

Arts & Science *(Life Sciences)*

Master's Oral Exam Procedures



Membership and Convening of Thesis Examination Committee- Master's students

The supervisor(s) shall nominate members for the Master's Thesis Examination Committee and propose a date, time and place for the oral thesis examination. The supervisor(s) must obtain commitments from those nominated for the committee to serve as examiners and to attend the oral thesis examination as scheduled. In all cases, potential examiners should refer to the appropriate Senate document to determine if a conflict of interest exists. The applicable departmental form is completed and signed by the supervisor(s) and the Graduate Coordinator (or Head, if the Graduate Coordinator is a supervisor).

The Thesis Examination Committee for Master's students in Health Sciences shall be composed of the following members:

- Chair of Committee
- Supervisor(s)
- Head (or delegate)
- At least 2 examiners

NOTES

1. *At least one member of the Thesis Examination Committee shall be external to the candidate's home department.*
2. *Normally, the Chair of the Thesis Examination Committee for Master's students in Health Sciences shall be external to the candidate's home department. However, a Chair from the candidate's home department is permitted, provided that one of the examiners is external to the candidate's home department. The Chair of the Master's Thesis Examination Committee is not a voting member of the committee.*
3. *Normally, one of the examiners shall be external to the candidate's home department. However, all examiners could be from the candidate's home department, provided that the Chair of Committee is external to the candidate's home department.*
4. *The Graduate Coordinator (or Head, if the Graduate Coordinator is a supervisor) shall be responsible for approving the composition of the Examining Committee and signing the applicable departmental form.*

Processing Master's Oral Thesis Examinations

1. The completed signed departmental form to schedule a Master's Oral Thesis Examination shall be delivered to the designated departmental person no later than 10 working days prior to the scheduled date of the examination. The designated departmental person shall indicate on the departmental form whether the student has met the course requirements for graduation.
2. The candidate shall deliver a copy of the thesis to each member of the examining committee no later than 10 working days prior to the scheduled date of the examination.
3. The designated departmental person shall confirm the date, time and place of the examination to all committee members and the candidate no later than 10 working days prior to the scheduled date of the examination, and shall send a copy of the departmental form to the SGS Thesis Coordinator.

- 4. The examiners are not required to submit reports on the thesis prior to the oral thesis examination, unless they wish to submit a “negative report”; that is, if it is their opinion that the oral thesis examination should NOT proceed (see #5 below). If no negative report is submitted, it is presumed that the examiner agrees that the oral thesis examination should be held as scheduled and that they will attend the oral thesis examination.**
- 5. If, on the basis of the thesis submitted for oral examination, any committee member feels the examination should NOT proceed, he or she must submit a report which lists some substantive reasons why the thesis should not proceed to examination, no later than 3 working days prior to the scheduled date of the examination. The “negative report” shall be submitted to a designated departmental person who could be either the Chair of the committee, or the Graduate Coordinator in the candidate’s home department. If only one such negative report is submitted, the oral thesis examination shall proceed as scheduled.**
- 6. If two or more negative reports are submitted, the candidate and the supervisor shall be consulted by the Chair of the Examining Committee or the Graduate Coordinator to see if they wish to proceed with the oral thesis examination. The School of Graduate Studies shall be notified whenever two or more examiners recommend that the thesis oral examination not proceed. The onus is on the candidate to make the decision to proceed or not. If the candidate agrees that the oral thesis examination be postponed, the Chair must convey to the candidate, through the supervisor, the nature of the revisions to the thesis that are advised, and the candidate has the right to present the revised thesis at a later date. At the subsequent submission of the thesis, the oral thesis examination must be held. The School of Graduate Studies shall be informed when an oral thesis examination has been postponed due to negative reports.**
- 7. After the oral thesis examination, the Chair will ask for comments from the Examining Committee on the conduct of the examination (a standard form shall be provided) and will provide a report to the Head of the Department or Graduate Coordinator and to the School of Graduate Studies. The result of the defense, copyright forms, and reports, are forwarded by the Chair to the SGS Thesis Coordinator.**