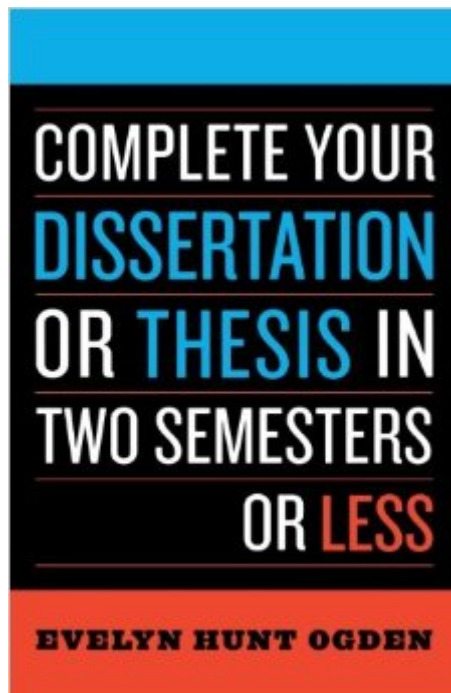


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# Complete Your Dissertation Or Thesis In Two Semesters Or Less



## Synopsis

This newly updated guide describes how to effectively and efficiently manage the dissertation or thesis process in two semesters or less. Written for doctoral and master's degree students enrolled in on-campus programs and students pursuing accelerated and online-based degree programs, this book demystifies the seemingly daunting process. From choosing a topic and advisor, to efficient researching and the actual writing and defense, *Complete Your Dissertation or Thesis in Two Semesters or Less* provides students with all the information needed to conquer this academic experience. Updates to this edition include: An update to the length of graduate studies Technological advantages now available to graduate students

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## Customer Reviews

Dissertation timelines are typically very long, often taking years to complete. This dissertation guide presents constructive advice on how to move through all phases of a dissertation project as quickly and headache-free as possible. While the time frame suggested by the title -two semesters or less-is unrealistic, following Ogden's advice will certainly lead to an earlier completion date. Although every chapter in the book is helpful, I found chapters covering committee choice and topic selection of particular interest. Ogden presents a variety of different professor-profiles as potential advisor (mentor) candidates. She succinctly elaborates on the factors that a PhD candidate should consider when choosing an advisor, including his or her availability, career position, commitments, interests, capability, and personality type. As I read this chapter, I began to

reevaluate my own assumptions about what a good advisor is in terms of the bottom line--completing the dissertation. The chapter on choosing a dissertation topic was full of useful information, although the author certainly guts any idealism or excitement when she says, "Make your objective a topic that is 'tolerably non-boring,' a topic that has a high potential for success (finishing)" (p. 38). True to the title of the book, the chapter (as is with every chapter) is all about being practical. Topic choice is dictated by such considerations as access to the data, feasibility of data collection, and short-cut means-to-an-end topic mining (rather than interest). The emphasis on efficiency and practicality, coupled with the brevity of the text, leads to some problems, however.

I'm a PhD in a social science that functions like the hard sciences - we have labs, and we do experiments or field surveys that require statistical analyses and tend to have shorter dissertations. This book is a good start and a great motivator. The first couple chapters - on doctoral life, on researching and selecting your committee, and on selecting a topic - are very good. Ogden breaks things down and emphasizes that you can, indeed, finish a dissertation. She's like the opposite of that annoying advisor (usually a tenured professor with a cushy salary) who just suggests that you can take all the time in the world to make your dissertation into your magnum opus; her emphasis is on helping you finish as quickly as possible. Her advice about researching your committee is just so spot-on, it's great. Her advice about selecting a topic is also fantastic - about finding something that's tolerably not-boring and that can be completed in a limited amount of time, and about finding something someone will pay you to do. The later chapters - about actually sketching a plan and writing - are less great. Still good, just not great. The overall ideas - about breaking your dissertation down into small pieces; planning each workday and what you will get done; setting realistic goals for yourself and meeting them - those are great! And they really do work, as they are keeping me on task during my proposal-writing stage. However, the actual details of the advice are a bit unrealistic. Fifteen days from finding a topic to turning out a completed, ready-to-be-approved dissertation proposal is a bit ludicrous, especially if you are at a university like mine where your committee has to be convened for you to give an oral defense of it (and the proposal is around 30 pages).

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