

University Graduate Committee Representative Checklist Doctoral Dissertation Defenses

University Graduate Committee Representative Role*:

The role of the University Graduate Committee (UGC) representative is to represent the Dean of the Graduate College and ensure that examinations are conducted in a manner consistent with expectations and standards of the Graduate College.

The UGC Rep is responsible for:

1. Clarifying policy and procedures when necessary.
2. Observing the fairness of the examination.
3. Conducting the voting process for the pass/fail decision and reporting results to the committee.
4. In the case of a pass decision, going over the *Student Reminders* section listed in the During the Defense section.
5. Reporting the results of the examination to the Graduate College and completing two additional reports on professionalism, adherence to academic standards, and outcome of the examination:
 - Report to the Dean
 - Dissertation Writing Survey

***If no UGC representative is in attendance, the committee chair shall perform these responsibilities.**

PRIOR TO THE DEFENSE

- Review the electronic copy of the dissertation (provided by the student) for completeness and readiness for defense (expected sections/info, grammar, typos). The student is not held responsible for design flaws approved in the prospectus; problems in the design should be brought to the attention of the Dean of the Graduate College in the Dissertation Writing Survey.
- Ensure that voting committee members have your email and/or your cell number for the secret vote.
- Determine how you will collect the members' signatures for the Part 1 form: the electronic option (preferred) or the print & scan option; see below. If using the electronic option, download the Part 1 form and save it to your computer. Full instructions on our website: <https://nau.edu/graduate-college/forms/>.

DURING THE DEFENSE

For any unexpected events, call the Graduate College at: 928-523-8254 (ETD Coordinator); 523-5316 (Front Office); 523-5019 (Associate Dean)

- Ask the committee members to affirm the readiness for defense. If the candidate is not ready or if committee members are not all present, the defense is rescheduled (unless the Graduate College approved in advance and in writing that the defense could go forward in the absence of a member).
- The Chair or UGC Representative reviews procedures. General suggested procedure:
 - Candidate presents an outline of the study and its relevance
 - Questioning by committee members
 - Discussion and vote
 - Counting of ballots and announcement of results
- The Chair decides if clarifying questions will be allowed during the presentation and by whom (e.g., guests, committee members only).
- When the exam portion of the defense begins, the chair asks all guests to exit the room.

- After the questioning by the committee members, the chair asks the candidate to exit the room.
- The committee discusses the candidate's performance and any suggested revisions or changes.
- Following the committee's discussion of the candidate's performance, the UGC Representative conducts the secret ballot vote. **(The UGC Representative does not vote.)** For voting members attending remotely, committee members should email [or text] their secret vote to the UGC Rep.
- The UGC Representative announces the results and informs the members whether the student passed the examination (4/5 or 3/4 pass votes).

If the student **passes** the defense with only MINOR changes:

- The UGC Representative records the number of Pass and Fail votes on the *Final Oral Examination (Thesis/Dissertation Defense) - Part 1 Pass/Fail Form*
- The UGC Rep (or the committee chair) notes the revisions/changes on the *Final Oral Examination (Thesis/Dissertation Defense) - Part 1 Pass/Fail Form* and specifies on the form which committee member(s) will verify that the revisions/changes are made prior to submission of the final copy of the dissertation to ProQuest.

Committee members and UGC Representative sign the form. There are 2 options.

Option 1: (electronic option, preferred): While still at the defense, the UGC Rep downloads the blank Part 1 form from the Grad College website, electronically records the vote, saves the form and emails the form to the committee chair for their electronic signature, then saves the form, and sends to the next committee member, etc. After the last committee member signs the form, the member will email the electronically signed form back to the UGC Rep for the UGC Rep's signature and submission of the completed and fully signed form to ETD@nau.edu. To ensure that the form is submitted to the Graduate College within 48 hours of the defense, this procedure should be completed in the moment, during the defense.

Option 2:(print and scan option): The UGC Rep prints the form and, with the permission of the committee members who are attending remotely, signs it on behalf of committee members: this is formally done by writing p.p. (Latin for per procurationem, meaning power has been delegated to sign on behalf) followed by the UGC Representative's signature on the signature line and the committee members' names printed on the appropriate line (please see example below).

For example:

Signatures of the Committee

pp UGC Rep Signature

pp Mary Smith

Printed Names

Remote Member's Name

John Doe

- Following the secret vote and committee members' signatures on the Part 1 form, the candidate is called back in to hear the results.

The UGC Rep goes over important **Student Reminders:**

- In order to graduate in the defending term, the student must upload the revised and final dissertation (approved by the committee with the submission of the Oral Defense Part 2 form) by the last day of term. Submitting the final dissertation beyond the [term deadline](#), will defer the posting of the student's degree to the following term. The student will then be required to submit a new graduation application and enroll for at least 1 unit of 799 in that following term to comply with the [Continuous Enrollment](#) policy. A student can submit final revisions within six months of the defense date but must enroll for at least 1 unit of 799 for each term within that [six month](#) period, apply for the appropriate future term graduation and may be required to resit the defense.

- If the student **does not pass** the defense or if there are MAJOR problems with the dissertation (e.g. the student needs to rewrite an entire chapter or reanalyze data):
 - The UGC Representative records the number of Pass and Fail votes on *Final Oral Examination (Thesis/Dissertation Defense) - Part 1 Pass/Fail Form*.
 - Committee members must note on the *Final Oral Examination (Thesis/Dissertation Defense) - Part 1 Pass/Fail Form* the major problems with the dissertation or the oral examination.
 - Committee members and UGC Representative sign the form. See above for the 2 options for collecting signatures.
 - Following the secret vote, the candidate is called back in to hear the results.
 - The student is advised of the deficiencies and of the need to reschedule the defense after the problems are corrected.
 - The UGC Representative informs the student that this will be considered a first defense and that the student will have only one more opportunity to pass the defense. The committee chair must complete a new Dissertation Defense Scheduling Form to begin the process again.

AFTER THE DEFENSE

- Return the *Final Oral Examination (Thesis/Dissertation Defense) - Part 1 Pass/Fail Form*, on which the vote is recorded and the committee members have signed to etd@nau.edu **within 48 hours of the defense**.
- Fill out the [Report to the Dean](#) and the [Dissertation Writing Survey](#) and submit both to etd@nau.edu as soon as possible.

**THANK YOU FOR THIS IMPORTANT SERVICE ON BEHALF OF THE DEAN OF THE GRADUATE COLLEGE AND
NAU GRADUATE STUDENTS!**