

THESIS & DISSERTATION PROCESSES AND DEADLINES

Though departments may take on administrative tasks to assist their students, the **student** is responsible for understanding the processes and deadlines of their graduate career. This is communicated to all new graduate students at Orientation. As required by university policy, any and all university communication may only be sent to the student's NAU email account. Processes, checklists, and resources can be found on the Graduate College ETD website: <https://nau.edu/graduate-college/thesis-and-dissertation/>.

All forms can be found on the Graduate College Forms website (Dissertation Committee forms, candidacy, oral defense forms): <https://nau.edu/graduate-college/forms/>

Please be aware that for all doctoral and master's students:

- Passing grades for Thesis (699) or Dissertation (799) credits will not be entered on the student's transcripts until the final, approved document is uploaded to ProQuest.
- Summer defenses are **STRONGLY** discouraged. Faculty are not on contract during the summer months and therefore, are not obligated to be available to students.
- Please contact the ETD coordinator or the Associate Dean at the Graduate College with any questions. We are happy to help.

DOCTORAL TRACK

Step 1 - Forming of the Dissertation Committee

1. Dissertation committees should be formed within the first year of study at NAU.
2. The committee **MUST** be approved **BEFORE** a prospectus defense. To not do so risks a non-approval of the committee by the dean, thus, negating the composition of the prospectus committee and approval of the prospectus.
3. The Dissertation Committee Recommendation form should be submitted to ETD@nau.edu for approval by the Graduate College Dean. All requested materials must be included, as outlined on the form. **ALWAYS** download the form directly from the Graduate College website to avoid outdated versions.
4. Once received, the Graduate College will evaluate and issue an official approval memorandum.

Step 2 – Applying for Candidacy

Students can apply for candidacy after the student has:

1. Completed all coursework with the exception of dissertation units or internship. A student is considered ABD (All But Dissertation) at this point.
2. Completed residency requirements
3. Completed the language or research requirement (if applicable)
4. Passed comprehensive exams
5. Has successfully defended the prospectus
6. Completed any requirements for candidacy that are specific to their department

Students should apply for candidacy well in advance of the graduating semester.

Students must include an updated and signed [Program of Study](#) listing all courses that will be used to fulfill the degree requirements with the candidacy application.

A candidacy application **CANNOT** be submitted at the same time as the defense scheduling form. Ideally, a candidacy application should be submitted well before the graduating term. To apply for candidacy late in the graduating term is problematic and negates the function and meaning of doctoral candidacy.

Step 3 – Scheduling a Doctoral Defense

The committee chair or student must submit the Dissertation Defense Scheduling Form to ETD@nau.edu at least 10 business days prior to the defense date. **This is a strict deadline.**

The ETD Coordinator will work to secure a University Graduate Committee (UGC) member to sit in on the defense. The role of the UGC member is to represent the Graduate College Dean and ensure that defenses are conducted in a manner consistent with the expectations and standards of the Graduate College.

Doctoral defenses are not permitted in the last two weeks of term. Deadlines can be found on the [Graduate College website](#).

“HOMESTRETCH” FOR GRADUATING DOCTORAL STUDENTS:

1. Submit the Defense Scheduling form at least 10 business days before the defense.
2. Submit the dissertation for format check to ETD@nau.edu 10 business days before the defense.
3. After the defense, the committee chair must submit the Oral Defense Part 1 form to ETD Coordinator within 48 hours of defense. This is the Pass/Fail form and lists any required revisions.
4. The student then resubmits their dissertation with revisions to the committee for review and approval.
5. If the revisions are approved, the committee chair will submit the Oral Defense Part 2 form to the ETD Coordinator. This form also notes the student's copyright selections.
6. When the student receives a copy of the Oral Defense Part 2 form from their committee chair, the student will upload the final version of the dissertation to ProQuest.
7. All Ph.D. students must complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates found on ProQuest. It is a short survey, but it is a requirement for their degree. Ed.D. students do not need to fill out the survey.
8. The student should ensure that they have successfully applied for graduation in their Louie- Student Service Center.

ALL OF THESE STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED BY END-OF-BUSINESS DAY ON THE LAST DAY OF TERM TO BE ELIGIBLE TO GRADUATE.

THESIS TRACK

The Graduate College is not involved in the scheduling of defenses for thesis students nor the forming of thesis committees. However, **thesis defenses are not permitted the last week of term.** Deadlines can be found on the [Graduate College website](#).

“HOMESTRETCH” FOR GRADUATING MASTER’S STUDENTS:

1. Submit the thesis for format check to ETD@nau.edu 10 business days before the defense.
2. After the defense, the committee chair must submit the Oral Defense Part 1 form to ETD Coordinator within 48 hours of defense. This is the Pass/Fail form and lists any required revisions.
3. The student then resubmits their thesis with revisions to the committee for review and approval.
4. If the revisions are approved, the committee chair will submit the Oral Defense Part 2 form to the ETD Coordinator. This form also notes the student's copyright selections.
5. When the student receives a copy of the Oral Defense Part 2 form from their committee chair, the student will upload the final version of the thesis to ProQuest.
6. The student should ensure that they have successfully applied for graduation in their Louie- Student Service Center.

ALL OF THESE STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED BY END-OF-BUSINESS DAY ON THE LAST DAY OF TERM TO BE ELIGIBLE TO GRADUATE.