

FOR STUDENTS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Pick a desired external defense date and work backwards!

Note: G+PS = Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

As soon as you have the slightest intention of defending in the next 6 months:

Pick a desired external defense date

- You can narrow it down to a specific week and suggest that week to your committee
- Ensure that at least 2 of your committee members can be physically present
- If you do not need to meet any hard deadlines (e.g., funding runs out, job application requires completed PhD, etc.), you could put off this step until after the DAM
- Check the graduation deadlines if you need to graduate by a certain month

At least 15 weeks before desired external defense date:

Pick an internal defense (aka dissertation approval meeting aka DAM) date

- It must be at least 7 weeks before your desired external defense date
- You may want to give yourself more than 7 weeks between the internal and external defenses if you think you might need more time to do post-internal defense revisions
- You must confirm that at least 2 of your committee members can be physically present (1 can join in via Skype)
- Set a reminder for yourself that you must submit a PDF copy of the dissertation to the graduate secretary (Jackie Shaw or current equivalent) at least 10 days before the internal defense – if a committee member wants a hard copy, you have to give Jackie a hard copy to give to that committee member

Submit EXTERNAL EXAMINER NOMINATION FORM

- Check the eligibility requirements
- Check the arms-length requirements – this one tends to be tougher if your committee members (*note: committee, not just primary supervisor*) have collaborated widely
- You have to provide a brief justification for each nominee – just list a bunch of relevant published work or write 1-2 sentences
- Do not contact your nominees beforehand!!
- G+PS will contact your nominees in the order you've listed – don't put jerks in the number one spot (if possible, avoid jerks altogether)
- Needs to be signed by Grad Advisor (Sheila Woody or current equivalent) and then emailed to G+PS (email address is on the form)

At least 8 weeks before desired external defense date:

Have your DAM meeting / internal defense

- You can choose the formal or informal option – the formal option means you do the full presentation and take questions in an orderly manner, the informal skips the presentation and goes straight to questions (less orderly manner but still as tough)
- This meeting is not open to the public (friends and RAs cannot attend)
- Based on how the DAM goes, revisit your proposed external defense date. If you have many revisions to do before submitting to G+PS, consider pushing your external defense to a later date (again, make sure at least 2 committee members can attend any new date you suggest). If revisions are easy enough, confirm with the committee your desired external defense date
- Take this opportunity to ask your committee members for suggestions for university examiners

Do any required revisions to your dissertation

- Email a PDF copy of your dissertation to graduate.thesis@ubc.ca and they will “pre-review” your formatting. You can do the pre-review step before the DAM if you want.
- Hold onto the email from G+PS that says your formatting has been approved

Submit the following 3 items in a single email to graduate.doctoral@ubc.ca:

Submit APPROVAL FOR EXTERNAL EXAMINATION FORM

- Cannot be signed until revisions are done and approved by supervisor
- Must be signed by research supervisor and Grad Advisor (Sheila Woody or current equivalent)
- Must specify the departmental speed chart (in case they need to mail the external examiner a hard copy) – you can ask Jackie for the speed chart

Submit your DISSERTATION

- In PDF form
- If a hard copy was requested by the external examiner, you must deliver a hard copy to the G+PS office. The hard copy must be cerlox-bound (printing shops will know what that is) and can be double-sided.

Submit a COPY OF THE EMAIL that says your formatting has been approved

- That’s why you needed to hold onto that email

Contact potential university examiners (or have your supervisor do it)

- Check the eligibility requirements (1 person can be from psych department)
- You have to provide a brief justification for each nominee – just list a bunch of relevant published work or write 1-2 sentences
- You get to choose these people – avoid jerks if at all possible
- They MUST be at your external defense so tell them about your tentative external date when you make your request

Submit UNIVERSITY EXAMINER NOMINATION FORM

- Must be signed by research supervisor and graduate advisor
- Emailed to graduate.doctoral@ubc.ca

Send your university examiners a copy of your dissertation

- Do this after you receive approval of these examiners from G+PS
- The examiners might ask you for a hard copy but most likely a PDF

At least 4 weeks before desired external defense date:

Submit your PROGRAMME

- This is where you fill out what courses you took, what papers you have published, who is on your committee, which awards you have won, the abstract of your dissertation
- There is a template you can use (see G+PS website)

Book a room for your external defense

- There is a link to the “oral defense booking request” form on the G+PS
- You can select “I am ready to finalize a booking” or “I am enquiring about room availability only” if you are not certain about the date/time (and then submit again later to finalize date/time)

Start studying for the defense

- Put together your PowerPoint presentation
- You will know who your external examiner is – try to anticipate their questions
- Practice your presentation in the room that you will be doing the actual defense (you can formally book it for practice or just check the calendar of defenses and pick a date/time when no one is scheduled to defend)

At some point, you will get a notification about having a chair for your defense

- You do not get to pick this person – they could be from any department in the university
- The chair gets an electronic copy of your dissertation and can request that you give them a hard copy

On the day of your external defense:

Defend your work

- Don't forget any adapters/dongles you need for your laptop
- No latecomers are allowed – they are so serious about this – they will literally lock the door

After your external defense:

Do revisions as needed

- They must be done within 1 month of your external defense

Fill out DISSERTATION APPROVAL form

- I think one of these is provided to your chair during your external defense but it is not complete until your supervisor signs off after your revisions are done

Fill out ELECTRONIC DISSERTATION SUBMISSION COVER SHEET form

- This requires only your signature

Submit the DISSERTATION APPROVAL form and ELECTRONIC DISSERTATION SUBMISSION COVER SHEET form

- Email them to graduate.thesis@ubc.ca
- You have to submit these forms before they will allow you to open a CIRCLE account so don't put this off

Set up your CIRCLE account and submit to CIRCLE

- Check if your funding will get prorated for submitting too early in the term (yes, this happens sometimes and they will ask for money back!)
- Follow the CIRCLE instructions (<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/final-dissertation-thesis-submission/circle-instructions>)
- Convert your dissertation to a single PDF and name it according to the strict naming conventions (ubc_gradyear_gradmonth_lastname_firstname.pdf)
- Submit to CIRCLE – you might get a message saying you did something wrong – fix whatever they ask you to fix

Apply for graduation

- You do it through the Student Service Centre
- You will need to write a doctoral citation. It is a 350-character summary of your dissertation research written in lay language. There is a preferred format and examples are given on the G+PS website

Disclaimer: Requirements and deadlines may have changed since this document was written (2017).