Practical Step to Completing a Master's Thesis or Dissertation

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

January 2005

SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Degree you are seeking   __Masters   (17) Doctorate   (1) Other

What is your graduate department?

Aero/Astro Engineering (1)   Biological Engineering (1)
Biology (1)   Chemistry (1)
Civil and Environmental Engineering (3)   EAPS (1)
History/Biological Engineering (1)   MAS (1)
Mechanical Engineering (2)   Media Arts & Sciences (1)
Neuroscience (1)   Physics (1)
Science (1)   Social Justice Education (1)

Have you completed your Thesis/Dissertation proposal? No (12) Yes (4) (1) Not Applicable

How did you find out about this workshop? (10) Email from the Dept.   __Flyer on Campus
                          University Website   (6) Other (1)

Do you feel that you need to complete you thesis/dissertation in a certain time frame? Yes (16) or No (2)

OVERALL

	Poor	Average		Excellent
1. Evaluation of the session		11.1%	55.6%	33.3%
2. The value of the course content to you personally	5.6	22.2	33.3	38.9
3. The value of the course content to you professionally		27.8	33.3	38.9
4. The workshop maintained my interest		16.7	38.9	44.4
5. The workshop was well organized		5.6	38.9	50.0
6. The workshop will assist me in graduate school	5.6	16.7	27.8	50.0

	Poor	Average		Excellent
7. Communicated the course content			38.9%	61.1%
8. Responded to questions/concerns		5.6	38.0	38.9
9. Provided relevant examples	5.6	16.7	16.7	61.1
10. Friendly respectful style			11.1	88.9
11. Encourage group participation		22.2	27.8	50.0

What was the *most* valuable thing you got from the workshop?

- *Being informed that i could get a coach. I'll definitely need one*
- *Her personal experiences will help me to finish my writing*
- *hidden cost& 15 minute items and necessary resources(format manual)*
- *how to work with advisor*
- *Lots of good tips, getting format guidelines, doing small chunks, figuring out where to get personal support*
- *Practical advice about handling committee members*
- *SPECIFIC TIPS*
- *Talk about formatting the dissertation*
- *techniques for using time everyday*
- *The 15 minute activities and question you most answer on your thesis proposal*
- *the general message that we all can finish and the thesis should tho be perfect*
- *The personal examples*
- *This was awesome, Thank you*
- *Tips on writing something every day, keep moving also having a journal*

What was the *least* valuable part of the workshop?

- *ALL WAS VALUABLE*
- *Everything was really useful*
- *Everything was valuable*
- *Excessive emphasis on humanities type dissertation. For many (most!) MIT students, getting research done is hard than writing about it*
- *For some that require lab experiments to write, addressing their needs in the presentation before Q & A might be good*
- *I thought all of it was useful*
- *not really*
- *proposal stuff(i am way past that)*
- *the pre-proposal part of the talk*
- *Things like the "Cost of your thesis" Slide, formatting etc*

Would you recommend this workshop to your colleagues? Why or why not?

- but the time on discussing how to do page set up for dissertation
- Maybe it would depend on where I thought they needed help.
- Not really. Only part of it was applicable to MIT students
- yes
- yes, because it encourages us to finish

- YES, I WOULD RECCOMEND
- yes, if nothing else it has motivated me to make a plan
- yes, it will motivate others to finish their writing
- Yes, Most of my friends are in graduate and thesis writing medical school
- yes, vary food for additional tips & motivation

Any suggestions to improve this workshop?

- I cannot imagine better
- Include more details about selection of thesis committee members
- Incorporate anecdotes/suggestions for Science/Engineering PhD work
- make it more interactive(maybe meeting in groups and make a list of thing we
  believe are important to write a dissertation)
- more advice about outside mentoring
- More emphasis/examples for Engr/Sci technical thesis than sociology thesis
- NONE
- Problems with these vary according to university for e.g. at MIT most folks don't have
  problems formatting etc. It might be nice if you could change some the slides according to the university.
- see previous answer
- Tell us about what you can expect to find in the software some snippets would be nice

How would this workshop impact your dealings with advisor or committee members?

- being more communicative with thesis committee about what they want, one chapter at a time or all at once
- Changes my new of what a thesis proposal should be; and the steps toward writing a dissertation.
  Helps me to see links between each stage of grad school.
- I'll prepare more things in writing when meeting with my advisor
- I'll try to get more organized in terms of be more prepared for research meetings
  also to how to help them help me
- I am not sure about how to pick committee member, but I'll at lease be nice to them
- It helped me organize better
- it will help me to be more organized
- MAKE MEETINGS MORE USEFUL,ORGANIZED
- No.I pretty much follow what you suggested already.
- none
- Will deal more professionally with advisor

What if any kinds of emotions did you have about starting your thesis or dissertation?

- *anxiety*
- *Dreaded Writing*
- *Excited because I want to be done soon*
- *excitement*
- *EXCITEMENT, AND FEAR B/C IT WAS SOMETHING I HAD NEVER DONE BEFORE*
- *I'm positive, motivated after this workshop*
- *I am very nervous about the dissertation*
- *I expected more guidance from my advisor, but I'm not sure about my own convictions*
- *I felt I can't do it.*
- *N/A*
- *Total lack of support issues*
- *trepidation*

Having attended this workshop, what impact do you think the workshop will have on you completion of your degree?

- gives me more motivation
- I'll know more of what to expect so less can surprise me
- I can do something everyday, even if it just formatting
- I think it is good advice
- I WILL BE ABLE TO KEEP MY DEADLINE
- I will definitely finish my degree
- It's giving me the motivation to continue in order to finish
- it's good to hear that it doesn't have to be perfect
- Not much, but it's got me thinking about planning my next steps.
- will find outsiders to help me complete program
- will help me to complete my degree faster (I hope!) very good advices

What is the most significant challenge you will need to personally overcome to complete your thesis?

- Advisor direction--currently it's hared to get, but I like freedom for now
- getting academic support
- Getting frustrated when my adviser is unreachable /unavailable
- Getting the research done.
- keep motivated
- Lack of organization and laziness
- Maintaining motivation to do the research.
- not perfecting every sentence
- procrastination & stress
- procrastination, feels like a thousand mile journey
- research
- Self confidence and focus.
- self motivation

The purpose of this workshop is to provide an overview of the thesis/dissertation process that relate to graduate students from all disciplines in the later stage of their career. Do you feel that the thesis/dissertation process in your department is the same or different from other departments? If different, in what way is the process different?

- I think the student in MAS have less direction and specific guidelines.
- It's about the same.
- My dept revolves around my chair
- no
- Pretty similar. I actually don't know the process; our dept doesn't offer much info, so I'm glad this workshop
- this is a rather new department but i think it is similar to other engineering departments on campus
- Very similar to the presentation outline.
- we have both a qualifying exam and a general exam- this in unnecessary I think