

Procedures for Conducting the Final Oral Defense For the Doctoral Dissertation

As the representative of the Dean of Graduate Studies, it is your responsibility to assure that the Final Oral Examination is conducted in a professional manner. This examination should provide the opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate his/her ability to conduct independent, meaningful research. Any deviations from professional academic standards should be reported immediately to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

The following procedures should be of help in conducting the Final Oral Examination. If you have additional questions, please contact the Graduate Office.

Prior to the Examination

COMMITTEE APPROVAL OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Approval of the thesis, dissertation to go forward for examination can only be given after the members have considered the entire manuscript. Members of the committee who do NOT agree that the thesis is examinable, whether in the majority or not, should inform the Program Head immediately and in writing so that such objections may be discussed with the Supervising Professor and the candidate.

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH COMPETENCE

The dissertation must demonstrate an independent research competence on the part of the candidate that substantially adds to knowledge in the candidate's field with respect either to its intellectual substance or professional practice. The third practicum in chemistry must demonstrate the candidate's ability to identify, analyze and solve substantive research and development problems at a level appropriate to the degree being sought. The dissertation or third practicum should be of such standard as to warrant publication in peer reviewed journals or scholarly books or monographs or equivalent.

SUBMISSION OF THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE THESIS, DISSERTATION

Once the candidate has, in the judgment of the Supervising Professor, prepared an examinable thesis/dissertation manuscript, it should be distributed to the other members of the Supervising Committee, allowing them adequate time to review the document.

After reading the document, a majority of the Supervising Committee members must agree that the document is ready to be defended before a request for a Final Oral Examination may be submitted and an examination date scheduled. Committee members should ensure that the manuscript is complete, has been rigorously proofread (preferably by a professional proofreader), and meets scholarship standards for dissertations. The Supervising Professor then submits a copy of the dissertation and the Request for Final Oral Examination form, signed with no more than one dissenting vote by the Supervising Committee members to the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies, which shall approve the scheduling of the Final Oral Examination.

Members of the committee who do NOT agree that the manuscript is examinable should inform the appropriate committee or administrator for that program immediately and in writing so that such objections may be discussed with the Supervising Professor and the candidate. The Final Oral Examination cannot be scheduled until a resolution has been reached with, at most, one dissenting vote.

FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION

A. Examining Committee

Upon the submission of the dissertation to the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Dean will appoint the Examining Committee. The membership of the Examining Committee will include all members of the Supervisory Committee plus a non-voting representative appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The representative serves as the Chair of the Examining Committee. An examiner external to the University may also be appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of a member of the Supervising Committee or the candidate.

Conducting the Examination

B. Conducting the Examination

Formal arrangements, such as time and place for the Final Oral Examination, are made by the appropriate committee or administrator for that program in consultation with the candidate and the Examining Committee and with the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies. All members of the Examining Committee must be present for the examination to be valid unless a prior written exemption has been granted by the Dean of Graduate Studies. If a member of the Examining Committee is absent without the approval of the Dean, then the Chair of the Examining Committee shall not hold the defense. The defense shall be rescheduled by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

The examination will be conducted by the Chair in a manner appropriate to the material presented and in accordance with current University regulations. The discussion will primarily focus on the candidate's research, although aspects of the general field in which it was conducted may also be covered.

1. The final oral examination shall be conducted in three phases.
 - a. Phase I. The candidate will make a formal public presentation of the research. That presentation is open to the public and members of the audience may ask questions. The Supervising Professor will chair this phase and supervise the questioning.
 - b. Phase II. Following the public presentation, the candidate will be examined by the members of the Examining Committee. This part of the examination is not open to the public. Depending upon the school's policy, other members of the faculty may also attend that part of the examination. This portion of the examination will be chaired by the representative of the Dean of Graduate Studies.
 - c. Phase III. After the completion of the oral examination, the Examining Committee will vote on the results of the Final Oral Examination. The committee will reach agreement on one of the five possible outcomes listed below with no more than one dissenting vote. If the committee cannot reach agreement on one of the options, then the candidate will have failed the oral examination and the manuscript will not be accepted.
 - (1) **Passed the oral examination and manuscript ACCEPTED,**
 - (2) **Passed the oral examination and manuscript ACCEPTED PENDING SPECIFIED REVISIONS,**
 - (3) **Second oral examination required, but manuscript ACCEPTED OR ACCEPTED WITH SPECIFIED REVISIONS,**
 - (4) **MAJOR REVISIONS of the manuscript and a second final oral examination required,**
 - (5) **Oral examination FAILED, manuscript not accepted and the committee recommends dismissal from the program.**

Following the vote of the Examining Committee, the Dean's representative shall complete the Examination Report, to be forwarded to the Dean of Graduate Studies within 24 hours of the time of the examination.

2. Procedures concerning Acceptance, Specified and Major revisions and Failure are as follows:
 - a. Accepted – The committee agrees that the dissertation is acceptable either without any revisions or with minor revisions such as corrections of typographical errors or changes of a minor editorial nature. It is the Supervising Professor's responsibility to ensure that such corrections are made. The final corrected and approved copies of the

dissertation must be submitted to the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies within a period of one month. If the final approved copy is not submitted within the one-month period, the results of the examination will be changed to Accepted Pending Specified Revisions and will be dealt with as specified under that result.

b. Accepted Pending Specified Revisions – The Committee agrees that the dissertation is acceptable pending changes which may include insertions or deletions. Such changes would be of the kind which do not radically modify the development/argument of the dissertation, but which go beyond minor revisions. The practical criterion will be that the committee is able to specify such changes with precision. It is the responsibility of the Supervising committee to certify that all such changes have been made. If the final approved copy is not submitted by the end of the semester following the examination, the results of the examination will be changed to Referred Pending Major Revisions and will be dealt with as specified under that result.

c. Referred Pending Major Revisions – The Committee agrees that the dissertation requires substantive changes in order for the dissertation to be acceptable. Detailed reasons for this decision must be supplied by the Chair of the Examining committee to the Dean of Graduate Studies, the appropriate committee or administrator for that program and the candidate concerned. These recommendations on required changes must be seen by all members of the Committee. The committee reconvenes within twelve months to re-examine the work. This second attempt on the Final Oral Examination will be the final attempt by the student. If the Final Oral Examination and the written manuscript are not Accepted, the student is dismissed from the program.

d. Failure – If the majority of the Examining Committee votes for failure of the oral and the non-acceptance of the manuscript, the student will be dismissed from the program. In no case will a third oral be given.

REGISTRATION DURING MANUSCRIPT REVISION

Regardless of the revision to be made, the student will be required to register and pay fees until the revisions are accepted by the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

IMPACT OF REVISIONS UPON TIME LIMIT FOR DEGREE COMPLETION

The ten-year time limit for completion of the degree is still in effect while these revisions are being completed.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT PROTECTION

In order to protect patent or other intellectual property rights, the Dean of Graduate Studies may, upon request, delay for a period of one year the binding, distribution and/or publication in microfilm of the dissertation or research practicum report.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS
REPORT OF FINAL EXAMINATION

DATE: _____

We, the undersigned as the Final Examining Committee for the doctoral dissertation of _____, submit this report of his/her Final Oral Examination.

This student has:

1. Completed the work assigned by the Supervising Committee.
2. Passed all examinations required by the Graduate Program.

3. Completed a dissertation which gives evidence of his/her ability to perform independent research and which contributes to the knowledge in his/her field.

The Examining Committee has voted and reports the results of this examination to be:

- _____ Passed the oral examination and manuscript ACCEPTED
_____ Passed the oral examination and manuscript ACCEPTED
_____ PENDING SPECIFIED REVISIONS
_____ Second oral examination required, but manuscript ACCEPTED
OR ACCEPTED WITH SPECIFIED REVISIONS
_____ MAJOR REVISIONS of the manuscript and a second final oral
examination required
_____ Oral examination FAILED, manuscript not accepted and the
committee recommends dismissal from the program

The REVISIONS which must be made to this dissertation must be specifically described below.

Print Name

Signature

Chairperson, Examining Committee

Chairperson, Supervising Committee

EVALUATION BY OUTSIDE MEMBER OF
DOCTORAL FINAL EXAMINATION

NAME: _____

STUDENT: _____

DATE OF EXAMINATION: _____

PROGRAM: _____

DEGREE: _____

In my judgment,

1. The dissertation submitted was:
_____ of acceptable quality

- _____ of marginally acceptable quality (please comment next page)
 _____ of unacceptable quality (please comment on next page)
2. The defense of the dissertation was:
 _____ Acceptable
 _____ Marginally adequate (please comment on next page)
 _____ Inadequate (please comment on next page)
3. The oral examination process was conducted in such manner as to: (do not restrict yourself to one response)
 _____ require the demonstration of intellectual capacity and rigor
 _____ require the demonstration of a true understanding of the dissertation and the dissertation topical area
 _____ make manifest any weak points in the candidate's dissertation
 _____ suggest a lack of intellectual capacity and rigor (please comment on next page)
4. The candidate's responses to questioning during examination demonstrated:
 _____ a high degree of intellectual competence
 _____ a marginally acceptable degree of intellectual competence (please comment on next page)
 _____ an unacceptable degree of intellectual competence (please comment on next page)
5. During the examination, the candidate was treated:
 _____ With fairness
 _____ Unfairly (please include additional comments)
6. Were all members of the candidate's committee present at and prompt in attendance for the examination?
 _____ Yes
 _____ No

**EVALUATION BY OUTSIDE MEMBER
OF FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION**

7. **COMMENTS:** Please comment on strengths and/or weaknesses of the dissertation as submitted, on the candidate's defense of the dissertation and on the oral examination process.

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OUTSIDE MEMBER'S SIGNATURE:
