



**Western Michigan University
Graduate College**

Routing Forms for Digital Signatures

The COVID-19 Pandemic has elevated the need for digital signatures on forms everywhere. Fortunately we are able to use the Adobe Acrobat Reader program to facilitate the process. Adobe Acrobat Reader is available at no cost from the Adobe website.

Step 1: If you don't already have it, download and install Adobe Acrobat Reader

Adobe Acrobat Reader is a free download from Adobe.com. If you already own a paid version of Acrobat, that version should work as well. There are known issues with non-adobe PDF viewer programs, therefore it's best not to use another program such as Firefox, Chrome, etc. (or Preview on the Mac) to fill, save or view Adobe forms.

Please note: the free version of Acrobat Reader often comes bundled with free one-month trial software such as McAfee Anti-Virus. If you already have an anti-virus program, installing a second one on top of it may cause your computer's performance to slow noticeably. You do not have to install the free trial software, un-check the boxes next to those items during the installation of Acrobat.

Step 2: Download the form you need and rename it for clarity

We suggest adding your name to the form filename to make it easily recognizable as yours.

Step 3: Open and fill the form with Acrobat

Your computer might be set up to use another program as the default for opening PDFs. Right-clicking and selecting "open with" or "open with another program" will usually get you to where you can choose Acrobat as the program to open the form. If you like you can change the preferences in your operating system to use Acrobat as default, but it's not necessary at this time. Fill out the form fields first, we'll leave the signing for last.

Step 4: Sign your form

If your form requires your signature at this point, click on the signature box and follow the prompts that Acrobat provides. If you do not have to sign your form, skip to the next step. If you do not already have an Adobe Digital Signature, you will need to Configure one at this time. Acrobat will prompt you for the necessary information and you will need to create a password for your signature. We recommend saving your signature(Digital ID) as a file to your personal computer for later use.

Step 5: Route your form for individual signatures

Often forms require signatures from several people. You must send the form as an email attachment to each of these people one at a time. After receiving the signed version of the form from the first person, save it to your computer and then attach that signed version to the email for the next signature. There's no method to combine separately signed forms, so do not send the form to everyone at once. Include these instructions in your email to your form signers. Help them help you by sharing these tips to set up Adobe signatures on their computer.

Final Step: Return the completed version of the form

Send the completed form to the appropriate Graduate College email. Email addresses are provided next to each form on our forms page.