



Locating Theses and Dissertations

Locating Dissertations Completed at ISU and Other Universities

Dissertations & Theses

Use the *Dissertations & Theses* database to locate dissertations completed at both Illinois State University and other universities. *Dissertations & Theses* covers the complete range of academic subjects appearing in dissertations from over 1,000 accredited institutions since 1861 and is updated monthly. From 1980 forward, 350-word abstracts written by the author are also included. Beginning in 1997 most dissertations are available full text. Almost all dissertations completed at Illinois State University, including those completed before 1997, are available full text. Theses and dissertations completed before 1997 at universities in Illinois can be requested through the I-Share option in the Milner Catalog. However, some theses and dissertations, especially those with accompanying media, may not circulate.

The subject headings used in this index are very broad. Try experimenting with various combinations of words. Remember that you can limit to various fields, including keyword, author, title, subject, advisor, and school. Dissertations not available for free download can be ordered through Interlibrary Loan. However, many institutions will not lend their dissertations. Some dissertations can be purchased, and an *Order* option is available as part of the database.

The print version, *Dissertation Abstracts International*, is available from 1938-1996 is kept in storage on Floor 1 and must be requested. Use to locate abstracts of pre-1980 dissertations.

WorldCat

Dissertations can also be located through *WorldCat*. Although the lengthy abstracts found in *Dissertation Abstracts International* are not available, *WorldCat* is a good way to locate dissertations completed at institutions that do not submit to *Dissertations & Theses*. After accessing *WorldCat*, use one of the drop boxes to change the index field from *Keyword* to *Notes* and then type the word *thesis* in the matching box. An alternative method is to use one of the *Subtype Limits*. Change *Any Format* to *Manuscript*. Although Milner can request copies through Interlibrary Loan, many libraries will not lend their dissertations.

Other Databases

Other databases may also include citations for dissertations. Although the subject specific indexes do not offer the most direct way to locate dissertations, they may be important when conducting an exhaustive search. *ERIC*, *PAIS International* and *PsycINFO* are a few of the databases that include citations for dissertations. Various search engines and databases are structured differently, and there may be no direct way to limit to dissertations. Think about the field of study and what indexes cover the field.

Dissertations and Theses Completed at Illinois State University

Most theses and dissertations completed at Illinois State University are available in Milner Library and are listed in the online catalog. There will be two entries for newer dissertations; one entry is for the bound paper copy, and the second entry links to the electronic full text. All dissertations have *Author*, *Title* and *Subject Heading* entries. Theses from 1991 and later have *Author*, *Title* and *Subject Heading* entries. For earlier theses, those completed between 1966 and 1991 will have *Author* and *Title* entries, but those completed between 1946 and 1965 will also have *Subject Heading* entries. A paper index was maintained through 1990 and is located in the Reference area on Floor 2. The paper index includes a *Keyword* section and is the only way to search by subject for dissertations completed between 1966 and 1990.

Copies of ISU theses and dissertations that can be checked out are shelved by call number with the library's other circulating books. They are located in the southwest corner of Floor One. Individual theses and dissertations are given a unique number based on the order in which they come into the library. Thus, dissertations and theses produced by any given department will not be shelved next to each other.

A second copy of each thesis and dissertation is kept in the University Archives. These archival copies can be viewed, but they cannot be taken from the Archives. Hours may vary depending on staffing. It is suggested that those who want a thesis or dissertation make advance arrangements with Archives staff. For more information, go to www.library.ilstu.edu/archives/.

Searching the Online Catalog

To locate ISU theses and dissertations, go to the library's Online Catalog and choose the option for an *Advanced Search*. In the *Search for* box, enter the words *theses masters* or *theses doctoral*. Use the drop box for *Search by* to change the designation to *Subject Words*.

You have different options as to how to proceed. If you want to locate dissertations or theses completed in a particular department, type some key words from the name of the department in the second *Search by* box. Note that the default at this level is *as a phrase*. You may want to use the down arrow to change this to *all of these*. Again use the drop box for *Search by* to change the designation to *Subject Words*. If you want to search for a particular topic, enter relevant terms in the second *Search for* box. In this situation, you may want to leave the *Search by* box at the *Any Words* default. *Author* searches can also be used as *Advisor* searches since the advisor's name is treated as an author.

Although the catalog record includes a Subject Heading for departmental theses, using this Heading will not retrieve dissertations received after 1997.

Dissertations & Theses @ Illinois State University

The *Dissertations & Theses @ Illinois State University* database allows you to search citations and abstracts of doctoral dissertations completed at Illinois State University that were published in the *Dissertations & Theses* database. Almost all are available full text online.