



Doctoral Dissertations and Master's Theses

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Text October, 2001; layout August, 2003

Wilson IRIS Information, Reference and Instruction Services, 180 Wilson Library, (612) 626-2227

The web version of this publication is available at: <http://wilson.lib.umn.edu/reference/uofmdiss.html>

What dissertations and theses are available?

With minor exceptions, all doctoral dissertations and all "Plan A" master's theses accepted by the University of Minnesota are available in the University Libraries system. In some cases (see below) only a non-circulating copy in University Archives exists, but for doctoral dissertations from 1940 to date, and for master's theses from 1925 to date, a circulating copy should almost always be available.

"Plan B" papers, accepted in the place of a thesis in many master's degree programs, are not received by the University Libraries and are generally not available. (The only real exceptions are a number of old library school Plan B papers on publishing history, which have been separately cataloged in MNCAT.) In a few cases individual departments may have maintained files of such papers.

In what libraries are U of M dissertations and theses located?

Circulating copies of doctoral dissertations:

Consult MNCAT at <http://www.lib.umn.edu> under the author or title of the work desired to determine location and call number of a specific dissertation. [See end of this guide for example.](#)

Circulating copies of U of M doctoral dissertations can be in one of several locations in the library system, depending upon the date and the department for which the dissertation was done. The following are the general rules:

Dissertations prior to 1940

Circulating copies of U of M dissertations prior to 1940 do not exist (with rare exceptions): for these, only the archival copy (see below) is available. Also, most dissertations prior to 1940 are not cataloged in MNCAT and can only be identified by the departmental listings described below.

Dissertations from 1940-1961

Circulating copies of U of M dissertations from 1940 to 1961 will in most cases be held in the Minnesota Library Access Center (MLAC) within the Elmer L. Andersen Library, *with two major classes of exceptions*: dissertations accepted by biological, medical, and related departments are housed in the Bio-Medical Library in Diehl Hall, and dissertations accepted by agricultural and related departments are available at the Magrath Library or one of the other libraries on the St. Paul campus (the Magrath Library maintains records of locations for such dissertations).

Dissertations from 1962-date

Circulating copies of U of M dissertations from 1962 to date at present may be located either in Wilson Library (see below) or in MLAC; consult MNCAT (our online catalog) for location of specific items. Again, the two classes of exceptions noted above apply here also; dissertations in their respective departments will instead be in Bio-Medical Library or in one of the St. Paul campus libraries. (Additionally, science/engineering dissertations from 1970 to date are being transferred to that library, and will be located in Science & Engineering Library when it eventually returns to Walter Library building following Walter remodeling.)

Circulating copies of master's theses:

Theses prior to 1925

Circulating copies of U of M master's theses prior to 1925 do not exist (with rare exceptions); for these, only the archival copy (see below) is available.

Theses from 1925-1961

Circulating copies of U of M master's theses from 1925 to 1961 may be held in MLAC or in [the Wilson Library Sub-basement Annex \(S-50\)](#); consult MNCAT in specific instances. Once again, there are exceptions and theses in their respective departments will be housed in the Bio-Medical Library or in one of the St. Paul campus libraries.

Theses from 1962-date

Circulating copies of U of M master's theses from 1962 to date will be located in Wilson Library (see below), except for the same exceptions for Bio-Medical and St. Paul theses. There is also an exception to the exception: MHA (Masters in Health Administration)

theses through 1998 are in the Bio-Medical Library, but those from 1999 on are in Wilson Library (most recent five years' worth will be located in Business Reference).

Archival copies:

Archival (non-circulating) copies of virtually all U of M doctoral dissertations from 1888-1952, and of U of M master's theses from all years up to the present, are maintained by University Archives (located in the Elmer L. Andersen Library). These copies must be consulted on the premises, and it is highly recommended for the present that users make an appointment in advance to ensure that the desired works can be retrieved for them from storage. For dissertations accepted prior to 1940 and for master's theses accepted prior to 1925, University Archives is generally the only option (e.g., there usually will be no circulating copy).

Archival copies of U of M doctoral dissertations from 1953 to the present are maintained by Bell and Howell Corporation (formerly University Microfilms Inc.), which produces print or filmed copies from our originals upon request. (There are a very few post-1952 U of M dissertations not available from Bell and Howell; these include such things as music manuscripts and works with color illustrations or extremely large pages that will not photocopy well; in these few cases, our archival copy is retained in University Archives.)

How may a specific dissertation or thesis be located?

To locate a specific dissertation or thesis it is necessary to have its call number. Consult MNCAT, our online catalog, under the author or title of the item you seek, just as you would for any other book. Depending on date of acceptance and cataloging, a typical call number for such materials should look something like one of the following:

Examples of call numbers:

Dissertations:

MnU-D or 378.7M66
78-342 ODR7617

- or -

9ZAR08D31S08TC2

Plan"A" Theses:

MnU-M or 378.7M66
83-67 OL6156

MNCAT will also tell the library location (MLAC, Bio-Medical Library, Magrath or another St. Paul campus library, Science and Engineering, Business Reference, Wilson Annex or Wilson Library).

Those doctoral dissertations still in Wilson Library (which in all cases will be 1962 or later and will have "MnU-D" numbers) are located in the central section of the third floor. Those master's theses in Wilson (which in all cases will be 1962 or later and will have "MnU-M" numbers) are located in [Wilson Library Sub-basement Annex for those dated 1962-1995, or in the central section of the third floor next to the doctoral dissertations for those dated 1996 and after](#). These circulate and can be checked out, like any other books, at the Wilson Circulation desk on the first floor.

How may dissertations and theses accepted by a specific department be identified?

Reference Services (First Floor, Wilson Library) contains a series of bound and loose-leaf notebooks, arranged by department and within each department by date, listing dissertations and theses. Information given for each entry includes name of author, title, and date (but not call number, which must be looked up individually). These notebooks are no longer current, but do cover listings by department from the nineteenth century up to approximately 1992. Many pre-1940 U of M dissertations and pre-1925 U of M master's theses are not cataloged in MNCAT (and exist only as archival copies). Such dissertations can be identified only with these volumes.

The books and notebooks are shelved in the reference room under these call numbers:

Wilson Ref LD3337 .A5 and Wilson Ref quarto LD3337 .U9x.

Major departments of individual degree candidates are also listed under their names in the GRADUATE SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT programs of the U of M, available in University Archives and (for recent years) also in Wilson stacks (LD3361 .U55x).

How may dissertations and theses on specific subjects be identified?

Master's theses, and doctoral dissertations cataloged from circa 1940 to circa 1971, are cataloged by subject in MNCAT. (Doctoral dissertations after 1971 are cataloged by author and title in MNCAT, but are not assigned subject headings.)

It is also possible to search MNCAT by keyword. If the words "thesis" and "Minnesota" are included in your strategy, your results will generally be effectively limited to U of M theses and/or dissertations—for instance, you might do a keyword search such as:

 MNCAT Search Example:

find	folklore and thesis and minnesota	as	keywords
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This will retrieve U of M theses and dissertations (along with possibly a few false drops) that contain the word "folklore" in the MNCAT record (which will generally mean the in the title of the work). Other relevant works may use other terms, so a searcher will want to repeat the search substituting such terms as folk tales, folk songs, folk motifs, etc. as well as names of individual folk tales and the like. (By its nature, a keyword search will almost never be fully comprehensive.)

Subject access to U of M dissertations as well as those accepted by almost all other universities across the United States (and to a large extent in Canada and various other countries) is provided by **Dissertation Abstracts** (also known in its online version as

Digital Dissertations

<http://www.lib.umn.edu/articles/proquest.phtml>

Click on "Connect to Digital Dissertations". This index is available online and in print format (Wilson Reference quarto Z5053 .D57) Our subscription to the print version ceased in 1999, so the online version is more up-to-date. (However, for dissertations previous to 1980, the online version includes only citations and no abstracts: thus for pre-1980 abstracts you must consult the print version.)

Anyone may use **Digital Dissertations** from a workstation in one of the University libraries; U of M students, faculty, and staff may also dial in remotely via our web page, using their U of M id and password for authentication to the system.

In either format, records for U of M dissertations are included along with those of many other universities. In the online version it is possible to limit your retrieval to dissertations from our own university, however (or from any other specified university). For more information, see the online help screens, ask reference staff, and/or see the guide at: <http://wilson.lib.umn.edu/reference/digitaldiss.html>

What do I do if I don't find a specific dissertation or thesis under the author's name?

First, try to ensure that the spelling you have for the author is accurate; try possible variant spellings, elimination of middle name, etc. if appropriate. If the dissertation or thesis was only recently accepted it may be that it has not yet been received, cataloged, and marked. (It may still be available on *Digital Dissertations*.)

What about dissertations and theses from other universities?

While the chances are very slim that we will have any given dissertation which was accepted by another university, there are some avenues that should be explored if you are seeking such materials:

- Some dissertations subsequently may have been published as books or, with or without modifications, as journal articles; consult MNCAT and the appropriate indexes if you think this may be the case, or ask the reference staff for advice.
- University of Minnesota faculty, staff, and students may be able to borrow such materials from the school at which they were accepted via Interlibrary Loan. (However, not all institutions will loan their dissertations.)
- InterLibrary Loan <http://www.lib.umn.edu/ordering/illgen.phtml>
- Most U.S. dissertations since 1952 (and a few earlier ones and many Canadian and other non-U.S. ones) are available for purchase from Bell and Howell. Ordering information, options, and prices are explained at the **Digital Dissertations** "About" screen <http://www.lib.umn.edu/articles/proquest.phtml>

What about dissertations from other countries?

Various indexes and bibliographies exist listing dissertations and theses done in other countries; a good but now somewhat outdated source listing such and many related sources is Michael M. Reynolds' **Guide to Theses and Dissertations: An International Bibliography of Bibliographies** (Wilson REF quarto Z5053.A1 R49 1985).

Some long-running sets include:

Canadian Theses / Theses Canadiennes

Index to Theses with Abstracts Accepted for Higher Degrees by the Universities of Great Britain and Ireland

Inventaire des theses de doctorat soutenues devant les universites de Francaises

Deutsche Nationalbibliographie Reihe H: Hochschul-Schriften, Monatliches Verzeichnis

(Titles, scope, etc. of all the above have varied over the years; note the "continues" and "continued by" notes on our MNCAT records for these and related materials.)

The Center for Research Libraries will generally be able to supply foreign dissertations (for U of M clients only), though there may be a considerable lagtime involved in obtaining them. Requests can be initiated through our Interlibrary Loan service.

WHERE TO FIND

Dissertations and Theses Written at the University of Minnesota

Dates	Locations	Dates	Locations
PhD Dissertations			
Circulating		Archival	
1940-1961	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minn. Library Access Ctr (MLAC) in Elmer L. Andersen Library, W. Bank • Bio-Med Library in Diehl Hall • Magrath Library, or other St. Paul 	1888-1952	University Archives in Elmer L. Andersen Library, W. Bank (Must be used on premises)
1962 to present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilson or MLAC • Bio-Med Library in Diehl Hall • Magrath Library, or other St. Paul 	1953 to present	Contact Bell and Howell, see ordering info at: http://www.lib.umn.edu/articles/proquest.phtml
1997 to present	Current U of M students, faculty and staff may be able to download from Digital Dissertations (selected)		
Masters Theses			
Circulating		Archival	
1925-1961	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bio-Med Library in Diehl Hall • Magrath Library, or other St. Paul • Wilson Annex or MLAC 	1907 to present	University Archives in Elmer L. Andersen Library, W. Bank (Must be used on premises)
1962-present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilson (1996- present) • Wilson Annex (1962-1995) • Wilson Business Ref (Masters in Health Admin., 1999 - present) • Bio-Med Library in Diehl Hall • Magrath Library, or other St. Paul 		



MNCAT Sample Search

Search MNCAT at <http://www.lib.umn.edu>

Select **ADVANCED SEARCH** and enter
 Author keywords
 and/or
 Title keywords

Set the Limit Material Type pull -down menu to: Dissertations/Theses

Search: Enter word or phrase:

Title Keywords

Combine (AND) with:

Author Keywords

Combine (AND) with:

General Keywords

Limit search to:

Year:

Language:

Format:

Location: