

Wellesley College Archives
Access to Historical Theses policy

Context

Before 1994, the library did not systematically collect honors theses, and authors did not grant permission for their theses to be available to researchers. Current paper/physical holdings in the Archives date from 1925-2011.

Authors of master's theses were always required to deposit a copy in the library. Current holdings date from 1888-1979.

Researchers could request scans of theses that were clearly in the public domain (author died more than 70 years ago). For other theses, Archives would only scan a portion, following Fair Use guidelines. Theses were made available in our reading room, and researchers could take photos for research use.

Policy

Archives will proactively request permission from authors to digitize a few high-use theses. Otherwise, theses will only be digitized at the request of researchers or authors.

Any thesis written by an author who is still living: Archives staff will attempt to contact the author using contact information available from the Alumnae Association. Authors may choose to have their theses posted to the Digital Repository, to have them shared with researchers who contact the Archives, or to continue restricting them to reading room use only. If we do not hear back from the author after multiple contacts, the thesis will be made available to researchers by request, but not posted to the Repository.

Any master's thesis written by an author who is now deceased: the thesis will be digitized and uploaded to the Repository.

Any honors thesis written by an author who is now deceased: if the thesis is more than 50 years old, it will be digitized and uploaded to the Repository. More recent theses will only be shared with researchers by request.

Any author may request that the Archives digitize their thesis and add it to the Repository. LTS staff will create a form on the Archives website and in the Honors Thesis collection in the Repository.

Theses will be digitized according to existing [service levels](#).

Before digitizing historical Hygiene and Physical Education theses, Archives staff will check for posture photos, photos of children, and personally identifiable information (PII) of participants. This content will be redacted from any versions posted online or shared with researchers.

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