

DEPARTMENTAL HONORS – Union College

How to Choose an Internet Access Option

Union College Policy and Access Plan

Union College has a long-standing policy of providing access to all student honors theses in microform in the library. Additionally, as of 2008, the College is providing online access on a site restricted to the Union College community. Your thesis will be available after graduation online, which will be managed by the College, unless you choose to opt out or delay release for publishing, patent or proprietary reasons. The choice will be up to you and your advisor. If the two of you disagree, Union College will adopt whichever of your two choices is the more restrictive for posting online. Note, however, that your thesis will still be available for consultation on site in the library.

Why would I choose “Internet Release”?

Access to your thesis online serves the scholarly convention of sharing one’s research with others at Union College, and it makes it easy to do so. It also exemplifies the nature of honors work done in your department or program. In contrast, by opting out or placing an embargo on your thesis via a patent hold or a journal hold, others do not have online access to the results of your work.

What is a “Patent Hold,” and when would I choose it?

If you have patent and/or proprietary reasons for having information in your thesis withheld from public release, Union College will hold your document (generally for a one-year period) until your patent has been secured or the proprietary restriction is no longer necessary. This hold may be extended an additional year if you notify the library in writing before the initial hold ends.

Why would I choose “Journal Hold”?

If you are (or will be) submitting material to a journal that restricts any form of online access to material prior to publication, a “Journal Hold” is the option you need to select. This gives you time to get published, and your thesis will be released to the Union College site one year after graduation. This hold may be extended an additional year if you notify the library in writing before the initial hold ends, to give you time to finish publishing your material. Many students find, however, that the availability of their work online in some form does not hinder publication, and in several cases has attracted publishers to them. You should consider each publisher’s policy before making this decision.

Why would I “Opt Out”?

You should not choose any of the access options above if any of the following circumstances apply: (1) if there are co-authors whose permission to publish the thesis has not yet been secured; (2) if the work and/or ideas of Union College Faculty are disclosed in the thesis and written consent to its publication has not yet been secured from the faculty member(s); 3) if you have included third party copyrighted matter in the thesis (such as, but not limited to, images not created by you) and written permission for release has not been secured from the owner(s) of the copyright. **You may change this selection in future, once permissions have been secured**, by notifying the library in writing.

What if I have more questions about availability options?

If you still have questions or concerns about access options, please contact the College Librarian in Schaffer Library at 518-388-6277.