

THESIS PREPARATION, DEFENCE, AND FINAL SUBMISSION

A. Thesis Preparation Process and Format

After a successful permission to write meeting, the student will complete a draft of their thesis and submit it to their supervisor(s). For guidance about formatting the thesis document, students are encouraged to visit the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) website and click on “The Grad HUB”. On this page you will find an option for “Thesis Roadmap” that provides detailed information about style and formatting of your final thesis.

The supervisor reviews the thesis and the student completes all recommended revisions. Once the supervisor is satisfied with the draft, the student submits the draft electronically to all committee members. Committee members then review the document and submit their comments and suggestions to the student within a reasonable time period (generally two, but no longer than three weeks). The student addresses all suggested revisions from committee members and resubmits the thesis to the supervisor, who then checks to ensure that all corrections have been made. All committee members must approve of the final thesis draft. The supervisor must forward written approval from all committee members to the Graduate Administrative Support person before the defence paperwork can be completed.

PhD candidates must forward their FINAL thesis draft to the committee AND the Graduate Administrative Support Person who will submit it to CGPS. This must be done at least **FIVE WEEKS** prior to the desired defence date. CGPS will send the thesis to both the University Examiner and the External Examiner. The Graduate Administrative Support Person from Pharmacy and Nutrition will subsequently coordinate the details of the defence with all participants following the official invitation being sent to the University Examiner and the External Examiner by the CGPS Program Advisor.

MSc students must forward their FINAL thesis draft to committee members, the Graduate Administrative Support Person, AND the “Arms-Length Examiner” at least **TWO WEEKS** prior to the defence date.

B. Organizing the External Examiner and Defence Date

Defences may occur in-person on-campus; remotely through digital platforms; or, by a combination of both. The supervisor begins by contacting the first-choice individuals identified after the Permission to Write Meeting (see below).

A PhD defence:

- Requires TWO additional members: i) a “University Examiner” AND ii) an “External Examiner”.
- *Note to supervisors, the External Examiner for PhD defence is required to submit their CV for approval by CGPS.*

i) The University Examiner for a PhD Defence

Approved by the Graduate Chair or Associate Dean of Pharmacy and Nutrition using the criteria below. The university examiner has an “arm’s length” relationship with the Ph.D. dissertation research.

Will:

- Be a member of the faculty of the CGPS (Adjunct Professors included, but cannot be a Professional Affiliate);

- Normally have a Ph.D. degree or equivalent;
- Have suitable knowledge in the general field of dissertation research;
- Ideally, have previous experience supervising or examining doctoral students.

Will not:

- Have been directly involved in the candidate's Ph.D. dissertation research;
- Have served on the candidate's Ph.D. advisory committee;
- Be related (e.g., family, partner) to the candidate or supervisor.

May:

- Be from within or outside the academic unit of the candidate and supervisor(s), provided the arm's length criteria noted above are met;
- Have taught the candidate in classes and interacted in other ways not directly related to the dissertation research.

KEY CHANGE: While the external examiner still cannot have collaborated with the supervisor or student in scholarly activities during the past 6 years, the restriction no longer applies to the relationship between the external examiner and other members of the advisory/examining committee.

ii) The External Examiner for a PhD Defence

Approved by the Associate Dean, CGPS. The external examiner will have an "arm's-length" relationship with the student, the supervisor and members of the advisory committee.

An MSc defence:

- Requires an "Arms-Length Examiner".
- The arm's length examiner may be from within or outside the academic unit but should not have been directly involved in the student's thesis research.
- Arms-Length Examiners for a MSc defence are approved internally (i.e., by the Graduate Chair of the Associate Dean of Pharmacy/Nutrition).
- Once the Arms-Length Examiner has agreed to serve, the supervisor must send an email to the Graduate Administrative Support Person, the Graduate Chair, and the Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Affairs indicating the following information. Approval will be communicated by email from the Graduate Chair or the Associate Dean in Pharmacy/Nutrition and saved in the student's file.
 - Name of examiner
 - Affiliation
 - Highest degree obtained (should be a minimum of MSc)
 - Statement that the individual has NOT been part of the student's thesis research.

C. Scheduling the Defence:

The Graduate Administrative Support person will help identify a date and time for the defence once the Supervisor has obtained consent from the additional members described above. However, the supervisor is encouraged to suggest several dates based on their discussions with the student and additional members. All room and videoconferencing/audiovisual equipment bookings will be made by the Graduate Administrative Support person, who can also provide travel support to the external examiner if they will be attending in person. **Students may not have any contact with the external examiner/Arms-Length Examiner prior to the defence.**

D. Defence Presentation

Graduate student defence presentations will be open to anyone who is interested in attending. Following completion of the presentation (40 minutes for a PhD and 30 minutes for MSc), a short question period will be allowed from general audience members. Thereafter, the chair will ask general audience members to leave the meeting promptly so the closed portion of the defence can begin.

E. Electronic Submission

Following a successful defence, students must complete all remaining corrections prior to uploading their thesis to the Electronic Thesis Database (ETD). The supervisor will withhold their final signature from the defence paperwork until such time as corrections are complete and will let the student know when to upload the thesis. Once a thesis has been uploaded to the ETD, the student will have completed all degree requirements and may be eligible for a tuition rebate.

F. GRADUATION

In addition to other degree requirements, all students must complete an application to graduate on PAWS before the deadline for the next convocation ceremony. All degree requirements must be completed and all outstanding fees paid before students are able to graduate. More information about convocation is available at the following link: <http://students.usask.ca/academics/graduation.php>. If a student wishes to attend a later convocation ceremony they should contact convocation@usask.ca.

If students require proof of degree completion prior to convocation they may request a formal letter directly from the CGPS.