Dissertation Forward: Rethinking the PhD Thesis

Christopher Loss, Vanderbilt University
Cassidy Sugimoto, Indiana University Bloomington

Moderator: Maureen McCarthy, Council of Graduate Schools
Plan for today

• Two presentations of approximately 20 minutes each, followed by a Question & Answer period.

• Please submit any questions through the GoToWebinar control panel on your screen.

Audio Troubleshooting

- Having trouble hearing us? Try switching to a different audio connection. You can change from Telephone to Mic & Speakers or vice versa without leaving the session.

- If you experience trouble with a telephone connection, click “Problem dialing in?” for an alternate phone number to dial.
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Cassidy Sugimoto, Indiana University Bloomington

Moderator: Maureen McCarthy, Council of Graduate Schools
Christopher P. Loss

Associate Professor of Public Policy and Higher Education; Associate Professor of History; Chancellor Faculty Fellow (2016–18); and Director of the M.Ed. Program in Higher Education Administration, Dept. of Leadership, Policy & Organizations

Vanderbilt University
Toward a 21st century dissertation

Dr. Cassidy R. Sugimoto
School of Informatics and Computing
19th century dissertations are anachronistic in the 21st century.
Dissertations should reflect the genre conventions and inventions of the home discipline(s).
Changing genre compositions

Economics, Political Science, and Sociology
Teams are the new academic persona.
Diminishing place of sole authored work
Contributorship models acknowledge distributed expertise.
## PLoS Contributorship data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contribution</th>
<th>Articles</th>
<th>Author-article combinations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzed the data</td>
<td>85,900</td>
<td>98.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceived and designed the experiments</td>
<td>85,406</td>
<td>98.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributed reagents/materials/analysis tools</td>
<td>64,444</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performed the experiments</td>
<td>82,811</td>
<td>95.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrote the paper</td>
<td>86,517</td>
<td>99.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (20 243)</td>
<td>15,900</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N distinct papers</td>
<td>87,002</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Distribution of authors as a function of their number of contributions, by discipline

Percentage of authors
Odds of females performing a task relative to males

- Analysis: 0.90
- Design: 0.90
- Material: 0.84
- Perform: 1.52
- Write: 0.92
Standards in credentialing must acknowledge the heterogeneity of the job market.
Science and Engineering doctorate holders employed in academia: by type of position (1973-2013) (S&EI, 2014)
Growing rates of interdisciplinarity
Doctoral students and dissertations are inputs as well as outputs of scholarship.
Doctoral education should be the entrance into open and linked scholarship.
Doctoral education should educate and prepare, not haze.
The 21st century dissertation will continue to evolve.
Thank you!

Questions?

CONTACT
CASSIDY R. SUGIMOTO
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Questions?

Please submit your questions by typing them into the Questions box on the GoToWebinar control panel.
Thank You for Participating!

- Webinar recording and slides will be emailed to participants and posted on the CGS website within one week of the webinar. Please share with interested colleagues.
- Check out the proceedings from the Jan. workshop.
- Attend the 2016 CGS Annual Meeting session, “The Future of the Dissertation” (early bird registration is open).
- Follow #DissFwd on Twitter.