine whether the papers substantially meet the content and submission guidelines for a credible submission for publication, as well as meeting the program's dissertation goals/criteria.

### **Content**

The Multi-Article Dissertation should minimally consist of the following:

1. Front matter (title page, abstract, table of contents, etc.) consistent with requirements of all traditional dissertations (see the Graduate School Tech Manual for more information)
2. Chapter 1: An introduction chapter that provides the foundation for the papers provided in the subsequent chapters. While the specific content included in this chapter is ultimately decided by the student's discipline and dissertation committee, this chapter most often explains the importance and coherence of the collection of articles, including conceptual and/or theoretical links across the articles, and overarching hypotheses and/or specific aims or objectives.
3. Subsequent Chapters: Each manuscript is inserted as a stand-alone chapter, using the formatting guide of the intended journal publication or that selected by the dissertation committee. Please see the Multi-Article Dissertation Tech Manual for specific information regarding formatting and required content.
4. Concluding Chapter: The final chapter summarizes the results of all papers, discusses the results as they relate to the overarching hypotheses and/or specific aims or objectives posed in the introductory chapter, presents the general conclusions supported by the work, and discusses the implications and future directions of the work.
5. Back matter (appendices as appropriate)

The graduate school recommends that all students consult the Multi-Article Dissertation Tech Manual for specific information regarding formatting the multi-article dissertation.