Doctoral Thesis Dissemination Policy
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The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is conferred by the Institute primarily in recognition of breadth of scholarship, depth of research, and the power to investigate problems independently and efficiently, rather than for the completion of definite courses of study through a stated period of residence. The work for the degree must consist of systematic studies of an advanced character, of research and the preparation of a thesis describing these. A thesis is to be a substantial new contribution to the field that would be released into the stream of scholarship. In addition, the candidate must have clear self-expression in both oral and written English.

Dissemination of the thesis
1. The dissemination of a thesis is guided by the Caltech open access policy that states, “The Faculty of the California Institute of Technology is committed to disseminating the fruits of its research and scholarship as widely as possible.”
2. Standard practice is to make a thesis openly available through CaltechThesis upon submission.
3. Graduate students or their advisors may request that a thesis be embargoed for a period up to six months, during which time access will be limited to campus, in order to pursue publications and/or patents. The request must be made to the library in writing and must be approved by the University Librarian. The metadata associated with every thesis will be available worldwide upon submission. The embargo automatically expires after six months.
4. Exceptions, i.e., extending the embargo to include the campus or beyond six months, must be requested in writing and will require the consent of the University Librarian, the Division Chair, the Vice Provost, and the Dean of Graduate Studies. Extensions will typically be limited to six months.

Examples of situations where an extension of the embargo may be granted:
(i) Portions of the thesis are included in a publication under review in a journal whose policy explicitly requires embargo. The written request must include documentation, and an additional six-month extension of the embargo may be granted.
(ii) A patent application or licensing agreement is under negotiation and the Office of Technology Transfer and Corporate Partnership advises continued embargo. The written request must include documentation, and an additional six-month extension of the embargo may be granted.

Examples of situations where an exception will not be granted:
(i) The advisor intends to prepare a patent application, but has not yet done so.
(ii) The student intends to prepare a paper, but has not yet done so.
(iii) The student seeks to extend the embargo to campus in order to keep some methodology described in the thesis secret in order to apply it to other areas.
5. Theses that are currently embargoed will be made openly available on campus on the date this policy goes into effect, and worldwide in six months from the date that this policy goes into effect. Requests for exception must follow the rules above and require the approval of the University Librarian, the Division Chair, the Vice Provost, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.