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**RESPONSIBILITIES: DOCTORAL CANDIDATE THESIS DEFENCE**

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This checklist is provided as a reminder and guide for doctoral candidates who are proceeding to the defence of their thesis and to Chairs, Directors, and Graduate Coordinators involved in the examination. A full outline of the procedures is available in the *Graduate Studies Calendar* and in the "Graduate Coordinator's Handbook".

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**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DOCTORAL CANDIDATE**

1. You shall submit a PDF of the completed thesis and a PDF of their CV to the Senior Thesis Clerk ([thesis@dal.ca](mailto:thesis@dal.ca)). You shall also submit the original PhD Thesis Submission Form and PhD Examination Information Form with all signatures to the FGS office. FGS will transmit the thesis package to your external examiner. You are responsible for transmitting copies to the rest of your committee (you should find out if they prefer a hard or soft copy). See the Graduate Studies Calendar for specific dates. It is important to bear in mind that **THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER MUST BE ALLOWED AT LEAST ONE MONTH TO READ THE THESIS BEFORE THE DEFENCE DATE.**
2. Ensure the thesis abstract (MAXIMUM length of 350 words) is suitable for the Thesis Defence Notice, (limited to one page only). The abstract must then be submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies at least one month prior to the defence date. The abstract must be submitted electronically to Faculty of Graduate Studies at [thesis@dal.ca](mailto:thesis@dal.ca), as a MS Word or text document.
3. If you have a remote participant for your defence, please contact the Senior Thesis Clerk several weeks prior to the defence to arrange a test run.
4. Prepare a summary presentation, **NOT TO EXCEED TWENTY MINUTES**, for the oral examination. The candidate may want to attend several defences prior to his or her own defence to familiarise him or herself with the conduct of a doctoral examination.
5. If you haven't reviewed the "Dalhousie Thesis Licence Agreement" with your Supervisor(s), you should do so. Your Supervisor(s) will have to acknowledge reading this document when they sign the PhD Thesis Approval form.

It should be noted that these are the only formal pre-examination responsibilities of the candidate to the Faculty of Graduate Studies office. Arrangements for the examination, including communication with the External Examiner, are handled by the Department or the Faculty of Graduate Studies office, not by the doctoral candidates.

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**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR/SCHOOL DIRECTOR/FACULTY DEAN**

1. Recommend three choices for External Examiner to the Faculty of Graduate Studies Associate Dean. This departmental recommendation should be made at least three months prior to the anticipated date of submission of the thesis and should be accompanied by a curriculum vitae or a statement of examiner's qualifications for the first choice of External Examiner.
  2. After the Faculty of Graduate Studies Associate Dean selects an External Examiner, the Department Chair/ School Director/ Faculty Dean will be notified of the External Examiner appointment.
  3. Contact the selected External Examiner to issue an initial invitation and determine dates External Examiner is available to attend the defence.
  4. Recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies Associate Dean (after consultation with the Graduate Coordinator and the candidate's Supervisor) a suitable time for the thesis defence, keeping in mind that the External Examiner should have **AT LEAST ONE MONTH** to read the thesis. **PLEASE NOTE: THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S THESIS COPY WILL NOT BE SENT TO THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER UNTIL AN ESTABLISHED DATE AND TIME HAS BEEN DETERMINED BY THE CANDIDATE'S DEPARTMENT AND THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER. THE DEPARTMENT IS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE THIS INFORMATION TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN WRITING.** When selecting a defence date and time take into consideration that normally there can only be one member of the Examining Committee participating remotely through web-conference or teleconference. (Note: the External Examiner is considered part of the Examining Committee.)
  5. Arrange details of travel and accommodation with the External Examiner and submit the Examiner's expense account to the Faculty of Graduate Studies Thesis Clerk after the examination.
  6. Participate at the defence as the Departmental Representative, or assign a designate.
  7. Distribute Thesis Defence Notices (provided by the Faculty of Graduate Studies) to all committee members and interested parties.
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**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GRADUATE COORDINATOR**

1. Receive copies of the unbound thesis from the candidate and distribute them to the internal members of the Examining Committee.
  2. Assist the Chair, Director, or Dean and the candidate's Supervisor in selecting a suitable time for the thesis defence.
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**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

1. Issue a formal letter of invitation to the External Examiner.
  2. Courier an approved copy of the thesis to the External Examiner.
  3. Book a suitable room for the defence.
  4. Receive and forward copies of External Examiner's report to the Defence Chair who will distribute copies to the members of the Examining Committee **after** the in-camera session. Notify the department that the external examiners report has been received and the defence is proceeding.
  5. Prepare the Thesis Defence Notice and forward it to the Department one week in advance of defence for distribution.
  6. Provide the PhD Thesis Approval Form at the Examination for Committee Members' signatures—this is given to the Defence Chair with his or her defence materials.
  7. Write a congratulatory letter to the student stipulating time span for corrections or to explain a negative decision.
  8. Process the External Examiner's expense claim and mail the cheque when issued from Financial Services.
  9. Receive and review final approved thesis (in PDF/a format) via DalSpace.
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