

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION DEFENSE

Provided that the student has completed all graduation requirements and is in good academic standing, he or she is now ready to defend the dissertation before a committee.

Timing/Registration Requirements

- The dissertation defense must be at least one year after passing the preliminary exam. Students who plan to defend their dissertation before a year has elapsed must submit a *Graduate Student Petition* requesting an exemption from the one-year minimum requirement. This petition needs to be approved by the student's advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS).
- Students must be in good academic standing.
- Students should be sure that they have submitted their *Intent to Graduate* prior to any term when they might be graduating. Students should login to the University portal, <https://my.uic.edu>, and in the "Academics" tab, go to the "Records" sub-tab. Choose links, and then the link to declare your Intent to Graduate. Read the information carefully, and follow the instructions given. For more information: <http://grad.uic.edu/graduation-deadlines>.
- **Students must be registered for the term when they defend their thesis. Students must register for the summer term if defending the dissertation during that term.** **Note:** If the defense will occur within the first official ten days of the Fall or Spring term (first five days of the Summer term) and the student was registered the previous term then registration is not required. A defense after the first official ten days (first five days in Summer) of the term requires registration that term.
- **ZERO HOUR REGISTRATION:** Doctoral students who have completed all degree requirements except the dissertation, and who do not wish to register for additional coursework may petition and register for zero hours. Please check with the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) to confirm that all degree requirements have been fulfilled prior to petitioning for zero hours. The petition must be submitted by the 10th day of the term (5th for summer) and should include an option (A or B). Students should register for PhD thesis research (CME 599) by the registration deadline each term, even if the petition is still pending approval. Zero hour students cannot hold a fellowship, assistantship and/or tuition and service-fee waiver.
 - **Option A:** Range IV (0 hours) tuition, tuition differential, and all related fees, including CampusCare (unless under the opt-out option) are assessed. Students requesting Option A only have to petition one time for zero hour approval.
 - **Option B:** No fees are assessed; only Range IV (0 hour) tuition (and differential, if applicable) is assessed. Students who elect Option B are ineligible for access to certain on-campus facilities, such as the gym, and student health insurance (CampusCare). Doctoral students who request Option B must specify Option B on the petition and the terms requested (maximum two terms per petition). If more than two terms of Option B are required a new petition must be filed before the start of that term. Students must re-file a petition for Option B by the 10th day of the term (5th for summer) so that the student bill is correctly calculated.
 - More information about zero hour registration, including important information for international students, can be found at: <http://grad.uic.edu/zero-hour-registration>.

- Registration for terms after the term of a successful defense is not required, unless the student is the recipient of a fellowship, assistantship and/or tuition and service-fee waiver, or is on a student visa.
- **Dissertation submission deadlines:** In order to be eligible to graduate for a certain term, students must submit the dissertation and have it approved by the deadline according to the Graduate College academic calendar here: <http://grad.uic.edu/academic-calendar-0>. Failure to submit the dissertation by the deadline will delay a student's graduation to the following term.

Committee Members/Committee Recommendation Form

The dissertation committee must be approved by the Graduate College on the recommendation of the DGS. It should be the same as the prelim exam committee unless there are extenuating circumstances. The defense committee consists of at least five people:

- at least one faculty must come from outside of the UIC CME Department
- at least two faculty must be Graduate Faculty with full membership
- at least two faculty must be tenured
- chairperson of the committee must have full membership (not necessarily tenured)
- Check the Graduate College [website](#) for the membership status of individual faculty
- For any faculty without membership in the Graduate Faculty, a CV will need to be included with the Committee Recommendation Form.

The [Committee Recommendation Form](#) must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and then the Graduate College for approval **at least 3 weeks prior to** the dissertation defense date. Please note:

- The form must be typed on the PDF (handwritten versions will not be accepted)
- Your full name on the form **MUST** exactly match the name on the final dissertation that is submitted to the Graduate College
- Program code for the Civil Engineering program is *20FS0106PHD*.
Program code for the Materials Engineering program is *20FS1434PHD*.
- The thesis title may not exceed 105 characters, including spaces, and may not include any abbreviations. Note: The thesis title on the form **MUST** exactly match the title of the final dissertation that is submitted to the Graduate College.
- Changes to the committee or the thesis title may be requested before the defense occurs using the [Request for Change in Thesis Title/Committee Member\(s\) Form](#). Please note that changes to the thesis title after the Examination Report has been issued will require submission of this Request for Change form to the Graduate College. A new examination report will be issued and it will be the student's responsibility to obtain all of the signatures from his/her committee members.

Announcement

The defense can be open to the academic community of the university and be publicly announced one week prior to its occurrence. Students are responsible for e-mailing the Graduate Program Coordinator **at least one week prior** to the

defense date with the announcement (date, time, location, advisor), title, and abstract. The defense announcement will be distributed to the students and faculty one week prior to the presentation date.

iThenticate Procedures

The student is the sole author of their thesis, and it is the student's responsibility to ensure that all information is correctly cited and that proper copyright permissions have been obtained. The iThenticate screening process is one tool towards that end. iThenticate account information will be e-mailed from noreply(@)ithenticate.com to you upon receipt of the Committee Recommendation Form by the Graduate College. iThenticate review procedures are available on the Graduate College website at <http://grad.uic.edu/ithenticate-review-procedures>.

There are 3 iThenticate report documents that need to be submitted to the Graduate College through a shared Box folder. Detailed instructions and a demonstration video are available at <http://grad.uic.edu/ithenticate-review-procedures>. Please be sure that the Box folder is shared with the Graduate College using thesischeck@uic.edu (along with your advisor) and that it includes all 3 reports required by the Graduate College. The final report must show 0% overlap.

The Dissertation Defense

All candidates for the Ph.D. degree must have an advisor who is a full member of the UIC graduate faculty. The advisor is considered the primary reader of the dissertation. The committee vote is "pass" or "fail". A candidate cannot be passed if more than one vote of "fail" is reported.

Examination Report Form

After the committee recommendation form has been approved by the Graduate College, they will send the Examination Report Form to the GPC, who will e-mail students that it is available to be picked up from the CME office. The Examination Report Form must include the pass/fail decision and signature by the entire committee. The Examination Report Form must be submitted to the GPC within two business days of the thesis defense. **The Red-Border Certificate of Approval is no longer issued by the Graduate College so is not required.**

Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Submission

The Graduate College Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) guidelines and the Thesis Manual can be found at <http://grad.uic.edu/thesis> and will assist you in preparing and submitting your thesis. Following your defense, the final version of your thesis must be reviewed by your advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator before it is submitted to the Graduate College through the ETD submission system. Students are required to pay a publishing fee as outlined in the ETD guidelines. Please be sure to include the GPC as the departmental contact when submitting your thesis.

DISSERTATION DEFENSE TIMELINE

Prior to the Dissertation Defense

At least two months prior to defense

- Consult with research advisor regarding anticipated date of defense.
- Confirm registration (coursework, research or zero hours) for term of the defense.
- Submit the *Intent to Graduate* through <http://my.uic.edu> prior to the term of the defense.
- Contact potential committee members regarding availability.
- Coordinate with committee members for date/time when all members are available.

At least three weeks prior to defense

- Complete the [Committee Recommendation Form](#) and submit to GPC.
- Reserve a room (contact the GPC when requesting the CME library or 1047 ERF).

One week prior to defense

- Send dissertation defense announcement to the GPC with date, time, location, advisor, title and abstract.
- Provide copies of the dissertation to each member of the committee.
- (Day of Defense) Pick up the Examination Report Form from the GPC office.

Following the Dissertation Defense

Immediately

- Confirm that every committee member has signed the Examination Report Form, indicating their grade (“Pass” or “Fail”).
- Make sure the chairperson indicates the Examination Date and any conditions that may have been made by the committee
- Submit the White and Pink copies of the form to the GPC within two business days of the defense.

Following weeks

- E-mail a copy of the committee-approved dissertation to the GPC for format approval. You will be notified within 24 hours if it is ready to be submitted through the ETD.
- Upload the final dissertation to the Graduate College through the [Electronic Thesis and Dissertation](#) system. Follow all instructions related to the format requirements and publishing fee.
- Submit a bounded copy of your thesis to the GPC.