Embargo Periods and External Publication for History Dissertations

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Access Restrictions

This portion of the study compared access restrictions for 2005-2016 History dissertations at 16 USA universities. Access restrictions included: Delayed upload, Campus-only access, and Blocked access.

2005-2010 dissertations

2011-2016 dissertations

Publication of History Dissertations as Monographs

This portion of the study compared publication rates and time to publication for monographs based on unrestricted and restricted History dissertations, 2005-2013.

WorldCat was searched for authors’ names, and monograph titles were compared to dissertation titles.

Conclusions

- During the study period, restricted access dissertations were published at a slightly higher rate than unrestricted dissertations.
- Times to publication were similar for both groups. In addition, both groups had a number of monographs that were published well after the 6 year restriction period that the AHA recommended.

“The American Historical Association strongly encourages graduate programs and university libraries to adopt a policy that allows the embargoing of completed history PhD dissertations in digital form for as many as six years. … [Open access dissertations are] a form of distribution that publishers consider too widespread to make revised publication in book form viable.” (July 2013)

- This study compared numbers for access-restricted History dissertations at 16 USA universities in the years before and after the above policy statement was issued.
- It also compared publication numbers and time to publication for monographs based on unrestricted and restricted History dissertations from the same universities.

Every year, a substantial number of History PhD candidates at these 16 universities selected some form of access restriction.

Least restricted: 2010, 49% restricted

Most restricted: 2014, 88% restricted (year after AHA policy was issued)

* Values for 2015 and 2016 are not final, as “delayed upload” numbers were not available as of 6-15-2017.

Unrestricted Dissertations: As of 6-15-2017, 26% of unrestricted History dissertations (2005-2013) had been published as monographs.

Time to publication: 0-11 years

Restricted Access Dissertations: As of 6-15-2017, 30% of embargoed History dissertations (2003-2013) had been published as monographs.

Time to publication: 0-11 years