

DIRECTOR/CHAIR OF FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION INSTRUCTIONS

1) **All committee members must participate for the entire oral examination.** If a committee member is participating remotely, that member needs to be able to communicate with the candidate and other Committee members during the entire defense. If more than one member of the committee, or the student, is participating remotely for the exam please inform Graduate Student Academic Services prior to the exam for approval. **Call 621-5128 if an emergency arises, including any change to the final committee.**

2) **Review the procedures with the Committee before the candidate enters the room.** Procedures and customs differ from department to department; normally the candidate presents the dissertation research prior to any questioning by the committee. The presentation is open to the public and lasts no more than an hour.

a) Specify time allotment for the examination (no minimum: maximum is 3 hours).

b) Clarify that the audience leaves after the candidate's presentation.

c) Specify that the examination continues with only the Committee and the candidate present.

d) Remind examiners that this is primarily an oral defense of the dissertation, not a general examination.

However, the examination may include general questioning related to the fields of study encompassed.

3) **The Examination**

a) Request a recess to discuss or redirect the process if needed and ask the candidate to momentarily leave the room.

b) Conclude within the 3 hour time period.

c) Ask the candidate to leave the room for the final discussion and voting.

d) Evaluate the candidate's performance. The Committee will evaluate the candidate's overall performance.

Review the three Options with the committee.

i) Option 1. Pass with no revisions

ii) Option 2. Pass with Revisions.

The Dissertation Director indicates date by which revisions must be made. **The committee decides whether oversight of the revisions will be the sole responsibility of the Dissertation Director, or whether the dissertation revisions will be approved by each individual Committee member.** The Dissertation Director will summarize the revisions required by the Committee that are needed for approval of the dissertation. Once the candidate completes all revisions to the satisfaction of the Committee, the Dissertation Director must **notify the Graduate College degree counselor by e-mail that final approval has been granted.**

iii) Option 3. Fail

The Committee votes whether or not to recommend a repeat examination.

e) **The Committee performs a secret vote** (individual vote options: Pass, Fail, or Abstain). The outcome of that vote determines whether or not the student has passed; if result is a Pass, the committee must decide on which option to select for the student (Pass or Pass with Revisions). If there are 3 committee members then all three members must pass the student in order for that student to pass the final defense. If there are more than 3 committee members then there may be only one negative vote (Fail or Abstain) for the student to pass.

f) **Inform the candidate of the results of the examination**, but do not report the actual votes, only whether a Pass or Fail and which option.

g) **The Dissertation Director will report the outcome in GradPath** on behalf of the entire committee (using the link in the GradPath e-mail for the Results form or the Pending Transactions page). The Dissertation Director enters the vote count and outcome of final defense on the Results of Final Oral Defense form in GradPath and submits it electronically to Graduate Degree Certification for approval. If revisions are required by the student, the Director or Graduate Coordinator must notify (by email) Graduate Student Academic Services when the revisions have been completed.

h) The Dissertation Director may return the Grade Change form(s) for 920 dissertation units (or MUS 925 or NURS 922) to the Graduate Student Academic Services office, or the Director may withhold that grade until the student completes revisions. A separate Grade Change form should be submitted for any ungraded 900 research units.