

**TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES GRADUATE PROGRAMS
HDFS DOCTORAL DEGREE**

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR THE DEFENSE

The following are suggested general guidelines for the defense for the doctoral degree. The Graduate School has no desire to establish an inflexible uniformity in the conduct of these examinations, but we do wish to make this important event in a candidate's graduate program more significant and also deserving of broader interest and participation on the part of the faculty members and other graduate students alike. A dissertation defense should be a major event in any department, justifying greater attendance than is sometimes evident.

The defense, usually the general field of the dissertation, is required of all candidates for doctoral degrees. It may be scheduled at any suitable time after the dissertation (not necessarily the final version) has been approved by the candidate's advisory committee. The examination is a formal public affair, and should be scheduled in a room conducive to general attendance by faculty members and students.

I. The Semester you plan to Graduate, do the following FIRST

1. Have your Advisory Committee Chair file your "Official Title of Dissertation" with the Graduate Dean.
2. Pay your Dissertation Fee at the Bursar's Office.
3. As is the case with every other semester, be sure that you are enrolled for dissertation hours with each committee member (12 hours, or 9 hours if you hold a half-time assistantship).

II. After Completing your Dissertation Draft (at least SIX WORKING WEEKS before you plan to defend):

1. After first obtaining approval from your advisor, circulate copies of your draft to the other members of your advisory committee.
2. Allow **three weeks** for your committee to review your draft. During the third week, your committee should have feedback concerning your draft.
3. You may set the date for the defense **only** after having the approval of **all** members of the advisory committee to do so.

III. Setting your Dissertation Defense Date (at least **THREE WEEKS** before you plan to defend):

1. The student and faculty should work together to assure that faculty are available to review written documents according to the policy stated here. Sometimes faculty have out-of-town professional obligations.
2. Reserve a room for your defense. The Graduate Secretary can help you with this or you may make reservations through the Dean's office. The examination is a formal public affair, and should be scheduled in a room conducive to general attendance by faculty members and students.
3. Write your defense announcement. Prior to duplication, take the original to the Graduate Dean's Office for proofreading. Example of the format used is attached. You will need to submit 70 copies to the Graduate Office for official distribution.
4. Obtain the "Dissertation Packet" containing your title page from the Graduate School.

IV. Conduct of the Examination:

Although there will likely be some variation from department to department and from committee to committee, the following general procedures are appropriate:

1. The chairperson of the advisory committee should convene the examination by introducing the candidate, giving his/her background and indicating the general format of procedures to be followed.
2. Initially, the candidate should be given a short period of time (from 15 to 30 minutes) for an overview of his/her project for the benefit of those in attendance who have not read the dissertation.
3. After this presentation, the candidate should be questioned by members of the committee in a way that will require a genuine defense of both the dissertation and its research procedures. All members of the committee should have read and thoroughly familiarized themselves with the dissertation before the examination, and copies of the document (not necessarily in final form) should be available for reference during the examination.
4. After the committee members have examined the candidate, others in attendance should be permitted to raise questions or make comments. As indicated earlier, the examination is a public affair and the candidate should be able to defend the work before anyone who cares to question it.

5. When ample opportunity has been given for questions from the audience, those not on the doctoral committee should be excused while the committee asks any final questions it chooses.
6. When the committee is satisfied, the candidate should be dismissed from the room while the committee deliberates and comes to a decision concerning the adequacy of the candidate's performance. The Graduate Dean or his representative, who attends primarily to observe the conduct of the examination and serves as an impartial arbiter in case questions arise relating to procedure or outcome, should participate in the final deliberations and may cast a vote if he/she deems it appropriate.
7. When a decision is reached, the candidate should be informed and the committee chairperson should forward a report of the outcome to the Graduate Office for the record.

V. After Your Defense

1. Follow the instructions for electronic submission of your thesis on the Graduate School's website: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/etd.php>. It is also customary to provide a departmental copy and a copy to each of your committee members.
2. Journal articles based upon the dissertation research should be written. Discuss authorship with your chair.