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. The major field also sets the policy for the requirements to pass this exam.

- 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 Doctoral Oral Examination 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 includes 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 notice must be received in the candidacy advisor’s office (DuBourg Hall, room 420D) AT LEAST TEN (10) BUSINESS DAYS BEFORE THE ORAL EXAMINATION.

- A degree audit of the student’s record and a list of remaining requirements are prepared by the candidacy advisor. That and the oral ballots with the permission of the Associate Vice President, Graduate Education are sent to the committee chairperson with an extra copy of the degree audit to be given to the student after the oral.

- The oral examination must never take place without the official ballots

3. Application for Candidacy

- When a student receives notice from the AVP, Graduate Education that he/she has passed the oral examination, the student is eligible to request that the candidacy advisor prepare the candidacy packet (contact Rachel Philippone at 314/977-2243 or philipponerm@slu.edu).
• A candidacy packet consists of an Application for Candidacy, a copy of the doctoral candidacy procedures, a link to the Formatting Guide which includes the Format Check List, and a memo regarding the style manual requested by the student’s major department. It is sent to the student via email. Please note: the Dissertation Proposal/Prospectus is no longer required by this office.

• Forming a Doctoral Committee: The dissertation/project committee consists of at least three members, all of whom are members of the Graduate Faculty of Saint Louis University, and who are familiar with the topic of the dissertation/project. The chair of the committee must be a member of the student’s major department. 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 Associate Dean or Center Director of your College/School/Center at the time he/she makes the recommendation.

4. Advancement to Candidacy

• The student completes the Application for Candidacy by listing the chairperson of the dissertation committee and the other members and listing the date when the degree requirements are expected to be complete. He or she has it signed by the major department chairperson (and the chairperson of the minor field(s), if applicable). After the candidacy Advisor receives the form, the student is advanced to doctoral candidate status.

5. An Application for Degree

• The Application for Degree found on the Graduate Education website and under the links for Current Students and then Doctoral Students is due at the beginning of the semester in which the student is preparing to complete all of their degree requirements, including the dissertation defense, all coursework, practicum and the format review.


• When the candidate, the dissertation chairperson and the readers agree that the dissertation is in its final form and ready to be defended, the doctoral candidate prepares the dissertation according to the most recent Formatting Guide. Use the checklist which is found in the last six pages of the Guide as a final 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 the candidacy advisor at least two weeks in advance of the oral defense date.
• At this time, the student contacts the candidacy advisor to arrange an appointment for the format review. The format review is by appointment only and is to be scheduled for a date and time after the defense and after all required corrections are made to the dissertation.

• The dissertation committee sends the ballots to the candidacy advisor when the committee accepts the dissertation.

7. Electronic Dissertation Submission and Final Requirements

• After the format review appointment and after any additional corrections are made for formatting, the student will need to convert the document to a PDF file prior to submitting the document to Pro Quest/UMI. ProQuest digitally archives the dissertation and publishes the abstract via Dissertation Abstracts International.

• Submitting the dissertation to ProQuest is required before the degree can be awarded. Complete instructions will be given on the submission process at the format review appointment.

8. Doctoral Degree Conferral

• The degree is awarded by the Office of the Registrar on the day that all requirements are met (all grades posted, the dissertation is accepted on Pro Quest, and ballots received by the candidacy advisor), not the day a student defends his/her dissertation.