The Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS) and University Microfilms International (UMI) have announced the 2015-2016 WAGS/UMI Distinguished Master’s Thesis Award competition.

Each member institution may submit only one nomination for this award.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

This award recognizes distinguished scholarly achievement at the master’s level. Nominations will be accepted in any of the following disciplines in which PSU offers a master’s degree with an option (or requirement) for a thesis as the culminating requirement: Biological Sciences, Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, and Engineering.

The scholarly “product” eligible for this competition is a formal written thesis. If a nominating department offers both a thesis option and a project option, only the thesis is acceptable for consideration for this award. The university nomination requires a written endorsement from the Dean of Graduate Studies.

GUIDELINES FOR PSU PARTICIPATION IN THE 2015-2016 WAGS/UMI DISTINGUISHED MASTER’S THESIS AWARD

1. To be nominated, the student must have been graduated with a master’s degree in Summer or Fall 2014 or Winter or Spring 2015 with the thesis as the culminating activity for the degree. Nomination materials must be submitted to the PSU Office of Graduate Studies and must include the following:
   a. A non-technical summary prepared by the student (1000-1500 words) describing the research and its significance for a general academic audience of non-specialists.
   b. A letter from the thesis adviser or the department chair plus a letter from one additional faculty member, each on department letterhead. These letters should include information regarding the significance of the thesis, the contribution of the thesis to the program or the degree granting unit, and the impact of the thesis on the knowledge base of the discipline.
   c. A CV or résumé from the student nominee.

In addition to paper nomination packets, please submit the student’s non-technical summary and CV/résumé in electronic format (MS Word only) to hanson@pdx.edu. Please include “WAGS nomination” and the nominee’s name in the subject line of the email.

2. All nomination materials (paper and electronic) must be received in the PSU Office of Graduate Studies (184 XSB; 1633 SW Park Ave) no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 31, 2015. One nominated thesis will be selected by the Dean of Graduate Studies for forwarding to the WAGS competition.

3. Initial screening will be based upon four criteria: originality, significance of the study, overall quality, and outcomes and accomplishments from the thesis. Finalists selected by WAGS will be asked to provide three complete copies of the thesis.

4. The 2015-2016 award from WAGS/UMI consists of a certificate of award, $1,000 to the recipient, and travel expenses for the student and the student’s adviser to receive the award at the annual meeting of the Western Association of Graduate Schools.