

Policy Name:	Thesis Examination Policy
Originating Department:	Graduate Studies
Responsible Department:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Approval Authority:	Vice-Presidents' Academic Research Committee
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Contact:	Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies)

Policy Statement:

This policy outlines the procedures, requirements, and criteria that happen before, during, and after a thesis dissertation defence at both the master's and doctoral level.

Purpose:

To outline the procedures, roles and responsibilities, and associated outcomes for master's and doctoral thesis examinations.

Scope:

This policy applies to all thesis examinations at Carleton University, both at the master's and doctoral level.

Procedure/Roles and Responsibilities:

Section 1 – Master's Thesis Examinations
Pre-Examination Processes (1.1 to 1.4)

1.1 Thesis Submission

- a) After appropriate reviews, the candidate and the supervisor inform the department of the date they intend to submit the thesis. This notice shall be given at least **two weeks before the submission date**, so that they can monitor student defence workload, faculty availability and provide support in examination scheduling as needed.
- b) The candidate is required to upload the examination copy of their thesis through Carleton Central at least **three weeks before the examination date**.
- c) The candidate must accept the Academic Integrity Thesis Statement on Carleton Central indicating comprehension of and adherence to the Carleton University Academic Integrity Policy.

1.2 Constitution of the Examination Board

- a) The **thesis supervisor** schedules the examination and recommends membership of the thesis examination board to the Chair of the Department.
- b) The Chair of the Department (or delegate) appoints the examination board to comprise, as a minimum:
 - Thesis supervisor (or co-supervisors).
 - One additional faculty member from the student's home department or program. This includes cross-appointed and adjunct professors.
 - One arm's length faculty member who is from outside the student's home department or program. If the department includes significantly distinguished areas or programs, the Internal Examiner can belong to a different one from the student.
 - Chair of the Department (or delegate, who serves as chair of the examination board).
 - Dean of the Faculty (*ex officio* – non-voting).
 - Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) (*ex officio* – non-voting).

c) In the case of **joint programs**, the examination board should normally include at least one **additional** faculty member from the appropriate department or program at the other university. At the discretion of the academic department, the presence of the **additional** faculty member from the other university fulfills the requirement for an arm's length member who is from outside the student's home department or program.

d) It is the responsibility of the **Chair of the Department** to ensure that specific appointments to the examination board are in accordance with the list in section 1.2.b. Alternate examination board membership, such as government/industry employees, Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and faculty members at other universities, must be pre-approved by the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies). The examination notice that is sent to Graduate Studies should identify the role and affiliation (university and department) of each examination board member.

e) If any member of the examination board is to participate by telephone, videoconference or any other medium other than in-person, the supervisor must establish what technical arrangements will be made to allow remote access at least a week before the examination, including a second source of audio-conferencing equipment available as a backup, such as a telephone.

f) If a member of the examination board, other than the Carleton examiner outside the department/program or the supervisor (see 1.2.b) is unable to participate in the scheduled examination, they must submit a brief written report on the thesis to the Chair of the Department one week in advance. This report will include both an evaluation of the thesis and a set of questions to be asked at the examination. The chair of the examination board will present the report to the examination board at the examination by: 1) posing the questions contained in the report on behalf of the absent member during the examination question period and, 2) providing the absent member's judgements on the thesis in the in-camera discussion following the examination question period.

1.3 Examination Preparation

a) The examination board members must receive a copy of the thesis through Carleton Central and potentially also directly from the student or the department **three weeks** in advance of the defence.

b) The **department** posts the examination notice announcing the date, time and location of the thesis examination. Any special arrangements for participation of the examiners (telephone, video-conferencing etc.) will be included on the examination notice. The date of the announcement must be at least **two weeks** prior to the date of the examination.

c) If any examiner has serious reservations regarding the thesis, they must notify the Chair of the Department (or delegate) no later than **one week** before the oral examination. The Chair of the Department will then communicate with the Associate Vice-Provost (Graduate Student Affairs) regarding next steps.

d) In the event of serious reservations by any examiner, the Chair of the Department will consult with the thesis supervisor and the candidate as well as the Associate Vice-Provost (Graduate Student Affairs) to determine whether the examination will be deferred. The candidate has the right to proceed to examination. If the examination is deferred, the Chair of the Department will inform the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies).

1.4 Observers

Any faculty member from within the University (or from the joint institutes) may attend the examination as an observer. Other observers may also attend the examination provided they have obtained the permission of the candidate and the chair of the examination board. Whether observers stay for only the student presentation or for both the presentation and examination should be defined and agreed to ahead of time by the candidate and examination board. Individual programs, departments, and candidates may choose to permit observers to ask questions during a brief designated question period (typically < 10

minutes) following the presentation, when deemed appropriate by the Chair of the Department. Observers are not permitted to participate in any way during the examination period and may not leave the examination without permission of the chair.

1.5 The Examination

a) The default is for the examination to be conducted all in-person, with specific examiners participating online only when needed. As long as the student and the chair of the examination are able to attend in-person, the exam will proceed in an in-person/online hybrid setting. Requests for exceptions involving hybrid or fully online examinations must be reviewed and approved by the Chair of the Department.

b) The Chair of the Department (or designate) chairs the examination board.

c) It is the responsibility of the chair of the examination board to enforce the rules of procedure governing the conduct of examinations, to ensure that academic standards are maintained, and to protect the candidate from unfair or unreasonable forms of questioning. The chair of the examination board ensures that the examination is conducted according to the highest standards of academic integrity, collegiality and professionalism, and remains within the allotted time (typically 2 hours). In exceptional circumstances, if the chair of the examination board is not satisfied that the spirit of the guidelines for the evaluation of the thesis has been met, they will adjourn the examination and consult with the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies).

d) If a member of the examination board cannot attend, arrangements must be made in advance for this examiner to participate by telephone, video-conferencing or similar media, or by submitting a report with their questions in advance to the chair of the examination board.

e) If a member of the examination board cannot attend and has not submitted a report on the thesis, the chair of the examination board, in consultation with the board and the Associate Vice-Provost (Graduate Student Affairs) if needed, determines whether the examination will proceed. The chair of the examination board will inform the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) of these events following the examination.

f) The procedures to be followed in defences are as follows:

- The chair of the examination board conducts a brief in-camera meeting with the examination board at the outset to review the examination procedures and potential outcomes. The definitions of minor revisions and major modifications will be explained to all members of the examination board along with the criteria for medal eligibility (see Medals Policy). The chair will also take this opportunity to remind the examination board of the need to conduct the defence in a respectful manner.

The relationship of a candidate's research with their personal identity is an issue that occasionally comes up during graduate defences. Studies on positionality have shown that individuals from disadvantaged groups, especially racialized minorities, tend to be questioned more frequently on this matter than those of other backgrounds. If an examiner believes it pertinent to ask a candidate about their positionality, Chairs should ensure that questions are posed in a respectful way. Given that candidates may not always be able to articulate their level of comfort / discomfort in such situations, the chair should ensure that the candidate is not pressured to provide more personal information than what they (the candidate) reasonably consider meets the defence's scholarly requirements.

- The chair of the examination board admits the candidate to the room and reviews the examination procedures.
- The candidate may make a brief introductory statement and may use audio/visual aids or other appropriate methods.

- Observers may not participate in the examination in any way, except for participation in a dedicated question period for observers, if this has been agreed to in advance by the student and department/program.
- In the first round of examination questions, the examiners normally proceed in the order set out in the examination notice. Questioning in this round is one-on-one without interventions from other board members.
- This will be followed by a second round of questions without a set order. In this round, questions may come from any of the examiners, and comments and general discussion may take place. This discussion should always remain student-focussed, and examiner-to-examiner dialogue that does not involve the student should be minimal. The duration of this round is at the discretion of the chair of the examination board.
- The candidate may make an optional closing statement.
- The candidate is asked to withdraw while the examination board deliberates.

1.6 Examination Outcome

a) The chair of the examination board polls the members of the examination board to determine if the candidate passes or fails. The supervisor records in writing all required revisions, major or minor, agreed to by the board. In addition, the chair of the examination board records in writing the process for approving required revisions, including who will review and approve the revisions as decided by the examination board. Any subset of the examination board can be chosen for approval but for minor revisions, it is usually only the supervisor.

The overall thesis grade can be Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory.

i) It is **Satisfactory** if/when the document is Accepted and the oral defence is considered Satisfactory.

If consensus cannot be reached among the members of the examination board as to the categorization of the thesis document (Accepted, Acceptable after minor revisions, Acceptable after major modifications, Rejected) or for the oral defence (Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory), a vote will be taken to determine the outcome. The arm's length member must form part of the majority vote. If the arm's length member does not form part of the majority vote, the chair of the examination board will adjourn the examination and inform the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies).

In exceptional circumstances, if the chair of the examination board is not satisfied that the spirit of the guidelines for the evaluation of the thesis has been met, they should adjourn the examination and consult with the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies).

ii) In cases where the **oral defence is deemed Unsatisfactory but the thesis document is deemed Satisfactory (Accepted with or without revisions)**, the candidate will be required to defend again, normally within one month of the original defence and with the same examination board. The board will produce a report itemizing the reasons for the failure of the oral defence. Should the defence be deemed Unsatisfactory a second time, the candidate will be permanently withdrawn from the program, without the option of re-applying to the program.

iii) In cases where the thesis document is **Rejected/deemed unsatisfactory**, the candidate will normally be withdrawn from the program. The examination board will produce a report itemizing the reasons for the failure of the thesis. The board may recommend to the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) that the candidate be allowed to register for an additional term to revise and resubmit the thesis. In such cases, a second defence will be scheduled within 6 months of the original defence, with the same examination board. Should the thesis be deemed Unsatisfactory

a second time, the candidate will be permanently withdrawn from the program, without the option of re-applying to the program.

- b) The chair of the examination board polls the arm's length and departmental members of the examination board regarding recommendation of the candidate for a medal if the thesis is judged to be outstanding. The thesis supervisor does not participate in the discussion or vote regarding medals. If the board members agree to recommend the candidate, the chair of the examination board submits a written report to the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies), including a brief summary of the student's performance during the oral defence and whether deliberation on a medal was unanimous or contentious.
- c) The chair of the examination board invites the candidate back into the examination room to discuss the examination outcome.
- d) The total duration of the examination should not normally exceed two hours.
- e) Following the examination, the chair of the examination board submits an online report, which summarizes the exam outcomes that were agreed upon by the board. This online form includes the email addresses for all the examination board members as a sign of their agreement. All members of the examination board as well as delegates for the department receive this thesis exam report. The chair of the examination board also completes the Examination Report Outcome Form in Carleton Central.

1.7 Final Thesis Submission

a) Accepted/ Minor Revisions:

- i) The candidate, after completing the required minor revisions and/or editorial changes that have been reviewed and approved by the supervisor, will upload the final copy of the thesis in Carleton Central for final approval by the thesis supervisor or designate. The candidate will also complete the required electronic forms.
- ii) Having verified the changes, the thesis supervisor will approve the upload and the final thesis will be electronically forwarded to Graduate Studies.
- iii) Provided that all master's program requirements have been satisfied, the Dean recommends to Senate that the degree be awarded.
- iv) Graduate Studies arranges for the electronic thesis to be transferred to MacOdrum Library.

b) Major Modifications:

- i) The candidate, after completing major revisions as directed by the examination board, will submit copies of the final thesis to all those involved in the approval of the revisions or modifications (see 1.6.a).
- ii) Having verified that the required revisions have been completed, those involved will approve the revisions through email.
- iii) Once all necessary approvals have been obtained, the candidate will upload the final copy of the thesis in Carleton Central for final approval by the thesis supervisor or designate. The candidate will also complete the required electronic forms.
- iv) Having verified that the required revisions have been completed, after consulting with all those involved, the thesis supervisor will approve the upload and the final thesis will be electronically forwarded to Graduate Studies.
- v) Provided that all master's program requirements have been satisfied, the Dean recommends to Senate that the degree be awarded.
- vi) Graduate Studies arranges for the electronic thesis to be transferred to MacOdrum Library.

Section 2 – Doctoral Thesis Examinations

Pre-Examination Processes (2.1 to 2.4)

2.1 Thesis Submission

- a) After the appropriate reviews, the candidate and the supervisor inform the department of the date they intend to submit the thesis. This notice shall be given at least **two weeks before the submission date**, so an examination can be scheduled.
- b) The candidate is required to upload the examination copy of the thesis through Carleton Central at least **five weeks before the examination date**.
- c) The candidate must accept the following documents on Carleton Central:
 - Academic Integrity Statement
 - FIPPA Statement
 - Carleton University Thesis License Agreement
 - Library and Archives Canada (LAC) Non-Exclusive License (optional)

2.2 Constitution of the Examination Board

- a) After consultation with the thesis supervisor, the **Chair of the Department** recommends membership of the thesis examination board to the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies). The **Chair of the Department** also evaluates information, including abbreviated CVs regarding the appropriateness of the nominated external examiner. This information will address issues of expertise and conflict of interest (below).
- b) The **Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies)** appoints the examination board to comprise as a minimum:
 - One member from outside Carleton University who is a recognized authority in the subject of the thesis (External Examiner, see 2.2.1).
 - One member (full-time faculty or adjunct) from outside the student's home department and who has been at arm's length from the thesis research (Internal Examiner). If the department includes significantly distinguished areas or programs, the Internal Examiner can belong to a different one from the student. In the case of joint programs, the member from the other university may replace the Internal Examiner.
 - Thesis supervisor or co-supervisors
 - At least two thesis advisory committee members. If no thesis advisory committee has been established, two department or program faculty members may be appointed. This includes cross-appointed and adjunct professors. In the case of joint programs, the member from the other university may replace one of the department/program members.
 - Chair of the Department (ex officio – non-voting)
 - Dean of the Faculty (ex officio – non-voting)
 - Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) or delegate (chair of the examination board; from outside the student's home department).
- c) In the case of **joint programs**, the examination board must include at least one faculty member from the appropriate department or program at the other university.
- d) It is the responsibility of the **Chair of the Department** to schedule the examination and to ensure that specific appointments to the examination board are in accordance with the list in 2.2.b and criteria in 2.2.1. Alternate examination board membership, such as government/industry employees, Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and faculty members at other universities, must be pre-approved by the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies). The examination notice that is sent to Graduate Studies should identify the role and affiliation (university and department) of each examination board member.
- e) If any member of the examination board is to participate by telephone, videoconference or any other medium other than in-person, the department must establish what technical arrangements will be made to

allow remote access at least a week before the examination, including a second source of audio-conferencing equipment available as a backup, such as a telephone.

f) If a member of the examination board (other than the external examiner) is unable to participate, s/he must submit a written report on the thesis to the chair one week in advance. The chair of the examination board will present the report to the examination board at the examination by: 1) posing the questions contained in the report on behalf of the absent member during the examination question period and 2) providing the absent member's judgements on the thesis in the in-camera discussion following the examination question period.

2.2.1 External Examiner – Criteria and Conflict of Interest

The external examiner should be an impartial scholar with recognized expertise in the thesis research area, typically with a faculty appointment at a PhD degree-granting university. In addition, it is necessary that they be at arm's length from the candidate, from the supervisor(s) and from Carleton University. To guarantee the impartiality of the external examiner, the following conditions should be met:

- The external examiner should have no family ties, financial ties or close professional ties to the candidate or the supervisor(s) in the six years prior to the oral defence;
- The external examiner should have neither held an appointment at Carleton University nor be a member of the joint institutes with the University of Ottawa in the six years prior to the oral defence;
- The external examiner should have no prior supervisory relationship with the candidate or with the supervisor(s) in the six years prior to the oral defence;
- The external examiner should not have been a principal co-author or close research collaborator with the candidate or with the supervisor(s) in the six years prior to the oral defence.
- The external examiner and the candidate should have no direct communication from the date of the submission of the dissertation to the date of the oral defence.

While this list is not an exhaustive one, it provides an indication of the kinds of relationships that call into question the impartiality of the external examiner. The candidate, thesis supervisor, and proposed external examiner should review the above criteria and confirm to the Chair of the Department that all arm's length requirements are met.

2.3 Examination Preparation

a) The examination board members must receive the examination copy of the thesis through Carleton Central and potentially also from the student or the department **five weeks before the defence**.

b) After approval, Graduate Studies announces the date, time and place of the thesis examination. Any special arrangements for participation of the examiners (video-conferencing, telephone, etc.) will be included on the examination notice. The date of the announcement must be at least **four weeks** in advance of the date of the examination.

c) The Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) writes to the external examiner to review procedures followed in the defence, to outline judgements to be made and to ask that any major concerns be communicated in the report to be submitted at least **two weeks** before the examination. The external examiner evaluates the thesis based on the below criteria:

- Demonstration of the candidate's familiarity of current knowledge in the area of research.
- Contribution of knowledge made by the candidate.
- Adequacy of research methodology, and general organization and presentation of the thesis.

d) The external examiner submits written comments on the thesis to the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) at least one week before the oral examination. The thesis defence will not proceed without receipt of the report of the external examiner **one week** in advance of the date of the defence.

e) In cases where the external examiner's report does not recommend that the thesis proceed to defence, the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) will consult with the Chair and/or Graduate Supervisor of the student's department. After this consultation, the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) will typically recommend postponing the defence. In such instances, the external examiner report will be released to the student and the thesis supervisor for review.

f) If any examiner has serious reservations regarding the thesis, they must notify the Chair of the Department (or delegate) no later than **two weeks** before the oral examination. The Chair of the Department will then communicate with the Associate Vice-Provost (Graduate Student Affairs) regarding next steps.

2.4 Observers

Any faculty member from within the University (or from the joint institutes) may attend the examination as an observer. Other observers may also attend the examination provided they have obtained the permission of the candidate and the chair of the examination board. Whether observers stay for only the student presentation or for both the presentation and examination should be defined and agreed to ahead of time by the candidate and examination board. Individual programs, departments, and candidates may choose to permit observers to ask questions during a brief designated question period (typically < 10 minutes) following the presentation, when deemed appropriate by the Chair of the Department. Observers are not permitted to participate in any way during the examination period and may not leave the examination without permission of the chair.

2.5 The Examination

a) The default is for the examination to be conducted in-person, with specific examiners participating online only when needed. It is understood that the external examiner will often participate online. As long as the student and the chair of the examination are able to attend in-person, the exam will proceed in an in-person/online hybrid setting. Requests for exceptions involving hybrid or fully online examinations must be reviewed and approved by the Chair of the Department.

b) The Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) or designate chairs the examination board (see section 2.2.b).

c) It is the responsibility of the chair of the examination board to enforce the rules of procedure governing the conduct of examinations, to ensure that academic standards are maintained, and to protect the candidate from unfair or unreasonable forms of questioning. The chair of the examination board ensures that the examination is conducted according to the highest standards of academic integrity, collegiality and professionalism, and remains within the allotted time (typically 3 hours). In exceptional circumstances, if the chair of the examination board is not satisfied that the spirit of the guidelines for the evaluation of the thesis has been met, they will adjourn the examination and consult with the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies).

d) If a member of the examination board cannot attend, arrangements must be made in advance for this examiner to participate by telephone, video-conferencing or similar media, or by submitting a report with their questions one week in advance to the chair of the examination board.

e) If the external examiner is not present, specific arrangements must have been approved in advance for this examiner to participate by telephone, video-conferencing or similar media. The written report of the external examiner must also be submitted through Carleton Central at least one week prior to the date of the examination board.

f) If a member of the examination board other than the external examiner is unable to participate and has not submitted a report on the thesis, the chair of the examination board, in consultation with the board and the Associate Vice-Provost (Graduate Student Affairs) if needed, will determine whether the examination will proceed. The chair of the examination board will inform the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) of these events following the examination.

g) The procedures to be followed in defences are as follows:

- The chair of the examination board conducts a brief in-camera meeting with the examination board at the outset to review the examination procedures and potential outcomes. The definitions of minor revisions and major modifications will be explained to all members of the examination board along with the criteria for medal eligibility (see Medals Policy). The chair of the examination board makes sure that the external examiner's report has been provided to the examination board members. The external examiner's written comment regarding recommendation of the candidate for a medal is not conveyed at this point (see 2.6.b). The chair will also take this opportunity to remind the examination board of the need to conduct the defence in a respectful manner.

The relationship of a candidate's research with their personal identity is an issue that occasionally comes up during graduate defences. Studies on positionality have shown that individuals from disadvantaged groups, especially racialized minorities, tend to be questioned more frequently on this matter than those of other backgrounds. If an examiner believes it pertinent to ask a candidate about their positionality, Chairs should ensure that questions are posed in a respectful way. Given that candidates may not always be able to articulate their level of comfort / discomfort in such situations, the chair should ensure that the candidate is not pressured to provide more personal information than what they (the candidate) reasonably consider meets the defence's scholarly requirements.

- The chair of the examination board admits the candidate to the room and reviews the procedures.
- The candidate may make an introductory statement and may use audio/visual aids or other appropriate methods. It is usual to limit such statements to about twenty minutes.
- Observers may not participate in the examination in any way, except for participation in a dedicated question period for observers, if this has been agreed to in advance by the student and department/program.
- In the first round of examination questions, the examiners normally proceed in the order set out in the examination notice. Questioning in this round is one-on-one, with no interventions from other members of the board.
- This will be followed by a second round of questions without a set order. In this round, questions may come from any of the examiners, and comments and general discussion may take place. This discussion should always remain student-focussed, and examiner-to-examiner dialogue that does not involve the student should be minimal. The duration of this round is at the discretion of the chair of the examination board.
- The candidate may make an optional closing statement.
- The candidate is asked to withdraw while the examination board deliberates.
- In case of technical difficulty in the course of an examination conducted through videoconferencing, the chair of the examination board may briefly suspend the proceedings to allow some time to fix the problem. Should the disconnection persist and the examiner(s) accessing the proceedings through videoconferencing fail to be reconnected in a timely fashion, the proceedings will continue through telephone or other pre-arranged backup options.
- Should both the videoconferencing and telephone systems become inoperative, the chair of the examination board in consultation with the board may carry on with the examination if it is deemed that the virtual presence of the distant examiner(s) is not absolutely required. Upon reconnection, the chair of the examination board will summarize the exchanges that the remote examiner(s) missed. Should technical difficulty make it impossible for the remote examiner(s) to

satisfactorily complete their one-on-one questioning, the chair of the examination board may adjourn the examination and inform the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) of the situation.

- Should persistent technical difficulties with both the telephone and videoconferencing systems interrupt the board's examination outcome deliberations before a final decision has been reached, the chair of the examination board will adjourn the examination and inform the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) that deliberation will have to resume at a later time when all examiners are present in person or through telephone/videoconferencing.
- In the case of an Integrated Thesis including co-authored articles, should the supervisor or any other member of the advisory committee be one of the principal authors of a co-authored article included in the thesis, this member will be allowed only limited participation in the defence. During their turn in the first round of questioning, the member may be allowed by the Chair to provide points of clarification on the thesis and reformulate questions for the candidate but may not address critical and substantive issues. Furthermore, this member will not be allowed to participate actively in the deliberations after the defence.

2.6 Examination Outcome

a) The chair of the examination board polls the members of the examination board other than the thesis supervisor(s) to determine if the candidate passes or fails, and the extent of required revisions, if any. The thesis supervisor(s) may participate in the discussion, as needed, but shall not seek to influence the decision of the board regarding requested revisions or exam outcome. The supervisor records in writing all required revisions, major or minor, agreed to by the board. In addition, the chair of the examination board records in writing the process for approving required revisions, including who will review and approve the revisions as decided by the examination board. Any subset of the examination board can be chosen for approval but for minor revisions, it is usually only the supervisor. In the case of an Integrated Thesis, any member of the examination board who appears as one of the principal authors of a co-authored article included in the thesis is not allowed to participate actively in deliberations or vote on the outcome.

The overall thesis grade can be Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory.

i) It is **Satisfactory** if/when the document is Accepted and the oral defence is considered Satisfactory.

If consensus cannot be reached among the members of the examination board as to the categorization of the thesis document (Accepted, Acceptable after minor revisions, Acceptable after major modifications, Rejected) or the Oral Defence (Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory), a vote will be taken to determine the outcome. The thesis supervisor(s) does not participate in the voting process. The chair of the examination board may approve the thesis as satisfactory if the majority of board members recommend it as satisfactory. The majority must include the external examiner.

In exceptional circumstances, if the chair of the examination board is not satisfied that the spirit of the guidelines for the evaluation of the thesis has been met, they should adjourn the examination and consult with the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies).

ii) In cases where the **oral defence is deemed Unsatisfactory but the thesis document is deemed satisfactory (Accepted with or without revisions)**, the candidate will normally be required to defend again, normally within three months of the original defence, with the same examination board. The examination board shall produce a report itemizing the reasons for the failure of the oral defence. Should the defence be deemed Unsatisfactory a second time, the candidate will be permanently withdrawn from the program, without the option of re-applying to the program.

- iii) In cases where the thesis document is **Rejected/deemed Unsatisfactory**, the candidate will normally be withdrawn from the program. The examination board shall produce a report itemizing the reasons for the failure of the thesis. The examination board may recommend to the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) that the candidate be allowed to register for an additional term to revise and resubmit the thesis. In such cases, a second defence will be scheduled within 6 months of the original defence, with the same examination board. Should the thesis document be deemed Unsatisfactory a second time, the candidate will be permanently withdrawn from the program, without the option of re-applying to the program.
- b) The chair of the examination board conveys to the board the external examiner's written comment regarding recommendation of the candidate for a medal. If the external examiner does not recommend the candidate for a medal, discussion on the issue is ended. If the external's written recommendation is affirmative or undecided, the chair polls the external, internal and departmental members of the examination board regarding recommendation of the candidate for a medal. The thesis supervisor(s) does not participate in the discussion regarding medals. If the examination board members agree to recommend the candidate, the chair of the examination board submits a written report to the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies), including a brief summary of the student's performance during the oral defence and whether deliberation on a medal was unanimous or contentious. The external examiner also writes a follow-up letter of support outlining the reasons for medal recommendation.
- c) The chair of the examination board invites the candidate back into the room to discuss the examination outcome.
- d) The total duration of the examination should not normally exceed three hours. However, the external examiner should be encouraged to address all of their points.
- e) Following the examination, the chair of the examination board submits an online report, which summarizes the exam outcomes that were agreed upon by the examination board. This online form includes the email addresses for all the examination board members as a sign of their agreement. All members of the examination board as well as delegates for the department receive this thesis exam report. The chair of the examination board also completes the Examination Report Outcome Form in Carleton Central.

2.7 Final Thesis Submission

a) Accepted/ Minor Revisions:

- i) The candidate, after completing the required minor revisions and/or editorial changes that have been reviewed and approved by the supervisor, will upload the final copy of the thesis in Carleton Central for approval by the thesis supervisor or designate. The candidate will also complete the required electronic forms.
- ii) Having verified the changes, the thesis supervisor or designate will approve the upload and the final thesis will be electronically forwarded to Graduate Studies.
- iii) Provided that all doctoral program requirements have been satisfied, the Dean recommends to Senate that the degree be awarded.
- iv) Graduate Studies arranges for the electronic thesis to be transferred to MacOdrum Library.

b) Major Modifications:

- i) The candidate, after completing major revisions as directed by the examination board, will submit copies of the final thesis to all those involved in the approval of the revisions or modifications (see 2.6.a). Having verified that the required revisions have been completed, those involved will sign the Thesis Revisions Approval Form.

- ii) Once all necessary approvals have been obtained, the candidate will upload the final copy of the thesis in Carleton Central for approval by the thesis supervisor or designate. The candidate also completes the required electronic forms.
- iii) Having verified that the required revisions have been completed, after consulting with all those involved, the thesis supervisor or designate will approve the upload and the final thesis will be electronically forwarded to the Graduate Studies.
- iv) Provided that all doctoral program requirements have been satisfied, the Dean recommends to Senate that the degree be awarded.
- v) Graduate Studies arranges for the electronic thesis to be transferred to MacOdrum Library.

Contacts:

Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies)

Related Policies:

Academic Integrity Policy

Cotutelle Policy

Medals Policy