

8. Dissertation Defense

At least 2 weeks before the dissertation defense, the Dissertation Approval Form, the Faculty Agreement Form and the announcement must be submitted to the Dean of The Graduate School. The dissertation must be approved for oral defense by the Advisory Committee. The signed Faculty Agreement form indicates that members of the committee have read the draft of the dissertation and find it acceptable for the purpose of examining the student. If the draft of the dissertation is not approved, the student will be responsible for making all changes recommended by the committee and must resubmit it to the committee for approval. The student must be enrolled in the PhD program in the semester that the exam is administered.

In preparation for the dissertation, students should consult the Thesis/Dissertation Preparation Guide located at <https://www.augusta.edu/gradschool/student-resources>. It is the responsibility of the major advisor to ensure students adhere to these policies. The Graduate School will not approve dissertations that do not follow the format outlined in guide. Using an alternative format MUST be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School prior to preparation of dissertation.

All requirements for the degree must be completed before a student can defend their dissertation. Satisfactory performance on the dissertation defense, in which the student defends their dissertation before the Advisory Committee, dissertation reader(s), and all Augusta University faculty, staff and students, is required. This exam is based primarily on the dissertation and the field of knowledge that constitutes the student's major subject.

If the student chooses to select a reader, the reader must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. A reader should be an expert in the student's field of study, have a terminal degree, and is typically a University (AU or otherwise) faculty member. The Dean of the Graduate School and reader(s) must receive a corrected electronic copy of the dissertation approved by the Advisory Committee at least two (2) weeks before the dissertation defense.

DEFENSE DATE:

- The student must receive approval by his/her advisor and committee to set a date to defend. No defense will be scheduled 2 weeks prior to or 2 weeks after graduation.
- Once the final date is set, the student must notify The Graduate School with the date and a copy of his/her JagTrax profile form reviewed and signed by the program director.
- Submit the name of the reader, if applicable, to The Graduate School for approval.
- Nine weeks before dissertation defense– submit electronic draft of dissertation to his/her advisor.
- Five weeks before the dissertation defense – submit the Dissertation with the Dissertation Approval Form and Faculty Agreement Form to The Graduate School
- Two weeks before the dissertation defense – an announcement should be emailed to the faculty advisor for distribution to students and faculty. Departments are responsible for producing and distributing the Final Oral Examination Announcement, which is open to the Augusta University community. These announcements must be emailed to all students and faculty of the area of study (i.e., all SCCS graduate faculty and students).

Dissertation Approval Form

<https://www.augusta.edu/gradschool/student-resources.php>

Faculty Agreement Form

<https://www.augusta.edu/gradschool/student-resources.php>

Final Examination Announcement Template

<https://www.augusta.edu/gradschool/student-resources.php>

The Final Oral Examination Form, provided by the Graduate School, must be completed at the end of the exam by the committee and reader(s) and submitted to the Dean of The Graduate School for final

approval. Final defense results and all completed forms (defense rubrics, distinction ballots, final oral exam form) must be submitted within 5 days of the exam.

THREE OPTIONS

- Pass – Minor Revisions

If minor revisions, student will not be enrolled (nor be allowed to enroll) for the following semester (or any subsequent semesters) in the degree program in which he/she has just defended his/her dissertation. The student will be expected to graduate at the end of the semester in which he/she defends. The student's final approved revised dissertation and ALL final paperwork is required to be submitted to The Graduate School at least *one week* prior to the end of the semester/graduation. NOTE: Standard process – stipend stops 2 weeks after students defends to provide ample time to complete minor revisions before leaving AU.

- Pass – Major Revisions

If a student passes pending major revisions, a subcommittee will be appointment and he/she must continue enrollment for the semester while completing major revisions (generally, no more than one semester; two with permission from the Dean of The Graduate School). The subcommittee will establish a list of necessary revisions, along with a timeline for completion, in order for the dissertation to be approved and accepted by The Graduate School in partial fulfillment of the PhD degree requirements. The student's final approved revised dissertation and ALL final paperwork is required to be submitted to The Graduate School *one week* prior to the end of the semester/graduation. The student must be enrolled in the semester in which they defend AND complete major revisions.

- Not Pass (Case by Case as recommended by the Committee to the Dean of TGS)

- *Dismissal

- *Fall Back Masters

- *Option to redefend with or without major revisions

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