

## ***Checklist for HESP faculty and students engaged in theses or dissertations***

- Select the student's committee.** Requirements for this are as follows:

**Eligible Committees for the MA thesis:** The Committee must consist of a minimum of *three members*, at least two of whom must be Regular Members of the UMCP Graduate Faculty, who are on tenured or tenure-track appointments. The Chair of the Committee is the student's advisor, who must be a Regular or Adjunct Member of the Graduate Faculty, or, by special permission, has been appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. Each member of the Committee must be a member of the Graduate Faculty of UMCP. Upon nomination by the Director of the Graduate Program and approval by the Dean of Graduate School, individuals who have been approved for Special membership in the Graduate Faculty may serve on Thesis Examining Committees. These individuals serve in addition to the two required Regular Members. To nominate a Special Member to serve, submit the nominee's curriculum vitae, a nomination form, and a letter of support from the Director of the Graduate Program. Graduate faculty who terminate employment at UMCP (and who do not have emeritus status) retain their status as members of the Graduate Faculty for twelve months, and during that time may serve as members and chairs of Thesis Examining Committees. If granted Special Member status, however, they may serve as co-chair. Professors Emeriti and Emeritae may serve on Thesis Examining Committees if they have retained their membership in the Graduate Faculty.

**Eligible composition of Dissertation Examining Committees:** The Committee shall include a minimum of five members of the Graduate Faculty, at least three of whom shall be Full Members. The Chair of the Committee normally shall be the student's advisor, who shall be a Full Member of the Graduate Faculty, or who has been granted an exception to the policy by the Dean of the Graduate School. Each Committee shall have appointed to it a representative of the Dean of the Graduate School. .

- Nominate the Examining Committee.***

A committee is not official until it has been nominated and approved by the Graduate School. To do this, you must submit the committee nomination form. The form is found at

<http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/gss/forms/Nomination&Thesis.pdf>

There is a **deadline each semester for its submission:** Please check with the graduate school's deadlines, posted at

<http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/deadlines/index.htm>

Please note that students who complete theses and dissertations must also submit, on time, other forms required for graduation, such as program approval forms, and application for graduation forms. Consult the forms page at

<http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/gss/forms/>

**Special rules for Dissertations:** Membership on a Dissertation Examining Committee requires nomination by the student's advisor and the Graduate Director of the student's graduate program, and approval by the Dean of the Graduate School. The nomination of a Dissertation Examining Committee should be provided to the Graduate School at least six weeks before the date of the expected dissertation examination. The dissertation examination cannot be held until the Graduate School approves the composition of the Dissertation Examining Committee. Furthermore, if the Graduate Faculty status of any member of an approved Dissertation Examining Committee changes, the approval of the Dissertation Examining Committee may be void, and a new Dissertation Examining Committee nomination form may be required to be approved by the Graduate School.

- **Chair.** Each Dissertation Examining Committee will have a chair, who must be a Full Member of the Graduate Faculty or, by special permission, has been otherwise appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. Dissertation Examining Committees may be co-chaired upon written recommendation of the program's Graduate Director and with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School; at least one of the co-chairs must be a Full Member of the University of Maryland Graduate Faculty.

- **Representative of the Dean of the Graduate School.** Each Dissertation Examining Committee shall have appointed to it a representative of the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean's Representative should have some background or interest related to the student's research. The Dean's Representative must be a tenured member of the Graduate Faculty at the University of Maryland and must be from a graduate program other than the home program of the chair and co-chair (if one exists) of the examination committee. In cases where a student is in an interdisciplinary graduate program, the Dean's Representative must be from a unit other than the home unit(s) of the Chair of the Committee and student's advisor.

- **Special Members.** Individuals from outside the University of Maryland who have been approved for Special membership in the Graduate Faculty may serve on Dissertation Examining Committees. These Special Members must be in addition to the required three Full Members of the University of Maryland Graduate Faculty. For procedures to nominate an individual for Special Membership, please refer to the section below on Graduate Faculty.

- **Professors Emeriti and Associate Professors Emeriti** may serve on Dissertation Examining Committees provided they are members of the Graduate Faculty

**Hold at least one preliminary meeting of the student and**

**committee:** This is to assure that the student and committee members agree on the appropriate grounding of the thesis/dissertation question and the specific methodology that will be employed. It is thus useful to hold this meeting **before obtaining IRB approval**, which is required for all projects in this department, even those making use of archived data.

**Prior to this first meeting** and any subsequent to it, the student should distribute a well-articulated background review, hypotheses and methods to the committee members **at least a week before-hand**, so that members can read and annotate the proposal and come prepared to discuss issues with the student. *Under no circumstances should a meeting be held if the members have not had sufficient opportunity to read the preliminary proposal.* Members may inform the advisor if they do not believe that the preliminary proposal is not sufficiently well-articulated to yet merit a meeting of the committee.

**Obtain IRB clearance for the project:** We have a number of departmental resources for this stage of thesis/dissertation preparation. Please go to:

<http://www.bsos.umd.edu/hesp/degreePrograms/current/reswriting.htm>

Please follow all instructions *faithfully*. Students **may not begin a project until it has received IRB approval**. The graduate school will demand assurance that the project has received such approval before accepting the thesis or dissertation.

**Hold an interim meeting of the committee if any unforeseen**

**changes in the direction of the thesis/dissertation are expected.** We recognize that some alterations (all of which must be approved by the IRB) may be necessary during the execution of a thesis/dissertation project. Such changes should be approved by the committee before being implemented, to avoid “nasty surprises” at the end of the project.

**Write up the thesis/dissertation and distribute it to**

**committee members:**

**First, FORMAT IS IMPORTANT.** Please see the guide at

<http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/publications/>

If the student does not comply with the format requirements, the submission may be rejected and the student may (in fact is likely to) miss the semester's deadlines.

Committee members must have at least 10 days (dissertations) or within a reasonable time frame (MA theses) before the set defense date to read and comment on the written final submission. The student should not make changes to the document at the last minute, and bring revised copies to the hearing.

The committee members may inform the student if the thesis/dissertation does not appear ready for defense. In this case, the hearing must be rescheduled and the same time frames listed above apply to revised submissions.

**Hold the defense:**

**There is no formal guideline for MA defenses. Students and advisors should use guidelines for dissertation defenses as a reasonable guide.**

**Procedures for the Dissertation Examination:**

- **Oral Examination Requirement.** Each M.A. and doctoral candidate is required to defend orally his or her doctoral dissertation as a requirement in partial fulfillment of the doctoral degree.
- **Committee preparation.** The members of the Dissertation Examining Committee must receive the dissertation at least ten working days before the scheduled examination. Should the Dissertation Examining Committee deem it reasonable and appropriate, it may require submission of the dissertation more than ten working days in advance of the examination.
- **Attendance at the Examination.** Oral examinations must be attended by all members of the student's officially established Dissertation Examining Committee as approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. All examinations must be open to all members of the University of Maryland Graduate Faculty. Programs may wish routinely to open dissertation examinations to a broader audience. In such cases, program policies must be established, recorded, and made available to all doctoral students. Should a last-minute change in the constitution of the Dissertation Examining Committee be required, the change must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School in consultation with the Graduate Director of the student's graduate program and the chair of the student's Dissertation Examining Committee.
- **Location of the Examination.** Oral examinations must be held in University facilities that are readily accessible to all members of the Dissertation Examining Committee and others attending the examination. The chair of the dissertation examining committee selects the time and place for the examination.

- Notice. Notice of the doctoral examination **must be publicized** in the student's graduate program at least five working days prior to the examination.
- **The Dean's Representative.** The Dean's Representative must be identified at the beginning of the examination. The responsibilities of the Dean's Representative include the following: to ensure that the procedures of the oral examination comply with those of the Graduate School (as described herein) and to report to the Dean of the Graduate School any unusual problems experienced in the conduct of the examination.
- **Invalidation of the Examination.** The Dean of the Graduate School may void any examination not carried out in accordance with the procedures and policies of the Graduate School. In addition, upon recommendation of the Dean's Representative, the Dean may rule an oral examination to be null and void.
- **Emergency substitution procedure.** The Graduate School is aware that last-minute emergencies can prevent a committee member from attending a scheduled dissertation examination and will work with the chair of the examining committee and/or Graduate Director to make last-minute substitutions in committee membership to allow the examination to take place as scheduled.
  - The request must be sent in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School. Fax or e-mail requests are acceptable. A telephone call to the Graduate School explaining that an emergency request is coming will facilitate the process.
  - The proposed substitute must be a member of the Graduate Faculty consistent with the rules for committee membership. Thus, if the Dean's Representative (who must be a tenured faculty member) could not attend, the substitution of an untenured member of the Graduate Faculty would not be acceptable.
  - Once the written request has been received, the substitution will be made, usually within the hour, provided that the revised committee meets the requirements for committee membership.
  - When the substitution has been made, a written confirmation, in the same format as the request was received (fax or e-mail) will be sent out, along with a telephone confirmation. The substitution is not official, however, until the written confirmation has been received in the graduate program.
  - An examination that is held with one or more substitute members on the committee, but without prior written confirmation from the Graduate School that the substitution(s) have been approved, will be voided and the examination will have to be repeated.
  - A copy of the written request and the written confirmation must be placed in the student's file for future reference.
- **Remote Participation in a Dissertation Defense.** All members of a Dissertation Examining Committee must be physically present in the examination room during the entire dissertation defense and during the

committee's private deliberations following the examination. **Participation by telephone is not permitted under any circumstances.** Remote participation by video teleconferencing is permitted under the following circumstances:

- Permission to conduct a remote-participation defense must be obtained by the dissertation chair from the Graduate School in advance. In making this request, the chair must indicate in writing that he/she has read the rules for a remote defense listed below.
  - A competent video technician must be present at both the University site and the remote location for the entire duration of the defense in the event that technical difficulties arise.
  - Only one remote site may be used during the defense.
  - The candidate, the committee chair, and the Dean's Representative must all be present in the examination room. None of them may be at the remote site.
  - The program must pay for all of the costs of the video teleconferencing arrangements.
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- **Preliminary meeting of the committee prior to the student presentation:** prior to the start of the actual defense, the advisor will ask the student and visitors to leave the room and poll the members of the committee to verify that the defense is warranted, and to ascertain the schedule of questions (i.e., by committee member, by section of the document, etc.) to facilitate the flow of the defense. This step may occur before the actual defense date.
  
  - **Student Presentation.** The student is permitted to present briefly (e.g., 15-20 minutes) a summary of the dissertation, emphasizing the important results and giving an explanation of the reasoning that led to the conclusions reached. This step is especially important in giving the student experience in publicly presenting the work.
  
  - **Opportunity for Questioning by Members of the Dissertation Examining Committee.** The chair invites questions in turn from each member of the Dissertation Examining Committee. The questioning may continue as long as the Dissertation Examining Committee feels that it is necessary and reasonable for the proper examination of the student.
  
  - **Conclusion of the Examination.** After questioning has been completed, the student and any others who are not members of the Dissertation Examining Committee are asked to leave the room and the Dissertation Examining Committee discusses whether or not the dissertation and its defense are satisfactory. The Committee has the following options:
    - To accept the dissertation without any recommended changes and sign the Report of Examining Committee.
    - To accept the dissertation with recommendations for changes and, except for the chair, sign the Report of the Examining Committee. The chair will check that the changes to the dissertation have been

- made, and, upon his or her approval, sign the Report of Examining Committee.
- To recommend revisions to the dissertation and not sign the Report of Examining Committee until the student has made the changes and submitted the revised dissertation for the Dissertation Examining Committee's approval. The Dissertation Examining Committee members sign the Report of Examining Committee if they approve the revised dissertation.
    - ***NOTE: The above two options are the most typical outcomes of most thesis/dissertation hearings. The student should be prepared to make alterations to the previously submitted document and to be able to make these changes in time to meet submission of the thesis deadlines for that semester. In the event of either of these two decisions by the committee, the advisor should retain the signed approval form until the student has satisfied any requested changes.***
  - To recommend revisions and convene a second meeting of the Dissertation Examining Committee to review the dissertation and complete the student's examination.
  - To rule the dissertation (including its examination) unsatisfactory. In that circumstance, the student fails.
- **Following the examination, the chair, in the presence of the Dean's Representative, must inform the student of the outcome of the examination.** The chair and the Dean's Representative both sign a Report of the Examining Committee indicating which of the above alternatives has been adopted. A copy of this statement is to be included in the student's file at the graduate program office, and a copy is given to the student.
  - **Passage or failure.** The student passes if one member refuses to sign the Report, but the other members of the Dissertation Examining Committee agree to sign, before or after the approval of recommended changes. Two or more negative votes constitute a failure of the candidate to meet the dissertation requirement. In cases of failure, the Dissertation Examining Committee must specify in detail and in writing the nature of the deficiencies in the dissertation and/or the oral performance that led to failure. This statement is to be submitted to the program's Graduate Director, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the student. A second examination may be permitted if the student will be in good standing at the time of the proposed second examination. A second examination requires the approval of the program's Graduate Director and the Dean of the Graduate School. If the student fails this second examination, or if a second examination is not permitted, the student's admission to the graduate program is terminated.

### **Format of the defense:**

- The dissertation examination shall consist of two parts:
  - Part 1 shall be a public presentation by the candidate on the main aspects of the research reported in the dissertation. During Part 1, questions from the audience to the candidate will be permitted. For questions from persons who are not members of the Dissertation Examining Committee, the Chair of the Dissertation Examining Committee shall have discretion to decide whether such questions are germane to the topic of the dissertation and how much time shall be allotted for the answers.
  - Part 2 shall be a formal examination of the candidate by the Dissertation Examination Committee. This part shall be open only to the Dissertation Examination Committee, other members of the Graduate Faculty, and graduate students from the candidate's graduate program. During Part 2, only members of the Dissertation Examination Committee shall be permitted to ask questions. Programs may vote to establish a policy to have Part 2 be open only to members of the Dissertation Examining Committee and members of the Graduate Faculty.
  - Attendance at the final discussion and vote shall be limited to the members of the Dissertation Examining Committee.
  - Announcements of the date, time, and location of the examination, as well as the candidate's name and the dissertation title, shall be disseminated five working days in advance to all members of the Graduate Faculty and graduate students within the graduate program in which the candidate's degree is to be awarded. Mass-distribution methods, such as e-mail, a faculty/student newsletter, or individual announcements are acceptable. Merely posting a paper notice on a corridor bulletin board will not constitute a sufficient announcement.
  - Departments and graduate programs may petition the Dean of the Graduate School for exceptions to these policies.

**An abbreviated guide to the MA defense:**

1. Prior to the defense, the advisor meets with the candidate to describe what happens in a defense and the order of events.
2. At beginning of the defense, the advisor asks the candidate to leave the room. The committee then reaches consensus that the defense can (or cannot) proceed, and determines the order of questioning (e.g., chapter by chapter, person by person, etc.)
3. The candidate returns and gives a BRIEF (10-15 minute) summary of the thesis, including background, hypotheses, method, findings and implications.
4. Committee questioning ensues and is moderated by the advisor.
5. Following the questioning period, the candidate is asked to leave the room and the committee renders a decision and specifies:
  - a. the exact nature of revisions (if any);
  - b. which revisions are required and which are optional;

- c. who will supervise and sign off on the revisions and the timeline
  - d. documents are signed
6. In addition to filing the final thesis with the library (see next section), the student returns a final copy to each faculty member, and provides one bound copy for the department library.

## **Submit the final form of the thesis or dissertation**

Dissertations are to be submitted to the Graduate School in electronic format after final approval of the dissertation by the Dissertation Examining Committee. See the University of Maryland Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) website at <http://dissertations.umi.com/umd> or the University of Maryland Thesis and Dissertation Style Guide (<http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/publications>) for the details of this process.

Dissertations submitted to the University through the ETD process will also be deposited in the UM Library's online electronic archive, DRUM (Digital Repository at the University of Maryland, available at <http://drum.umd.edu>). This is a free public archive of academic work by University faculty and graduate students. The submission of the thesis to the University in fulfillment of degree requirements grants the University the one-time, non-exclusive right to publish the document on DRUM.

**HESP ALSO REQUESTS THAT YOU PROVIDE ONE VELOBOUND COPY FOR THE DEPARTMENT LIBRARY.**

## **Inclusion of One's Own Previously Published Materials in a Dissertation**

1. A graduate student may, upon the recommendation of the dissertation director, and with the endorsement of the home graduate program's Graduate Director, include his or her own published works as part of the final dissertation. Appropriate citations within the dissertation, including where the work was previously published, are required. All such materials must be produced in standard dissertation format.
2. It is recognized that a graduate student may co-author work with faculty members and colleagues that should be included in a dissertation. In such an event, a letter should be sent to the Dean of the Graduate School certifying that the student's examining committee has determined that the student made a substantial contribution to that work. This letter should also note that inclusion of the work has the approval of the dissertation advisor and the program chair or Graduate Director. The format of such inclusions must conform to the standard dissertation format. A foreword to the dissertation, as approved by the Dissertation Committee, must

state that the student made substantial contributions to the relevant aspects of the jointly authored work included in the dissertation. The letter should be included with the dissertation at the time of submission.

2. Students must comply with appropriate copyright law if they include any materials under copyright protection in the dissertation or thesis.

## **Understand the Policies on University of Maryland Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations**

### **The University's Rights**

The University of Maryland retains non-exclusive distribution, reproduction, and archival rights to doctoral dissertations submitted to the Graduate Faculty in fulfillment of requirements for a graduate degree. Such rights entitle the University of Maryland to reproduce, archive, and distribute dissertations, in whole or in part, in and from an electronic format, as it sees fit. Distribution is subject to a release date stipulated by the student and approved by the University.

### **The Student's Rights and Responsibilities**

The University of Maryland's publication rights regarding dissertations are non-exclusive - they offer no explicit restrictions on the distribution of dissertation material by the author. University of Maryland doctoral students retain full ownership rights to and copyright of their dissertations. Students also retain full rights to use all or part of their dissertation in future works, such as books or articles.

Students are responsible for ensuring that their thesis or dissertation complies with copyright law. Copyright law gives the owner of a work exclusive rights to reproduce, distribute, display or perform the work publicly and to modify or adapt the work and the exclusive right to grant others permission to exercise any of those rights in the work, subject to certain exceptions. Students are responsible for determining if their use of another's work requires his or her permission or falls within one of the exceptions. Permission is not required to use a work when:

- The work never qualified for copyright because, for example, it lacked originality or was created by Federal employees in the scope of employment.
- Copyright in the work has expired.
- The use qualifies as a fair use.

Please see the Graduate School policies for more extensive guidance on copyright issues.