Earning a Ph.D. in Physics at GW

This document is addressed to Graduate Students in the Ph.D. Program in Physics in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS) at GW. Its purpose is to clarify the formal steps required to successfully propose and defend a Ph.D. in Physics. It is assumed that students have passed all other formal requirements (coursework etc., as specified in the CCAS Graduate Student Handbook and Physics documents) prior to entering their Ph.D. research project. (If you are uncertain what these are, ask the Physics Graduate Advisor. As a general rule, if in doubt always ask.)

In this document, the abbreviation DGS refers to the Director of Graduate Studies or the DGS’ designated representative.

Attached to this document are several forms that will need to be filled in at various stages as you progress through the project. All forms need to be signed and certified by the DGS. Also, various steps may require giving advance notices before going on to the next step. The time periods associated with these advance notices are firm requirements, not suggestions.

Approved by Physics Graduate Committee: 23 March 2017
Amendments Approved by Physics Graduate Committee Sep 2017
Amendments Approved by Physics Graduate Committee March 2019

By signing here, I hereby acknowledge having received, read, and understood the instructions laid out here.

Name: ___________________________  GWid: ___________________________

Signature: ___________________________  Date: ___________________________

Please return this page to DGS with your signature.
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Please sign the attached signature page to acknowledge that you have received, read, and understood the instructions laid out here.

Step 0 — Finding a project

Find a Physics faculty member and agree with him/her on a Ph.D. project; this faculty member is going to be your Ph.D. Advisor (also referred to as Dissertation Director, Supervisor, etc.). If your primary Advisor is not a Physics faculty member at GW, you will need a GW Physics faculty member as Co-Advisor. The expectation is that you present your Dissertation Proposal no later than the 3rd year of your studies. Delay beyond that may indicate lack of academic progress and may lead to dismissal.

Start researching your project under your Ph.D. Advisor’s guidance and prepare a Proposal. You do not need to include already performed original work in the Proposal; outline the project, its original content and scientific significance, resources needed, how you expect to achieve your goals, and specify a tentative and feasible timeline. The narrative of the proposal should not exceed 15 pages, not counting references. If you have material for more than 15 pages, condense it into 15 pages. For a mandatory Proposal document template contact the Physics Graduate Advisor.

Timeline to Proposal  In the 4th semester, you take one of the advanced graduate courses “Astrophysics/Biophysics/Nuclear and Particle Physics I or II” (PHYS 6610/6710/6620/6720/6630/6730) and work with an advisor in a “Topics-In” class. You continue immersion in the research group during the following Summer. By the end of that semester, you also have passed the General
Examination. By the beginning of your 5th semester, you thus should have developed a clear idea where your research interest lies. The Department therefore expects that you present a Dissertation Proposal not later than in your 5th semester.

In order to help you, the DGS tracks your progress towards that goal.

If you have not passed your Dissertation Proposal by the end of the 5th semester, the DGS will usually recommend to the CCAS Associate Dean of Graduate Studies that you be put on probation for the following (6th) semester. The condition of your probation will be that you need to present a Dissertation Proposal by the end of the probation period. Before making such a recommendation, the DGS discusses with you and your advisor your progress, and whether you should be recommended for probation, and consults with the Physics Graduate Committee. The DGS’s decision takes into account your Annual Candidate Report and mitigating circumstances, including but not limited to: switching advisors, passing the General examination in the 4th semester (Retake), personal hardship. In such cases, the recommendation for probation can be delayed by one semester. That means you will definitely be recommended for probation for the 7th semester if you have not presented a Dissertation Proposal by the end of the 6th semester.

At the end of the probationary period, the DGS discusses again your progress with you and our advisor. If you have presented a Dissertation Proposal, the DGS recommends to the CCAS Associate Dean of Graduate Studies that the probation be lifted. If you have not, the DGS will, after consultation with the Physics Graduate Committee, decide whether to recommend that the CCAS Associate Dean of Graduate Studies terminate you from the programme for lack of academic progress. The DGS’s decision takes into account your Annual Candidate Report and, in addition, mitigating circumstances which were not considered when probation was recommended.

When you pass the General Examination and as part of the feedback to each Annual Candidate Report, you receive an email to remind you of these rules.

**Step 1 — Presenting your proposal**

When your Advisor agrees that your Proposal is ready to be presented to the public, your Advisor and you need to decide on your Dissertation Research Committee, composed of your Advisor (and your co-Advisor if necessary) and two Readers. The choice of Readers needs to be endorsed by the DGS. The Research Committee stays in place for the duration of your dissertation project. Readers are Physics faculty members who have an active interest in your project and have the necessary expertise to provide additional help and guidance for your project. (If at any time during the course of your Ph.D. research a Reader should no longer be available to serve on the committee, the Reader must be replaced immediately while your project is still on-going. This replacement requires the approval of the DGS. Such approval is also required if a Reader is to be replaced for any other reason.)

The formal Thesis Proposal Defense may be scheduled, after the DGS receives written consent from all members of the Research Committee that your proposal is ready for presentation. Announcements must be sent out to the entire Physics Department at least two weeks in advance.\(^1\)

Please note: Unless the DGS agrees that there are valid mitigating circumstances, presentations

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\(^1\) Announcement templates are available from the Physics Department Office.
should not be scheduled outside of regular lecturing or exam periods. (Inconvenience, scheduling problems, or being too busy otherwise, are not mitigating circumstances. Plan ahead.)

The Thesis Proposal Defense is conducted publicly in front of the entire Research Committee. The proceedings are chaired by the DGS. The Ph.D. Candidate gives a 20-minute presentation followed by a public Q&A session between Readers and Candidate. After that, the Chair may invite the public to pose questions. Following these, there is a discussion with the Readers in a closed session. The Advisor should not engage in presenting the project, but may provide brief clarifications if necessary. The Chair does not participate in the discussion. The whole process lasts typically 90 minutes.

At the conclusion of the Proposal Defense, the attached form [Step 1a] “Proposal Examination Form” is filled in and certified by the Chair, and signed by the members of the Research Committee. It goes to the DGS. In addition, forms [Step 1b] “Advancement to Candidacy” is filled in and signed by the DGS, certifying that you have satisfied all prerequisites for starting your PhD project and recording the members of your Research Committee. The DGS sends this document to CCAS as the official record of the start of your candidacy.

M. Phil. Degree: Students who have advanced to Candidacy and have completed at least 48 course credits are eligible for the M. Phil. degree. Upon request, the DGS files the necessary form and [Step M. Phil.] “Degree Along The Way (M. Phil.)” with CCAS; the student applies to the Registrar and pays a modest fee.

Intermediate steps — Submitting annual progress reports

After passing the PhD General Examination, you are required to submit a progress report to the DGS (with details as specified by the Physics Graduate Committee); see separate document. If you do not have an advisor etc, it will detail your endeavours to identify and integrate with a research group.

Once a year, usually at the end of Spring semester, until the Ph.D. project is concluded, you and your advisor are required to submit a progress report to the DGS (with details as specified by the Physics Graduate Committee); the DGS gives copies of these reports to the Readers. You then meet with the Readers to discuss the work and any issues related to your academic progress.

The Readers provide advice and guidance and evaluate your progress between Proposal and Defense. You are encouraged to take advantage of their expertise. You and your Academic Advisor must inform the DGS and the Readers immediately of major changes in the project’s scope or direction.

Preparing for the Endgame: Be Aware of GW/CCAS Deadlines

As of 2019, GW has revised the steps necessary before graduation. Keep these steps in mind when you plan your dissertation. Confirm all of the following dates with CCAS or ETD, not with the DGS.

Intent to Graduate You must apply to the Registrar for PhD graduation in Spring/Summer/Fall by early February/July/October; check exact dates with Registrar’s office. This is an “intent to graduate”; your thesis need not be finished, you need not have defended. If your defense is delayed, you can roll the application over to the next semester without new costs.
Thesis Pre-Clearance  Deadline for all the following items is early April/July/November; check CCAS/ETD for exact dates.

You must have completed the ETD workshop on dissertation formatting and publishing requirements, and submitted a pre-version of your thesis for formatting clearance to the library/ETD. This makes sure there is no last-minute formatting scramble. Your thesis does not to be final.

You also need to submit the [Step 2b “Dissertation Examination/Defense Form (CCAS)” to the CCAS Graduate Studies Office. This does not certify that your defense is successful, but that you plan to defend your dissertation in the current semester. Signature of the DGS is required (“Defense Committee Chair”). All Readers and Committee Members must be listed.

Dissertation Defense Completion  The Dissertation Defense must be completed by mid-April/July/November; check CCAS/ETD for exact dates.

After the successful dissertation defense, the DGS submits the Final Dissertation Committee Sign-Off form to the CCAS Graduate Studies Office.

ETD Approval Completion  Often, the Dissertation Committee will request changes. After these have been approved (see below), upload your final, approved dissertation to Proquest via the University ETD site. ETD must certify that you have indeed successfully uploaded by early May/August/December; check ETD for exact dates. It is not enough to upload in time; by the deadline, ETD must have approved that your upload fulfils all specifications, including formatting. Not doing wild formatting changes after the Pre-Clearance (see above) is imperative for success.

Step 2 — Getting approval of the Research Committee and forming an Examination Committee

When you finish research work on your project, write up your findings in a thesis document that must follow established guidelines; for a document template and further instructions contact the Physics Graduate Advisor. You must then seek formal approval of your completed dissertation from the Research Committee. The state of the thesis at this stage should be a finished product in form, appearance, and scientific scope and content. It is bad practice to deliver an unfinished product and rely on post-examination revisions to correct deficiencies, and Readers should not sign off on such unfinished drafts.

Satisfactory state of your thesis is certified by the members of the Research Committee in the attached form [Step 2a “Dissertation Research Committee Approval (Physics)”). All members of the Research Committee unanimously agree that the Ph.D. dissertation draft presented to them is acceptable in its current form and suitable for distribution to the Examiners (see following paragraph) in preparation for the Dissertation Defense. If only one member of the Research Committee disagrees, the form cannot be filed, the Defense cannot go forward at this point in time and you need to continue working on improvements until all members are in agreement.

The form also specifies departmental and outside Examiners for the Dissertation Defense. The Physics Department limits the number of examiners to two: one from within the department (preferably from a different area of expertise) and one from outside the department. None of the examiners can have had

Defense Examination Committee:  
- DGS (Chair)  
- Members of Research Committee  
- Two Examiners
a direct role in the dissertation research process. (They may be affiliated with the same research group as the candidate, as long as they were not involved in any of the project’s work and have no vested interest in its outcome.) The two examiners plus the members of the Research Committee form your Defense Examination Committee. The DGS chairs the committee.

You send the completed form to the DGS, whose signature certifies approval of the Research Committee and proper appointment of the Examination Committee. The Ph.D. Defense must not be scheduled without this certification.²

After this form is submitted to the DGS, get the DGS signature on the attached form “Dissertation Examination/Defense Form (CCAS)” and submit it to CCAS. Signature of the DGS is required (“Defense Committee Chair”). All Readers and Committee Members must be listed. Be reminded that CCAS has an early-April/July/November deadline.

Step 3 — Defending your Ph.D. Thesis

The attached CCAS document “Procedures for Ph.D. Examinations” lays out requirements and best practices for Ph.D. examinations in the Columbian College.

The Defense Examination Committee consists of the Research Committee formed at the time of the Proposal Defense augmented by two examiners — one from within the Physics Department and one from the outside, as specified in Step 2 — and by the DGS who chairs the actual defense proceedings.

The version of the dissertation that is to be defended must be circulated to all examination committee members at least one month prior to the examination. Announcements of the examination must be sent out to the entire Physics Department at least two weeks in advance.³ Please note: Unless the DGS agrees that there are valid mitigating circumstances, examinations should not be scheduled outside of regular lecturing and exam periods. (Inconvenience, scheduling problems, or being too busy otherwise, are not mitigating circumstances. Plan ahead.)

The Dissertation Defense is conducted publicly in front of the entire Examination Committee. The DGS chairs the proceedings, but does not participate in the discussion. As part of the public part of the examination, you present your Ph.D. project and its scientific outcome in a 25-min lecture, followed by a Q&A session between Examiners and Readers and you. The Advisor should not engage in presenting the project, but may provide brief clarifications if necessary. The Chair may invite the public to pose questions as well. At the discretion of the Chair, part of the examination may take place in a closed session. Further details of how to conduct the examination are specified in the attached CCAS document.

The decision to pass the dissertation and defense is reached in closed session by majority vote of the two Examiners and the two Readers; Director(s) and Chair do not vote. A split 2-2 vote counts as ‘pass’. Possible outcomes are (a) dissertation accepted as presented; (b) dissertation accepted subject to successful completion of mandatory revisions within specified timeframe; or (c) dissertation is unacceptable. The outcome of the Defense is certified by the signatures of all members of the Examination Committee in the attached document “Final Examination Committee Sign-Off (Physics)”⁴. (The actual vote tally is not recorded.)

²It is customary to informally discuss tentative defense dates with prospective committee members prior to DGS approval.
³Announcement templates are available from the Physics Office.
⁴This form has the same title but a different purpose than the next one – and it’s for Physics use only.
If revisions of the dissertation should be necessary, the form needs to clearly specify their scope, extent, and the expected timeline for submission of the revised, final version, and the committee members (Readers or Examiners, not a thesis Advisor) who will sign off. (Ideally, at this stage none of the revision requests should come from the Research Committee since they already had ample opportunity to request corrections prior to signing off on the thesis under Step 2 above.)

**Step 4 — Getting final approval**

If the dissertation was accepted as presented, skip this step.

If revisions are necessary, the correspondingly revised thesis is examined by the committee members designated in the previous step. If revisions take significantly longer than the previously agreed upon expected timeframe, the DGS must be notified, who will then decide whether the delay warrants reconvening the examination committee for an executive session to assess the situation.

If the revised dissertation is found acceptable, the attached form [Step 4 “Final Dissertation Committee SignOff (CCAS)”] is signed by the DGS certifying that all requirements have been successfully completed and you may be awarded a Ph.D. Degree. The DSG submits this form and the “Application for Graduation” (see CCAS website) to CCAS. You upload the final version of the thesis to the ProQuest dissertation library (for further information, see GW Gelman Library website).

**The day you successfully upload the thesis to ProQuest is the day your thesis is finally approved.** This day also determines the semester in which your degree is awarded. If a “graduation date” has been set for you (e.g., by granting an extension request), you need to have uploaded your thesis successfully to ProQuest by that date. Graduations are counted as “Fall term” when the upload is finished by early January of the following term. Ph.D. degrees are conferred only during May graduation. For exact dates and other terms, see the Academic Calendar.

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5This form has the same title but serves a different purpose than form 3b – and it’s for transmission to CCAS.
Ph.D. Step Sequence Summary

- Find advisor and agree on Ph.D. project
- Write proposal for Ph.D. project
- Choose two Readers for Research Committee (requires DGS endorsement)
- Have completed proposal approved by Research Committee (unanimity required)
- Announce date of Proposal Defense at least two weeks in advance
- Public presentation of Proposal, committee chair fills out \textbf{Step 1a} “Proposal Examination Form”
- DGS submits \textbf{Step 1b} “Advancement to Candidacy” form to CCAS
- Upon your request, DGS files \textbf{Step M. Phil.} “Degree Along The Way (M. Phil.)” with CCAS
- Start Ph.D. project research
- Submit annual Progress Reports to Graduate Committee
- Upon completion of project, write dissertation
- Apply to the Registrar for PhD graduation (“Intent To Graduate”)
- Complete ETD workshop on dissertation formatting, submit pre-version for Pre-Clearance by ETD
- Research Committee unanimously approves completed dissertation and notifies DGS, form \textbf{Step 2a} “Dissertation Research Committee Approval (Physics)”
- Choose two Examiners for Dissertation Defense Examination (requires DGS endorsement)
- You submit \textbf{Step 2b} “Dissertation Examination/Defense Form (CCAS)” to CCAS
- Circulate thesis to Examination Committee at least one month before examination date
- Publicly announce date of Dissertation Defense Examination at least two weeks in advance
- Public defense of Dissertation; see \textbf{Step 3a} “Procedures for Ph.D. Examinations”; committee fills out \textbf{Step 3b} “Final Examination Committee Sign-Off (Physics)”
- If necessary, revise dissertation within specified timeframe and obtain approval of revised dissertation from designated committee member(s)
- DGS completes \textbf{Step 4} “Final Dissertation Committee SignOff (CCAS)” and submits to CCAS
- Upload final version of dissertation to ProQuest dissertation library

At any stage, the student may address any complaints, in writing, to the DGS. If the answer is not to the student’s satisfaction, the student may appeal at any stage to the Chair of the Physics Department.

Penalties, Academic Dishonesty. Not following these rules and timelines can have consequences, including but not limited to: delay of approvals or signatures necessary; delay, cancellation or failure of the examination; termination of GTA or GRA stipends; and in severe cases, termination from the program due to lack of academic progress. The GW Code of Academic Integrity applies in its entirety. Excerpt: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, ask the Physics Graduate Advisor.
On ________________, graduate student ________________________________________________ (date) (full name) presented a PhD/Masters dissertation proposal (delete incorrect) entitled ___________________________________________________________________________________, with the intended semester of completion _________________________________.

Advisor: I, _____________________________________, certify that the candidate has shown the potential (full name) for doing research in Physics and agree to supervise this thesis project. _______________________________________________ (signature)

The members of the student's Proposal Examination Committee, having read the student's proposal and examined the student during the Oral Proposal Examination, all agree to the conclusions stated on the reverse.

Examination Committee: (consisting of at least 3 members; at least 3 members must be from of the Department of Physics)

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<thead>
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<th>Name (affiliation if not Physics)</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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<td>Chair:</td>
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<td>Reader:</td>
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<td>Reader:</td>
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Examination Committee's Decision

____ The proposal is rejected.

____ The student passes, and we recommend advancement to candidacy 2. The proposal sufficiently explores the context/background of research conducted in Physics, its timeliness, feasibility and plan:
1) Clear identification of a problem that can be examined via original research that can be conducted in the time frame of the chosen degree program (where, what?); 2) analysis of the relevant previous literature that provides a backdrop for conducting the investigation (what so far?); 3) clear explanation of why the chosen problem is significant/relevant/important (why?); 4) methods that are to be employed to successfully conduct the research (how?); 5) a time-line showing the major steps towards completion of the research (when?).

The committee raises the following issues to the attention of the student and advisor:
(e.g. conditional pass, concerns, areas to study in more detail, necessary revisions, if/how to update the committee; reasons for rejection.)
ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

Student _______________________________________________ GWID ________________________
Department/Program ______________________________________ Degree ____________________
Director of Graduate Studies: ___________________________________________________________
DGS Signature __________________________________________________ Date _________________
(signature not required if submitted electronically)

Completed credit hours (excluding 8999, UNIV 0250, CCAS 0940) __________
(must be at least 48- exceptions must be approved by the Dean)

General Examination title
______________________________________________________________________________  __________
______________________________________________________________________________  __________
______________________________________________________________________________  __________

Special departmental requirements (if applicable)
______________________________________________________________________________  __________
______________________________________________________________________________  __________

Dissertation Information
Topic/Title ___________________________________________________________________________
Director (& Co-Director) ________________________________________________________________
Readers _____________________________________________________________________________

CCAS use only
Coordinator __________________________________ Program in DegreeMap? Yes____ No_____
Transfer Credits ________ Coursework Credits ________ Total Credits ________

Move to Candidacy Yes _____ No _____
Attribute added in Banner ______
Approved by ________________________________ Date ____________
Notes: _______________________________________________________________________________
C-track updated _____ Email Sent _____
Application Process

1. Ensure you meet the degree requirements as outlined in the Bulletin before applying.
2. You must apply before the application deadline. Late applications will not be accepted.
3. You will receive an email once your application is approved. Once approved you will also need to apply online through GWeb. You cannot apply online until your application is approved.
4. Providing you meet all requirements, you will receive an email notifying you that you have been approved to receive the degree. This notice will not be sent until the end of the semester in which you apply.
5. Email completed form to ccasgradserv@gwu.edu

Requirements

- Master of Arts/Master of Science – You must meet all the requirements of the M.A. or M.S. degree in your field before applying.
- Master of Philosophy – You must advance to candidacy in your Ph.D program before you are eligible to apply for the MPhil.
- Master of Psychology – Available to PsyD and PhD – Clinical Psychology students only.

Not all degrees are available for each Doctoral program. If you are unsure what you can apply for, please inquire with your department.

Application Deadlines - If you miss the deadline below, you must apply for the following semester

Fall: 1 September
Spring: 5 January
Summer: 1 June**

** If you wish to participate in Commencement activities, you must apply using the Spring deadline

Student Name: ___________________________________________ GWID: __________________

Doctoral Program: __________________________________________

Degree Along the Way: M.A. M.S. M.Psy M.Phil
Semester: Fall Spring Summer Year: ______________________

Student Signature: ___________________________________________ Date: __________________

CCAS Action Only

Approved ______ DegreeMAP Complete ______ Coding Entered ______
DEPARTMENT OF:____________________________________

DISSERTATION RESEARCH COMMITTEE APPROVAL

The members of this student’s Dissertation Research Committee, having read the student’s Ph.D. dissertation, all agree that it is acceptable in its current form and suitable for distribution to the Examiners in preparation for the Dissertation Defense.

Director of Graduate Studies:______________________  Date: ____________________

Student’s name: __________________________________ GWID: ________________

First semester in program: ________________

Dissertation title: ________________________________________________

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<tr>
<th>Dissertation Research Committee:</th>
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Examiners:

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<td>Outside examiner:</td>
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Please complete this form if you plan on defending your dissertation in the current semester. Please read the instructions on the opposite page to ensure you have completed all necessary requirements.

Student Name: ___________________________________________________ GWID: __________________

Program: ____________________________________________________________

Semester Defending: _________________________ Defense Date: _______________

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**Dissertation Committee**

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*Outside Director’s affiliation (if applicable): __________________________________________

**Defense Committee**

Chair Name: ________________________________ Title: ________________________________

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<th>EXAMINERS</th>
<th>NAME</th>
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Student Signature: ________________________________________________ Date: ____________

Defense Committee Chair: ________________________________ Date: ____________
This form must be completed once the examination committee is finalized and before the defense. This form must be received as part of the CCAS preclearance deadline.

Construction of examination committee

Examination committees must be composed of at least six members, allocated in the following manner.

a. **The dissertation committee**—A director and two readers who have advised the student during the dissertation research process. It is permissible for the director to be drawn from outside of the academic unit in which the student is enrolled. If the director is from outside of the academic unit, then the committee must also have a co-director from inside the unit. Please indicate your outside director’s affiliation on this form.

b. **Two examiners**—Examiners cannot have had a direct role in the dissertation research process. One examiner must be from within the academic unit, with the other examiner coming from outside of the academic unit. A third examiner is permitted but not required.

c. **The chair of the examination**—The examination is chaired by a member of the academic unit in which the student is enrolled. *The chair cannot be drawn from the dissertation committee or examiners.*
Columbian College of Arts and Sciences  
Graduate Committee  

Procedures for Ph.D. Examinations  
December 6, 2011

This document lays out requirements and best practices for Ph.D. examinations in Columbian College. **Bold** text indicates Columbian College requirements.

1. **Construction of examination committee**

Examination committees must be composed of at least six members, allocated in the following manner.

   a. The dissertation committee—A director and two readers who have advised the student during the dissertation research process. It is permissible for the director to be drawn from outside of the academic unit in which the student is enrolled. **If the director is from outside of the academic unit, then the committee must also have a co-director from inside the unit.**

   b. Two examiners—**Examiners cannot have had a direct role in the dissertation research process. One examiner must be from within the academic unit, with the other examiner coming from outside of the academic unit.**

   c. The chair of the examination—The examination is chaired by a member of the academic unit in which the student is enrolled. **The chair cannot be drawn from the dissertation committee or examiners.** It is recommended that the director of graduate studies, if not an examiner or on the dissertation committee, serve as chair. The chair takes no part in the examination itself, except, if asked, to pose an introductory question to elicit an opening summary from the student.

2. **Pre-examination preparation**

The members of the examination committee should be chosen by the dissertation director, in consultation with the student. If there is a difference of opinion, then the director of graduate studies should get involved in the selection process.

**The version of the dissertation that is to be defended must be circulated to all examination committee members at least one month prior to the examination.**

Ph.D examinations should be announced in the academic unit at the time the dissertation is circulated to examination committee members, one month prior to the examination.

3. **Examination procedures**

   a. The chair of the examination assembles members of the examination committee. While the student and any observers are outside of the room, the chair discusses examination procedures with committee members. Issues that are discussed should include the
number of rounds of questioning, the order of questioning, and the time allocated for questioning. Typical practices include two rounds of questioning, the outside examiner questioning the student first, and each committee member questioning the student for 10-15 minutes per round. **The dissertation director does not participate in the questioning.**

b. Opening the examination—The student, dissertation director, and examination chair all stand at head of table for the following introduction.

   Chair: *This is a final examination for the degree of doctor of philosophy. I call on the director of the candidate’s research to present the candidate.*

   Director: *It is my pleasure to present [student name], who has completed all of the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy. [Student name] and her/his dissertation are before the committee for examination.*

c. The student, director, and chair are seated, and the examination begins. Typically, the student provides a brief (10 minute) summary of the research question, methodology, and main findings. This presentation can be omitted if the student has already made a presented the dissertation in the academic unit.

d. **When the questioning is completed, the student and any observers leave the room.** The dissertation director is called upon to make a case for the merits of the dissertation and the student’s performance at the examination.

e. Each examiner and dissertation committee member offers an evaluation of the dissertation and examination.

f. The examination committee must decide (1) whether the student has passed or failed the examination and (2) if the student has passed, what revisions to the dissertation, if any, are required? **The decision to pass the dissertation and defense is reached by a majority vote.**

g. In the event that revisions are required, the examination committee must decide which members wish to see and approve the revised dissertation, as well as the deadline by which revisions must be submitted. Ordinarily, only the dissertation director reviews the revisions, but other committee members can be involved if they wish. Regardless, the director should be given clear instructions to convey to the student regarding the nature and timing of expected revisions.

h. Once these matters have been decided, the student and any observers are invited back into the room. The student stands with the chair of the examination at the head of table. If the student has passed, all members of the examination committee should be standing when the student re-enters the room. The chair announces the results of the examination.

i. The dissertation director or chair of the examination reports the results of the examination to the director of graduate studies, who then completes the requisite paperwork and submits this paperwork to Columbian College.
The members of this student’s Final Examination Committee, having read the student’s Ph.D. dissertation and examined the student during the Dissertation Defense, all agree to the conclusions stated below.

Director of Graduate Studies: ___________________________  Date: _____________

Student’s name: __________________________________  GWID: ________________

First semester in program: __________________

Dissertation title: ________________________________________________________

Date of defense: ________________

Final Examination Committee’s Decision:

☐ Dissertation is acceptable as is

☐ Dissertation is acceptable subject to requested revisions (Revisions must be conveyed to Dissertation Advisor)

Members of Committee who will sign-off on revised dissertation:

__________________________________        __________________________________

__________________________________        __________________________________

Date by which revisions should be completed: ________________

☐ Dissertation is unacceptable (Student must have Dissertation Research Committee sign-off on a new dissertation)
Final Examination Committee:

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Dissertation Research Committee:

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Examiners:

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Please complete this form when the student has successfully defended their dissertation and any requested revisions have been approved.

The members of this student’s Final Dissertation Committee, having read the student’s dissertation and examined the student during the dissertation defense, all agree to the conclusions stated below.

Student Name: ________________________________________________ GWID: __________________

Program: ____________________________________________________ Defense Date: ____________________

Dissertation Title: ____________________________________________

☐ Dissertation is acceptable as is

☐ Dissertation required revisions which has been submitted and accepted by the committee

☐ Dissertation is unacceptable (student must have dissertation research committee sign off on a new dissertation.

Dissertation Committee Director: ________________________________ Date: ________________

Defense Committee Chair: _________________________________ Date: ________________