

Dalhousie University
Faculty of Science/Department of Earth Sciences
ERTH6310/0 Credit Hours/PhD Thesis Proposal Defence

Instructor Information

The PhD Proposal defence is conducted by an Examining Committee consisting of:

- The members of the supervisory committee
- One member of the Department's Graduate Advisory Committee or Chair of the Department, either of who will serve as the Chair of the Examining Committee.

Course Description

This course includes the defence of the PhD thesis proposal, as developed in EARTH 6300, and is mandatory for all PhD students. The main purpose is to ensure that the student has a thorough understanding of the fundamentals in the student's chosen area of study and has attained an adequate level of knowledge in the discipline (of general and supporting science) to achieve the thesis goals. The PhD proposal defence consists of questions from the Examining Committee on all components of the student's PhD proposal to meet the above objective.

Co-requisite

ERTH 6300

Course Format and Timeline

- The primary thesis supervisor shall be responsible for scheduling and advising the student as to the date of their proposal defence.
- A student must be given at least two months' notice of the proposal defence date, which will normally take place within one month after the proposal presentation for EARTH 6300.
- The specific format and should be communicated to the student by the primary thesis supervisor concurrently with the proposal defence date.
- The student will provide each member of the Examining Committee a copy of the thesis proposal, as submitted for EARTH 6300, at least two weeks prior to the defence.
- The thesis proposal defence has a time limit of 2 hours and consists of the questions from the Examining Committee, which may range over all the areas of specialization touched on explicitly or implicitly by the proposed research. The student may use visual aids where necessary.
- Upon completion of questioning, The Examining Committee will meet *in camera* for discussion on the defense and will vote to either "pass" or "fail" the thesis proposal. The result must be communicated to the student immediately following the committee deliberations. In case of a "fail", the Chair of the Examining Committee will provide written reasons to the student within one week of the defense.
- The results of the examination will be conveyed to the Department Graduate Coordinator and filed with the Graduate Administrator by completing Ph.D. Proposal Defence Form.

Course Assessments

The oral examination is assessed by Examining Committee.

The student is evaluated on:

1. Depth and breadth of knowledge in the chosen area of study, including relevant basic science;
2. The scientific merit of the research problem and level of innovation in approach to solving it;
3. Originality and ability to make critical judgments on scientific matters.

The members of the supervisory committee vote for a “pass” or “fail” based on the majority of the votes. The Chair only votes in case of a tie.

Upon successful completion of the thesis proposal defence, the PhD student will be designated as “PhD Candidate”.

Students who fail must withdraw from the PhD program.

Learning and Support Resources

Required links:

- General Academic Support – Advising
Halifax: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/advising.html
Truro: <https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/agricultural-campus/student-success-centre/academic-support.html>
- Fair Dealing Guidelines <https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office/guidelines/fair-dealing-guidelines.html>
- Black Students https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html
- International Students https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/international-centre.html
- Indigenous Students https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html
 - (You may wish to include the following): The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Contact the elders at the Indigenous Student Centre (1321 Edward Street), by email at elders@dal.ca or by phone at 902-494-6803.
- Student Health Services http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness/health-services.html
- Counselling https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness/counselling.html
- Library <http://libraries.dal.ca>
- Copyright Office <https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office.html>
- E-Learning website <http://www.dal.ca/dept/elearning.html>
- Writing Centre https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html
- Faculty or Departmental Advising Support: Studying for Success Program http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html
- Student Finance page: https://www.dal.ca/admissions/money_matters.html

University Policies, Statements, Guidelines

This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the University Calendar and the Senate.

<https://academiccalendar.dal.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=viewcatalog>

Statements

- Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect (*The Center for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 1999*). As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity. (read more: http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html)

- Accessibility

The Advising and Access Centre and the Student Success Centre (Agricultural Campus) serve as Dalhousie's centres for expertise on student accessibility and accommodation. Our work is governed by Dalhousie's Student Accommodation Policy to best support the needs of Dalhousie students. Our team work with students who request accommodation as a result of: disability, religious obligation, an experienced barrier related to any other characteristic protected under Canadian Human Rights legislation. (read more at: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html)

- Student Code of Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution.

(read more: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/student-life-policies/code-of-student-conduct.html)

- Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported.

(read more: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>)

- Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. We are all Treaty people.

University Policies and Programs

- Important Dates in the Academic Year (including add/drop dates)
http://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html
- Dalhousie University's Grading Practices Policy
https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practices-policy.html
- Scent-Free Program <http://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/occupational-safety/scent-free.html>
- Faculty Information: Student Self-Declaration of Absence
https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/academic-policies/student-absence/student-absence---for-faculty.html

