

MSE Thesis and Dissertation Review Process and Procedures

Preventing Problems or Delays at the Dean's Office Level

Follow graduate studies guidelines for submission

Schedule defense of dissertation or thesis at least 2 weeks before the defense date

Don't schedule the defense until the thesis or dissertation has passed review

At the committee level

"It is the opinion of the committee that the following student is ready for the final oral examination."

At the graduate program coordinator's level

"I have confirmed, on behalf of the department and the university, that (1) the work's format, citations, and bibliographic style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials, including figures, tables, and charts, are in place; and (3) the manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee, thus suggesting that the student is ready for the final oral examination."

Don't sign 8d approval form until the thesis or dissertation is in excellent shape

"I confirm that the final copy is satisfactory to the graduate committee and ready to be submitted electronically for review."

Roles and Responsibilities in the Submission Process

Student's role

- See the Office of Graduate Studies Webpage for guidelines on how to prepare the thesis or dissertation for submission (preliminary pages template and minimum standards for form and style submission; ADV Form 11)
- Submit a paper copy of the thesis or dissertation to the dean's office, along with a signed copy of Form 8(d) (If minor revisions at the dean's level are requested, the second submission can be in PDF or Word document format)
- Attach an outline or table of contents that includes all heading levels. (The table of contents included in the manuscript does not need to include the lowest paragraph level heading but should at least include the second level. This will avoid having to bookmark down to the 4th paragraph-level heading when the thesis or dissertation is submitted for ETD review.)
- Return marked up copy of the thesis or dissertation to the dean's office with any revised and resubmitted manuscript
- Submit signed signature pages if the thesis or dissertation will be bound

Chair's role

- Sign the scheduling and submission forms (8c and 8d) only after reviewing and approving the final document for quality of writing and formatting as well as content
- Review all edits before the student submits the manuscript to the dean's office even if the student has hired an editor.
- Re-review the manuscript if any changes were made after the thesis or dissertation was approved for defense.
- Mentor the student through the final approval process

Committee members' role

Provide feedback on writing as well as content at the prospectus and defense levels

Graduate Program Coordinator's role

Review the thesis or dissertation for formatting and organization before scheduling of the defense (manuscript should pass this level of review before scheduling the defense)

Review the manuscript for formatting and quality of writing before the student submits it to the dean's office

Dean's office role (Associate Dean)

- Review the thesis or dissertation for final approval
- Provide feedback to the committee chair and discuss suggested changes, if they impact content
- If errors are noted so that the committee chair can convey needed changes to the student.

Review Process at Dean's Level

Organization

Logical connections; relevant supra and subordinate topics

Subheadings relate to higher level heading, with like ideas grouped together

No single level headings

Parallel and descriptive headings

An short introduction (e.g., two to three sentences) to orient the reader to the content and organization of major content sections (e.g., Literature Review and Discussion)

Quality of writing

Devices to signal the organization, orient the reader

- Use headings, introductory overviews to major sections
- Avoid having multiple levels of headings (e.g., first, second, and third) without any short orienting or introductory paragraph

Appropriate transitions

Correct grammar, spelling, punctuation

Formatting

APA formatting

Content

Sufficient detail in method section

Synthesis of results and concepts

Adequate specification of limitations

Relevant content in each of the sections (e.g. discussion deals with implications and is not just a restatement of results)

Deadlines

Students try to push deadlines

Problems occur when someone tries to push thesis or dissertation through when it isn't ready