Dissertation and Final Oral Examination

Written Dissertation

To earn a PhD, a student must write a dissertation that constitutes a substantial piece of original research and successfully defend it before the dissertation committee.

The Graduate School distributes a set of thesis and dissertation templates in Microsoft Word for Apple and Windows computers, which will help students format their papers according to current digital submission requirements.

Students should also consider attending the Using the Thesis/Dissertation Templates workshop presented by Bob Penman from the Graduate School. This workshop will help students learn to use the templates and will cover such topics as the use of styles, correct page numbering, and table of contents generation.

Final Oral Examination

A doctoral candidate must defend their dissertation in a final oral examination. Successful defense of the dissertation requires unanimous approval of the committee. If unanimity cannot be reached, the matter is referred to the Graduate Dean for review.

The Graduate School has strict rules and deadlines for scheduling the final oral examination and submitting paperwork for graduation. These are not flexible and students should make themselves familiar with the rules, because they are responsible for following them.

The department recommends that students attend the Doctoral Degree Candidate Workshop presented by Degree Evaluators from the Graduate School. At this workshop, they review the guidelines and deadlines necessary for graduation that semester. Topics will include: scheduling your defense, how to submit your dissertation to the Texas Digital Library, requesting an embargo, IRB & IOC requirements, and reviewing what paperwork you must submit to the Graduate School.

After defending the dissertation, the student submits it in an approved electronic format to the Office of Graduate Studies. Dissertations are made available to the public, and students are responsible for publication fees.

Graduate School information on electronic theses and dissertations.

Graduation Workshop Slideshow

Look at this Graduation Workshop Fall 2018 Powerpoint for more information on the graduation process. While the grad office will attempt to update the slideshow every semester, you can find information for other semesters in the links below:

Graduate School Events Page (including workshops on the graduation process)

University Writing Center Workshops

UT Academic Calendar