GradTools

University of Michigan

Helping Rackham Doctoral Students Track Degree Progress

GradTools is a special set of tools in the CTools environment, designed to help you as you work toward your degree. It is a one-stop site providing many uses with 3GB of storage and a secure backup. The unique feature of GradTools is the Dissertation Checklist, which presents the process for completing your doctoral degree in one personalized view. The checklist features include all the required and recommended steps towards earning your Ph.D., links within the steps to official forms and resources, and completion dates of required steps/milestones once they are satisfied.

Use GradTools

- to track your progress to degree and official status at Rackham. Checking off these items from the dissertation checklist can help you to keep motivated and help mark your progress. You can add custom items to the list too.

- to manage your dissertation committee and keep them informed and engaged with your work whether they are on campus or off campus.

- as a master site for your entire graduate career, archiving all seminar papers, conference materials, pdfs of influential readings, professional correspondence, grant applications, and dissertation chapters.

To create your GradTools site

- Go to the following URL: http://ctools.umich.edu
- Click the login button in the upper right hand corner. Your University of Michigan uniqname and Kerberos authentication is required.
- Click on "Worksite Setup" from the options on the left, just under "Home."
- Click the button called "New" in the upper left, just under the "Worksite Setup" blue banner.
- Click on the "GradTools site" radio button.
- Click "Continue."
- Click "Create Site."
- Your GradTools tab will appear at the top of your screen, or in the "more sites" menu.
- Click that tab or select the item in the menu bar to open your site. The "Dissertation Checklist" will be the second option on the left side of page.

Questions? Comments? Contact **gradtools@umich.edu**

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TOP 10 REASONS TO START USING GRAD TOOLS!

1. GradTools is a special set of tools in the CTools environment, designed especially for doctoral students by the Rackham Graduate School, to help you successfully work toward your degree. Try it! It's there to help you.

2. The unique feature of GradTools is the Dissertation Checklist, which presents all the required and recommended steps towards earning your Ph.D. in one personalized view. Use the checklist to track your progress to degree and your official status at Rackham. You can add custom items to your list.

3. Students who use GradTools say that one of its greatest benefits is the storage space. GradTools offers you 3GB of storage space to back-up and archive your entire graduate career. Use it to store final versions of your seminar papers, drafts of your dissertation chapters, PowerPoint presentations, grant applications, pdfs of influential readings, and any important file.

4. You can use GradTools to keep your committee members informed of your work progress at all times. GradTools enables you to grant access to your site in order for committee members or your advisor to review the work that you have posted. This is a great way to keep them informed and engaged with your work. Students have commented that it is especially useful if one or more of your committee members is at another institution, is on sabbatical, or is unable to attend one of your committee meetings.

5. Use the e-mail archive or announcements as a record of official correspondence with your committee.

6. You can use the discussions feature to invite feedback and comments from committee members of drafts stored in your Resources folder. You can also use the discussions feature to create a research diary, dissertation blog, new ideas, big questions, or freewriting area in which you explore your original thoughts and ideas.

7. Do your off-campus friends and family ever wonder about your studies and research? You can create friend accounts that will allow them access to your GradTools site and let them browse through your work, much like your committee members.

8. Need a recommendation letter or a professional reference? Use resources as a professional tool to store updated resumes, teaching philosophy statements and links to your activities, so that your professors can have the information they need immediately at hand when the time comes.

9. You can make of it what you need it to be. In the past, students have used their GradTools sites to keep track of job searches or to create personally customized checklists and time schedules as a way to keep them on track towards achieving their goals. There are many useful functions within GradTools. You decide how and when to use them.

10. It's easy to get started and user friendly. Turn over this page to learn how you can start using your GradTools site now.