

**Process for Students Pursuing a
Doctor of Philosophy
Saint Louis University**

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 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. Not all programs require a written exam.
- When the written examination(s) has been passed, the major field department chairperson notifies the Doctoral Candidacy Advisor through the Doctoral Oral Examination Form

2. Oral Examination

- The Doctoral Oral Examination Form found on the Graduate Education website <http://www.slu.edu/graduateeducation> under the links for Current Students and then Doctoral Students is filed 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. This form is signed by the Dean, Associate Dean, or Center Director to indicate approval of the committee.
- 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 (found under the link for Forms and Petitions).
- 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.
- The Doctoral Candidacy Advisor prepares a Degree Audit Form for the student and advisor which will include a list of any requirements not met.
- The Degree Audit Form is sent to the student (via email) and a paper copy to the Doctoral Oral committee chairperson
- The Doctoral Candidacy Advisor prepares the Result Form which is sent only to the Doctoral Oral committee chairperson to report the committee's decision.

- If the committee's decision is Passing or Passing with Distinction, the student is notified of the results and is automatically advanced to doctoral candidate status
 - **Please note: the Dissertation Proposal/Prospectus is no longer required by this office, although a prospectus is required by all programs.**
- If the committee's decision is Unfavorable the student is notified of the results and a new Oral Exam will be scheduled at an appropriate time. The oral exam committee will include an outside committee member (a SLU faculty member from another program) in order to assure that policies and procedures are appropriately followed.
 - If the decision is Passing or Passing with Distinction, the student is notified of the results and is automatically advanced to doctoral candidate status
 - If the committee's decision is Unfavorable the student is notified of the results and a third exam is rarely approved.
- The oral examination must never take place before the Degree Audit Form is initiated by the doctoral candidacy advisor.

3. Completing the Degree Audit Form

- The Degree Audit Form lists any requirements not met and has space for the student or advisor to list any course substitutions, waivers, or exception.
- Completing the expected graduation date: if this date does not fall within the “Time to complete degree requirements” on the Degree Audit Form, extension(s) will be required. Refer to extension of time information found in the Graduation Requirements section of the *Graduate Catalog*
- There also is a space for the student to list the proposed dissertation committee chairperson and members.

- *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.
- Listing the dissertation title. This will be the proposed title for the dissertation and can change as work on your dissertation progresses.
- The Degree Audit Form is not to be submitted for signatures and approvals until all sections can be completed.

4. Applying to Graduate and have Degree Awarded

- Instructions for the on-line Application for Degree through Banner Self-Service are found on the **Graduate Education** website under the links for **Current Students** and then **Doctoral Students**. Students should complete this on-line application at the beginning of the semester in which the student is preparing to complete all of the degree requirements, including the dissertation defense, all coursework, practica, internships, the format review, and submission of the dissertation to Pro Quest/UMI for electronic archiving.

5. Preparing for Dissertation Public Oral Defense and the Format Review

- When the doctoral 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* (found on the link for Current Students). There is a Format Checklist found at the end of the *Guide* to be used 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 and the doctoral candidate. The candidate and committee chair 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.
 - The Doctoral Candidacy Advisor will prepare two Result Forms. One is for the defense of the dissertation and the other is for the dissertation itself.
 - If the committee's decision is Passing or Passing with Distinction for the defense, the committee chairperson can notify the student of the result and 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 completed Result Forms are sent to the doctoral candidacy advisor to convey the result of the defense and acceptance of the dissertation (the Result Form for the dissertation can be delayed until the written dissertation is considered acceptable by the committee).
 - If the committee's decision is Unfavorable for the defense, the student is notified of the results immediately and a new defense will be scheduled at an appropriate time. A new Notification of Readiness is prepared and will include an outside committee member (a SLU faculty member from another program). This additional committee member will be added to the committee in order to assure that policies and procedures are appropriately followed.

- The Doctoral Candidacy Advisor will prepare the Result Form for the second dissertation defense.
 - If at the second defense, the committee's decision is Passing or Passing with Distinction for the defense and the dissertation, the committee chairperson can notify the student of the result and 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 Result Forms are sent to the doctoral candidacy advisor to convey the result of the defense and acceptance of the dissertation (the Result Form for the dissertation can be delayed until the dissertation is considered acceptable by the committee).
 - If at the second defense, the committee's decision is Unfavorable for the defense, the student is notified immediately and will need to discuss with committee chair and graduate program director the option of defending a third time.

6. Electronic Dissertation Submission and Final Requirements

- The format review appointment is held after the defense of the dissertation and all changes are made to the dissertation that were required by the committee.
- 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/UMI is required before the degree can be awarded. Complete instructions will be given on the submission process at the format review appointment.

7. Doctoral Degree Conferral

- The degree is awarded by the Office of Registrar only on the published date(s) during the semester when all degrees are awarded and all requirements are met (all grades posted, the dissertation is accepted on Pro Quest, and the Result Form received by the candidacy advisor), not on the day a student defends his/her dissertation.