

Stanford

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4.7.2 Doctoral Degrees, University Oral Examinations & Committees: Implementation

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1. Scheduling the Oral Examination

PROCESS STEPS	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Identify the examiners, a date, and time for the oral examination.	Degree Program, Student and Advisor
2. Ensure the appointment of an university chair. The degree program should not require the student to solicit the out-of-department chair, although the student may participate in selecting and contacting potential chairs. (See July 2012 memo from Richard Roberts [1].)	Degree Program
3. Submit the University Oral Examination form [2] to the degree program administrator at least two weeks prior to the examination date.	Student
4. Review committee composition for compliance with university requirements.	Degree Program

	Review student status:	
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the student be registered in the term the oral examination is to be taken? • Does the student have valid candidacy? • Has the student submitted supporting documents (e.g., Doctoral Dissertation Reading Committee form [3], abstract for a dissertation proposal or defense if applicable, reading list for field examination if applicable)? • If the oral examination is a defense of the dissertation, has the Doctoral Dissertation Reading Committee form [3] been submitted to and recorded by the degree program prior to the scheduling of the examination? 	Degree Program
6.	If the oral examination is a presentation of a dissertation proposal or defense of a partially or fully completed dissertation, provide copies of the dissertation or proposal to all members of the committee in advance of the examination in accordance with degree program procedures. Provide an abstract of the dissertation for the out-of-department chairperson.	Student
7.	Secure a location for the examination.	Degree Program
8.	Enter information about the committee and date in PeopleSoft Student Administration, including preliminary dissertation title if not yet entered.	Degree Program
9.	Notify Stanford Report if a public notice of the examination is desired (publishing this notice is optional). The deadline for submitting PhD orals is 5 p.m. Wednesday for the following issue.	Degree Program
10.	<p>Prepare a folder for the chair which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of student's University Oral Examination form [2] • Statement on degree program policy for oral examinations • Paper to be used as ballots 	Degree Program
11.	Prepare a copy of University Oral Examination form [2] for each examiner.	Degree Program

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2. Conducting the Examination and Reporting the Results

	PROCESS STEPS	RESPONSIBILITY
1.	Arrange for the chair's folder and copies of each examiner's form to be delivered in time to ensure that each member of the committee has written confirmation of the date, time, and location of the examination.	Degree Program

	Ensure that the examination is conducted within university and degree program guidelines.	
2.	<p>Procedural concerns, such as committee membership or insufficient number of voting members, should be raised as soon as possible by asking for a review of the degree program handbook or Stanford Bulletin as appropriate. (Note that the university policy takes precedence). Unresolved violations of university policy should be reported by the chair to the school dean's office for review.</p> <p>When the out-of-department chair believes that university or degree program regulations and guidelines are not being fairly applied, the chair should take immediate and appropriate action. For example, if during orals or the dissertation defense the student is badgered, questioned for an overly long time, or subject to overzealous questioning, the chair should stop the examination, excuse the student and counsel the committee members.</p>	Examination Chair
3.	Determine who is eligible to vote.	Examination Chair
4.	Tally the votes of the members and record the results of the examination on the University Oral Examination form [2]. Within five days of the examination, return this form to the degree program administrator.	Examination Chair
5.	Receive ballots and the University Oral Examination form [2], verify the attendance of all members of the examination committee, record results in PeopleSoft.	Degree Program

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3. If the Committee Votes to Fail a Student

	PROCESS STEPS	RESPONSIBILITY
1.	<p>Remain convened to formulate a recommendation for the degree program. The committee may recommend the length of time that should intervene before the student retakes the examination and conditions to be met before it may be retaken.</p> <p>The committee may recommend that the student not be permitted to repeat the oral examination, but only if this action has been preceded by a written warning to the student from the degree program that the student has not been making satisfactory progress. In effect, this is a recommendation that the degree program should terminate the candidate. If the candidate is to be terminated, the guidelines for dismissal of graduate students must be followed (see GAP 5.6 Dismissal for Academic and Professional Reasons [4]).</p>	The Committee
2.	Send within five days a written evaluation of the candidate's performance to the degree program and the student. Copies of the University Oral Examination form [2] and this evaluation should also be sent to the School Dean.	Examination Chair

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3. Within 30 days and after review of the examining committee's evaluation and recommendation, send the student a written statement indicating the final action of the Department Chair the degree program.

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Links

[1] https://drive.google.com/file/d/13xObmLsTYbYzAHnvJ57VuC7-_xkiZlcE/view?usp=sharing

[2] <https://registrar.stanford.edu/university-oral-examination-form>

[3] <https://registrar.stanford.edu/doctoral-dissertation-reading-committee-form>

[4] <https://gap.stanford.edu/handbooks/gap-handbook/chapter-5/subchapter-6/page-5-6-1>