1. **Written Examination**
   - Upon completion of coursework requirements, language/research tools requirements, and any special, additional requirements of the major field, the doctoral student prepares to take the written portion of the preliminary degree examination.
   - The required written examination(s) is taken at a time scheduled by the major field department.
   - When the written examination(s) has been passed, the major field department chairperson notifies the Doctoral Candidacy Advisor through the Doctoral Oral Examination Request for Ballots.

2. **Oral Examination**
   - The Oral Examination Ballot Request form is filled out by the department and proposes the student’s committee, consisting of five members of the Graduate Faculty, to conduct and evaluate the oral examination, and the date and time of the examination.
   - The major field department should also include in this notice any graduate courses from other institutions that are to be formally a part of the student’s Ph.D. program through the Evaluation of Advanced Standing form.
   - This notification must be received in Candidacy Advisor’s office AT LEAST TEN (10) BUSINESS DAYS IN ADVANCE OF THE ORAL EXAMINATION.
   - When oral exam notice is received in the Candidacy Advisor’s office, a summary of the student’s academic record is prepared and a list of remaining requirements is sent to the student and committee chairperson. At this time the oral examination ballots are also sent to the chairperson of the committee.
   - The oral examination must never take place without ballots from the Candidacy Advisor.

3. **Application for Candidacy**
   - When a student receives notice from the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education that he/she has passed the oral examination, the student is eligible to request that the Doctoral Candidacy prepare a Candidacy packet (call 314/977-2243 or email at philipponerm@slu.edu).
• A Candidacy Packet consists of an application for candidacy, a dissertation/project proposal/prospectus, a copy of these candidacy procedures, a Graduate Education Formatting Directive, and a memo regarding the style manual requested by the student’s major department.

• If humans or animals are involved in your research, you must go through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before you will be advanced to candidacy.

• The student completes the Application for Candidacy and the Project/Dissertation proposal outline and has them signed by the major department chairperson and the chairperson of the minor field(s), if applicable.

• The proposal/prospectus must be signed by all members of the dissertation/project committee (the “readers”), and the major field chairperson, and constitutes a formal agreement between the student and the major field that the topic and general approach are acceptable.

• Forming a Doctoral Committee: The dissertation/project committee consists of at least three members, all of who are members of the Graduate Faculty of St. Louis University, who are familiar with the topic of the dissertation/project. The membership of this committee may or may not overlap the membership of the student’s preliminary examination committee. If the major field chairperson recommends for the dissertation/project committee an individual who is not a member of the Graduate Faculty of Saint Louis University, the chairperson must contact the Dean/Director/Designee of your College/School/Center at the time he/she makes the recommendation.

• The complete set of forms (the application for candidacy, the Proposal/Prospectus for the project/dissertation proposal/prospectus, and the page with signatures & IRB number) is returned to the Candidacy Advisor’s office.

4. Advancement to Candidacy

• When the completed proposal is submitted to and approved by the Doctoral Candidacy Advisor and the doctoral committee is formalized, the student is advanced to candidacy and is notified by means of a letter, along with copies of the completed, signed candidacy application and the completed signature page of the proposal outline. These forms bear the date on which the student was advanced to candidacy. Copies are also forwarded to the chair of the doctoral committee and to the major-field chairperson. NOTE: All signatures on the proposal’s signature page and the application for candidacy must be original, not faxed copies or photocopies.
5. **Preparing for Dissertation Format Review and Oral Defense**
   - When the candidate, the dissertation chairperson and the readers agree that the dissertation/project is in its final form and ready to be formatted, the Candidate prepares it according to the most recent Graduate Education Formatting Directive and presents the final draft copy of the dissertation/project to the Doctoral Candidacy Advisor for a style and format review.
   - The Ph.D. degree candidate is required to defend the dissertation in a public forum. The date, time, and location of the presentation are determined by the candidate’s doctoral committee. The candidate must submit the “Notification of Readiness for the Public Oral Defense” form, signed by the Dissertation Chairperson, to Doctoral Candidacy Advisor at least two weeks in advance of the oral defense date. **At this time, the candidate must also submit the copy of the dissertation for style and format review.**

6. **Dissertation/Project Submission**
   - The committee in charge of the dissertation/project is responsible for forwarding two final copies of the dissertation/project and the four copies of the abstract, together with the signed ballots, to the Doctoral Candidacy Advisor. The completed ballots may indicate only total acceptance or rejection of the dissertation/project.
   - Once the dissertation committee members have submitted the dissertation/project and ballots, they cannot require any changes in the dissertation/project, nor can the student make any changes unless so directed by the Candidacy Advisor.
   - The ballots accepting of the dissertation are also assumed to indicate that the student has passed the public defense of the dissertation.
   - Dissertations/projects and ballots may be submitted to the Candidacy Advisor’s office at any time, including summers.
   - When the dissertation/project (two copies) and the ballots are received, the dissertation/project is checked by the Candidacy Advisor to see that the technical requirements regarding style and format have been met. If deficient in any of these requirements, the student is notified of and required to make the necessary corrections.

7. **Doctoral Degree Conferral**
   - Once the required corrections, completed forms, and receipt for payment of final fees are received in, the official degree conferral letter, signed by the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education, is sent to the student, and the student’s university records are appropriately annotated.
• The degree is conferred on the day that all requirements are met (all grades posted, the dissertation/project is turned in, ballots submitted), not the day a student defends his/her dissertation.

8. Commencement Information
Because preparation for the annual University Commencement in May requires advance notice in order to have diplomas prepared and programs printed, the following deadlines must be observed.

• For participation in May Commencement, a student must request candidacy papers from the Doctoral Candidacy Advisor sufficiently in advance to allow him/herself time to complete the forms, obtain the necessary signatures, obtain IRB approval (if necessary), and return the forms in time to meet the deadlines which appear in the Graduate Education supplement to the University calendar.

• Degree applications must be filed by a designated date in early February.

• Dissertations/projects, with the completed ballots, must be submitted to the Candidacy Advisor’s office by a designated date in early March.

• The corrections, final forms, and final fees must be submitted by a date in late April/early May.

Please consult the Graduate Education Calendar for the exact dates of these deadlines for the current year. The deadlines listed above apply to participation in Commencement, and not to the date of conferral. These deadlines are absolute; NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE ALLOWED.