



Dissertation Defense Guidelines

The following procedures must be followed as part of the dissertation defense:

- (1) Schedule Dissertation Defense
 - a. Work with Tiffany Nell to secure a location in the COE
 - b. Utilize Skype or Zoom for distance audience members

- (2) Submit a dissertation announcement request
 - a. Must be filed at least three weeks prior to the defense but no later than the deadline specified on the University Academic Calendar.
 - b. The dissertation defense announcements are posted to all COE social media and should include information about how to access the defense from a distance
https://educttu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3HNWsiB90mVi1QV

- (3) Select a Dean's Representative who is *Outside* of the Student's Department
 - a. The Graduate School recommends the chair and student select a Dean's Representative early in the dissertation process to avoid last minute issues
 - b. Make sure the Dean's Representative has Graduate Faculty Status
 - c. If the Dean's Representative does not have Graduate Faculty Status, seek permission for the individual to serve on the committee in this capacity through the graduate school
 - d. Dean's Representative must submit a "FINAL EXAMINATION FOR THE DOCTORAL DEGREE REPORT OF THE GRADUATE DEAN'S REPRESENTATIVE" to Pam Smith in the COE Graduate Office immediately following the defense
http://www.depts.ttu.edu/hs/faculty/policies/committees/Deans_Representative_Report.pdf

- (4) Submit a Defense Notification Form
 - a. Must be filed three weeks in advance of the defense but no later than the deadline specified on the University Academic Calendar
 - b. Must include the name of the Dean's Representative
 - c. Must be signed by the student and the dissertation chair
 - d. Submit form to Pam Smith in the COE Graduate Office
http://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/academic/docs/TD-Forms/May_19/defNOTIFICATION2019_VFinal.pdf



- (5) Submit the Oral Defense and Thesis-Dissertation Approval Form
 - a. Complete at time of defense or when all final edits have been completed
 - b. Must be submitted by the Graduate School's posted deadline
 - c. Submit to Pam Smith in the COE Graduate Office
http://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/academic/docs/TD-Forms/May_19/Oral-Exam-and-Thesis-Dissertation-Approval-Form.pdf

In addition to these procedures, the graduate school has set forth expectations for the defense process linked here:

https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/academic/docs/Doctoral_Oral_Defense_Guidelines.pdf

According to these guidelines, at the time of the dissertation defense the following procedures should be followed:

Conduct of the Examination

The chairperson of the advisory committee should convene the examination by introducing the candidate, giving his or her background, and indicating the general format of the proceedings to follow, although there may be variations from department to department. Initially, the candidate should give an overview of his or her study for the benefit of those in attendance who have not read the dissertation (15 to 30 minutes). After this, under the guidance of the chairperson, the candidate may be questioned by members of his or her committee, the representative, and other audience members. As indicated earlier, the examination is a public affair and the candidate should be prepared to defend his or her work before anyone who may question it. A copy of the dissertation (not necessarily in final form) should be available for reference during the examination. When ample opportunity has been given for this discussion, those not on the doctoral committee should be excused while the committee and the representative ask further, possibly more detailed, questions regarding both the dissertation and its research procedures. The candidate should be dismissed from the room while the committee comes to a decision concerning the results of the examination. When the decision is made, the chairperson should inform the candidate of the outcome and forward a short report of the examination to the Dissertation Supervisor for the record.

Committee Approval

All members of the dissertation committee must approve and sign the document before it is submitted to the Graduate School for the approval of the Graduate Dean. The options for



handling a situation in which a majority of the members of a student's examining committee vote to pass the student's examination, but there is a dissenting vote include the following:

1. The members may all agree on appropriate changes in the final form of the dissertation that resolve the objections of the dissenting member.
2. The dissenting member may accept the majority vote as a committee decision and agree to sign the dissertation.
3. A member voting against approval, and refusing to sign the dissertation as a matter of principle, may resign from the committee, in which case another member may be appointed as a replacement (if needed to make the minimum of three), and the dissertation may be approved. The chairperson must notify the Graduate Dean by letter of the replacement member, who must be approved by the Dean.
4. A member voting against approval may refuse to sign the dissertation and may not be willing to resign from the committee. In such a case, the matter should be referred to the Graduate School for review and assistance in solving the problem. It is stressed that occasions when committee members vote against approval rarely occur when all of the committee members work closely with the student throughout the preparation of his or her dissertation.