CH&E MSc Defence Procedure

Description below applies to both thesis proposal defences and thesis defences unless otherwise specified.

Before the defence

- Read the proposal/thesis, or at a minimum, read the abstract and scan the proposal/thesis, to become familiar with the proposal/thesis to be defended.
- Obtain the Proposal/Thesis Defence Decision form and attendance sheet from the Graduate Administrator.
- For the thesis defence: Obtain the external reviewer’s comments and questions from the Graduate Administrator (available one day before the defense) and be prepared to discuss at the defence.

At the defence

- Beginning
  - Ensure the student, the required supervisory committee members (see below), and the internal reviewer (for the proposal defence) are present.
    - If there is a single supervisor, he/she needs to participate in person.
    - If there are two co-supervisors, one may participate remotely.
    - Among other committee members, one can participate remotely.
  - Introduce yourself, welcome everyone and explain the procedure
    - Student presentation (20-30 minutes)
    - Question and answer session
    - “In camera” discussion with the chair, the committee and interested CH&E faculty members
    - Committee’s decision and comments relayed to the student
- Student presentation
  - Invite the student to introduce their topic and committee and proceed with the presentation (20-30 minutes).
  - Thank the student following the presentation.
- Questions
  - For the proposal defence: Briefly introduce the internal reviewer.
  - For the thesis defence: Briefly introduce the external reviewer and briefly summarize his/her general assessment.
  - Start each round of questions with one from the internal reviewer (for proposal defence) or external examiner (for thesis defence), then from the supervisor/co-supervisor, and from each of the other committee members.
  - Invite questions from faculty, other participants.
  - Following the end of questions, thank the student.
• Decision
  o Ask everyone but the supervisory committee and other CH&E faculty members to leave the room.
  o Ask the supervisory committee to decide one of the following:
    ▪ *For the proposal defence*: Approved with no revisions; approved with minor revisions; approved with major revisions; or not approved
    ▪ *For the thesis defence*: Approved as submitted; approved upon specific corrections being made; rejected but with permission to re-submit a revised thesis for re-examination; or rejected outright
    ▪ Note: The supervisory committee has sole authority to accept or reject the proposal/thesis, although concerns expressed by other faculty will be considered and conveyed to the student.
  o *For the proposal defence*: Confirm ethics review status: To be submitted; to be consulted (the student thesis is under a supervisor’s project with an ethics approval); not required (using only publicly accessible data)
  o Remind the supervisor that when the student is invited back in the room, the supervisor will be expected to briefly tell the student the committee's decision and directions/advice regarding changes (if any) that need to be made to the thesis.
  o Ask the student to return to the room, inform the decision, and give oral feedback.
  o Request that the supervisor provide a written summary of the defence to the student (*required for the proposal defense; optional for the thesis defense*), copying to Graduate Administrator.
  o Make sure all forms are signed.

• End the defence and give the signed Proposal/Thesis Defence Decision form and attendance sheet to Graduate Administrator.