Thesis Public Lecture and Examination

See Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Thesis

See also Chapter IV, heading Master's Degree by Thesis, subheading Program Regulations

MA Examination Procedure

Introduction by the Chair - 5 minutes
Presentation of research findings/scholarly work by candidate - 30 minutes (maximum)
Public Question Period - Audience -10 minutes
Break - 5 minutes (members of the public are free to leave)
Examination Period (questions only from examiners) - 1 hour and 40 minutes

Ordering of Questions by the Examination Committee:
There will be two rounds of questions by the Committee. The questioning by the Committee will be in the following order:

1) Member of the Graduate Faculty (not on the Advisory Committee)
2) Member of the Advisory Committee
3) Advisor or second member of the Advisory Committee

Suggested time allotted to examination committee members:
Graduate Faculty (Round 1: 15 minutes, Round 2: 10 minutes)
Advisory Committee Member (Round 1: 15 minutes, Round 2: 10 minutes)
Advisor/Advisory Committee Member (Round 1: 15 minutes, Round 2: 10 minutes)

Deliberation (in camera) - 25 minutes

Look for "Area-specific thesis public lecture" below CONTENTS for area-specific guidance if it exists.

Area-specific thesis public lecture and examination MA AS

Additional regulations specific to the Applied Social Psychology MA program:

Maximum Duration of Oral Examination

Master’s Examination: 2.5 hours

Master’s Examination Procedure

Introduction by the Chair - 5 minutes

Presentation of research findings/scholarly work by candidate - 30 minutes (maximum)

Public Question Period - Audience - 10 minutes

Break - 5 minutes (members of the public are free to leave)

Examination Period (questions only from examiners) - 1 hour and 40 minutes

The Chair
The chair of the examination committee is the official representative of the Assistant Vice- President (Graduate Studies). The chair serves to administer the examination according to the approved format of the program. The chair does not serve as an additional examiner.

It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that the oral examination is conducted in a professional manner. The Chair must ensure that proper forms from the Office of Graduate Studies are available and duly completed and signed by the Examination Committee. The Chair should ensure that adequate time is allotted to the candidate for presentation of research findings, and to the examiners for questions. The details on the time allocation to the candidate and examiners are given in the following paragraphs. It is also the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that examiners should adhere to the allocated time.

In unforeseen circumstances where a Committee member is unable to attend the examination (e.g., due to sickness) either in person or by video/teleconference, the Chair will attempt to receive questions to ask on behalf of the absent member, to be answered by the student to the satisfaction of the examiners present.

If during the examination the behaviour of either the candidate or the examiner(s) is unprofessional, the Chair should provide a warning. If the unprofessional behaviour continues, the Chair should stop the examination and report to the Graduate Coordinator.

The Chair should ensure recommendations for revision of the thesis are completed, and should withhold their endorsement of the examination (through signing the Recommendation Form) until such time.

Role of the Examiners
The examiners have the responsibility to review the thesis as outlined in the University Guidelines for thesis evaluation. If an examiner feels that there is a major problem with the thesis, the examiner should inform the candidate in writing with a confidential copy only to the advisor and Graduate Coordinator. If the candidate and the examiner cannot resolve the problem before the oral examination, the Graduate Coordinator will act as facilitator. If there is no agreement, the examination can go forward at the student's request, or postponed on the advice of the Graduate Coordinator.

Ordering of Questions by the Examination Committee:
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1) Member of the Graduate Faculty (not on the Advisory Committee)
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3) Advisor or second member of the Advisory Committee

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Deliberation (in camera) - 25 minutes

Evaluation of Thesis

As stated in the graduate calendar “The thesis must demonstrate the candidate's capacity for original and independent work, and should include a critical evaluation of work which has previously been done in the candidate's field of research. The thesis should emphasize any new conclusions which may be drawn from the candidate's own research.” The thesis should strive to evince critical and creative thinking skills, literacy skills and communication skills and a global understanding. Theses and student must be professional and adhere to the highest ethical standards. Evaluation of the thesis and oral examination will be done holistically. Numeric grades are not required; instead the work is reported as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

The candidate is deemed to have passed if a simple majority of Examination Committee members vote to pass the student. An abstention is regarded as a negative vote. If the Examination Committee decides thesis and oral exam are unsatisfactory, the candidate may be given the opportunity for a second attempt. A second unsatisfactory report constitutes a recommendation to the Board of Graduate Studies that the student be asked to withdraw.

In addition to determining whether the candidate passes the exam, the Examination Committee members will also discuss the recommended and required changes to the thesis. After each committee member recommends changes, the committee will come to a consensus about which changes the student is required to do. In the rare event of a disagreement, the Chair will decide if a requested change by a committee member can be overruled.

Following deliberations of the committee, the Examination Chair calls the student back to the examination room and verbally informs the candidate of the outcome of the Examination. If the defense is successful, changes will frequently be required. These changes may be minor or substantial.

Students should be prepared to make changes based on feedback received during the defense and must allocate sufficient time before final submission for this process. As noted above, those changes should be submitted to the Examination Chair for approval.

Following completion of the thesis revisions, the Examination Chair then submits the signed forms (i.e., Certificate of Approval, Report of the Examination Committee) to the Graduate Secretary, his/her Examination Chair report, and the Report of the External Examiner. The Graduate Secretary then contacts the student to complete graduation paperwork with the Department Chair. Once completed the student is responsible for the delivery of this paperwork along with the approved copies (2) of the thesis in its final form (following revisions) to Graduate Program Services.

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