

Scheduling Your Thesis/Dissertation Oral Examination (Defense Meeting)
McKay School of Education
Brigham Young University

Note. These are typical procedures for scheduling a thesis or dissertation defense in the McKay School of Education. Please check with your individual departments for information specific to your program.

Prior to your defense meeting, you have worked substantially with your advisory chair and have provided draft copies of your completed thesis/dissertation to your chair and committee members for feedback. You have also completed the following tasks:

Prior to Scheduling the Defense	Approximately 3 Weeks Prior to the Defense	No later than 2 Weeks Prior to the Defense
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check to make sure the following documents are signed and in your file in the department graduate secretary's office: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Approved Prospectus Form</i> • <i>Co-Authorship Agreement Form</i> • <i>IRB Approval Form</i> 2. Apply for graduation (see University deadlines). 3. You may want to schedule a "data review" meeting with your committee after having collected your data and before holding your thesis/dissertation defense. 4. You may also want to schedule a tentative date/time for your defense with your committee. Inform the graduate coordinator of this date. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a paper or digital copy of your thesis/dissertation to each committee member, chair, and program coordinator. 2. Your advisory committee will review your thesis/dissertation and if they approve, sign Form 8c: Department Scheduling of Final Oral Exam, verifying your readiness to defend your thesis/dissertation. 3. Collect signatures on <i>Form 8c</i> and give the signed form to your graduate coordinator, who will verify that the format, citations, bibliographic style, and illustrative materials fulfill university style requirements. 4. If you are required to make changes, you must make and have them approved 2 weeks prior to the defense date. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The graduate coordinator must sign <i>Form 8c</i> no later than 2 weeks prior to your defense date. 2. Obtain the signed <i>Form 8c</i> from your graduate coordinator. 3. Give <i>Form 8c</i> to the graduate secretary and work with her or her designee to schedule a room no later than 2 weeks prior to the defense date. 4. The graduate secretary will schedule the defense with the university.

Thesis/Dissertation Oral Examination (Defense Meeting) General Outline
McKay School of Education
Brigham Young University

Note. These are typical procedures for a thesis or dissertation defense in the McKay School of Education. Please check with your individual departments for information specific to your program.

Purpose of the defense meeting: Your thesis/dissertation oral examination is a meeting where you present your completed research to your advisory committee and any other members of the academic community who are present. Because you are expected to demonstrate knowledge and skills related to your research, your advisory chair and committee should refrain from speaking on your behalf. The desired outcome of this meeting is to share your study and to orally demonstrate that your work is of sufficient quality to receive your graduate degree. You and all members of your committee are required to be in attendance.

General meeting procedures:

1. Advisory chair invites you into the meeting and introduces committee members others in attendance, if necessary.
2. Advisory chair clarifies the purpose of the meeting and how the meeting will proceed.
3. Advisory chair invites a committee member to give the invocation.
4. Advisory chair dismisses you and any visitors, then discusses with the committee if you are ready to defend the thesis (this step may happen prior to the commencement of the meeting), then invites you and visitors to return.
5. Advisory chair or committee member may take notes for you, so you can concentrate on the discussions rather than on taking notes.
6. Candidate presents a brief oral summary of the literature review and research questions. The presentation of the literature review is usually brief, followed by a more thorough presentation of the methods, data analysis, results, and discussion. It is helpful if the committee members have a written summary to follow (e.g., PowerPoint show, written outline). This whole presentation generally takes no more than 15-20 minutes. It may take longer if committee members ask questions during, rather than after, your presentation.
7. Advisory chair may dismiss visitors at this point, or following the questioning.
8. If questions are reserved until following your presentation, committee members then ask questions for clarification of concepts, to examine your knowledge and skills, and to agree upon critical elements of your study.
9. Advisory chair asks you to step out of the room while the committee decides whether you have passed the defense.
10. Committee members complete the following forms:
 - a. *ADV Form 9 - Committee Member Evaluation of Final Oral Examination*
 - b. *ADV Form 10 - Report of Committee Action for Final Oral Examination*
 - c. *ADV Form 8d - Approval for Submission of Dissertation, Thesis, or Selected Project* is signed by the committee members when the final form of the thesis is ready for submission to the library.

- d. *Grade change form* (for 699R thesis hours) is signed by the graduate coordinator and submitted after thesis is completed and approved by the Dean's office.
 - e. *Other forms relative to each department's standards, if applicable*
11. Advisory chair invites you back to the room and informs you of the committee's decision. Possible defense outcomes are determined by vote of the committee:
 - a. Pass: no changes are necessary; the thesis is accepted, signed, and copies made for the Library.
 - b. Pass with qualifications: The thesis needs minor changes. The committee chair holds up the results of the defense until the changes have been satisfactorily completed.
 - c. Recess: The thesis needs revision, further writing, or other fixing. Another defense is necessary but must be held at least one month later.
 - d. Fail: The student's degree program is terminated immediately.
12. Committee and candidate discuss and sign the *Co-authorship Agreement Form* as appropriate.
13. Candidate collects copies of the thesis from committee members and schedules an appointment with committee chair to discuss committee members' recommendations.
14. After candidate passes the final oral examination and clears all qualifications, candidate or advisory chair submits paperwork ([*ADV Form 8d Approval for Final Dissertation or Thesis*](#), [*ADV Form 9 Committee Member Evaluation of Final Oral Examination*](#), *Co-authorship Agreement Form*, grade change form) to graduate secretary.

Getting Your Thesis/Dissertation Approved

1. If you pass the oral defense of your thesis with qualifications, you will be required to make the changes recommended by your advisory committee, as directed by your advisory chair. After making these changes, you must get signatures from each committee member on ADV Form 8d: [*Approval for Final Dissertation or Thesis*](#).
2. Then you will submit an electronic copy of your thesis to your graduate coordinator along with *Form 8d*. This version is reviewed for format and content. The graduate coordinator may discontinue reviewing theses/dissertations with numerous typographical, grammatical, or formatting errors, returning the thesis to you for changes prior to resubmission.
3. Graduate Studies will accept electronic signatures on ADV form 8d. Signatures are obtained using EchoSign, which offers an easily managed process to insert the required name, and then email the next person on the 8d for their signature. All signatures must be on one document, regardless if an electronic signature is used in conjunction with original signatures. Additional information is available on the Graduate Studies [EchoSign Instructions page](#).
4. After you make all required changes the graduate coordinator will sign *Form 8d*, then you will submit the following to the dean's office (301 MCKB):
 - A printed copy of your entire thesis (single sided).
 - A printed copy of the full Table of Contents (including Level 4 and 5 headings) so the logic of the headings can be checked.

- Signed Form 8d: *Approval for Final Dissertation, Thesis, or Selected Project*.
 - Completed *McKay School of Education Checklist of Format and Conventions for Theses and Dissertations*
5. The dean's office typically takes up to 10 work days for this review (longer, if closer to deadlines). Corrections to the thesis are likely to be required at this level of review; if there are to be changes to be made, then you and your advisory chair will be notified.
 6. Send a revised version of your thesis/dissertation electronically to the dean's office using 'track changes' to show how you have attended to the requested changes.
 7. After you have made all of the changes the dean's office requires, the dean signs *Form 8d*, and you are then required to convert your document to a pdf file. See ADV Form 11: [Checklist for Preparing ETD \(PDF\) for Submission](#) for instructions. Upload it bookmarks for levels 1, 2, and 3 to the [BYU Electronic Theses and Dissertations website](#). The library offers classes and individual instruction on working with this website. The date on the title page of an ETD should be the month and year the college dean signs ADV Form 8d: *Approval for Final Dissertation or Thesis*.
 8. After you have uploaded your thesis to the ETD website, the graduate coordinator approves it (checks to see if the file is working correctly – all necessary headings are bookmarked, the bookmarks lead to the right pages, fonts are embedded). If it is not approved, you will need to delete the uploaded version, make changes, and resubmit your document on this website.
 9. Upon receiving graduate coordinator approval, the file is automatically sent through the ETD website to the dean's office for approval. If it is not approved by the dean's office, you will need to delete the uploaded version, make changes, and resubmit your document on this website.
 10. You will receive an email indicating approval by the dean's office. At this point, you will take your signed Form 8d and title page to the Graduate Studies Office -105 FPH. You may want to order personal bound copies on the [BYU Print and Mail](#) website, but this is not required.