

Defense Procedure for Graduate Committees

Major professors should encourage students to verify well in advance that committee members are available for the defense and to sign the title page after revisions. *Please review the [Graduate Education Deadlines](#) for the current academic year for information on when each step should be completed.*

	Steps and notes
Step 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final POS is reviewed and revisions are submitted if substantial changes are needed • Should be done by <i>midterm before the last semester</i>, to provide time for the Grad Office to complete an initial degree audit and identify any issues before the final semester registration is closed.
Step 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The major professor reviews the thesis/dissertation. • The major professor informs the student whether the document may proceed to the committee.
Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The graduate committee reviews the thesis/dissertation and determines if it is defensible. • The committee evaluates whether the document is defensible: that it is an acceptable manuscript in terms of technical quality and proper expression in American Standard English, and that the revisions can reasonably be completed before the final week of classes. The committee may discuss their assessments in person or by email if needed. • During this time, the Grad Office also conducts a preliminary formatting and content check, and notifies the student and major professor of any issues. • Each committee member provides written comments/corrections to the student and notifies the major professor of any substantial issues that might prevent a successful defense. • If the document is not deemed defensible, the major professor discusses the deficiencies with the student and notifies the Grad Office that the defense will be delayed.
Step 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee approves the scheduling of the defense. • The student formally schedules the defense with the Grad Office using the <i>Defense Approval and Scheduling</i> form. <i>By signing the form, the committee is certifying that the thesis/dissertation is defensible as defined above.</i> • The signed form must be submitted no later than 5 working days before the defense. • The committee is encouraged to require the student to submit a revised draft before the defense, so they can verify that the initial revisions have been satisfactorily completed.
Step 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee, chaired by the major professor, conducts the defense. • The committee signs the <i>Defense Results Report</i> and delivers it to the Grad Office within two working days after the defense. The form will NOT be accepted from students. • Any additional revisions should be summarized by the GDR, attached to the <i>Defense Results Report</i>, and given to the student in writing.
Step 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee certifies acceptance of the thesis/dissertation after student completes the required revisions. • The committee signs the title page printed on archival paper to certify acceptance. • The major professor requests the Registrar to convert all of the student's prior 798/898 research grades from NP to S. • The major professor fills out and signs the <i>Checkout Sheet for Graduate Students</i> so the student can begin collecting signatures if necessary.
Step 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Graduate Office coordinates the final document production and degree audit. • The document undergoes proofreading, an abstract review, and a final formatting check. • Major professors and department heads must sign the library order form if not done earlier. • The student makes the last corrections and submits the final printed archival copy, including the committee signature page, for the Dean of Graduate Education to sign. • The student returns the completed <i>Checkout Sheet for Graduate Students</i> to the Grad Office.