

Frost Centre for Canadian Studies & Indigenous Studies  
Requirements & Timing Ahead of an PhD Dissertation Oral Defence

Once the supervisory committee has provided unofficial approval dissertation:

1. Student will make sure all members on internal committee have final copy of the dissertation.
2. Supervisor will inform the Frost Centre Office that all members of the dissertation supervision committee have a copy of the dissertation and that the oral exam is imminent. Frost Center Office will send a copy of the **Pre-Examination Thesis/Dissertation Approval Form (Step 1)** to each member of the internal committee to sign indicating that the dissertation can be sent to the External Examiners. The dissertation will not be sent until all forms have been collected.
3. The Supervisor will provide to the Director
  - a. ranked list of up to three possible External Examiners, including contact details (bio URL, email)
  - b. ranked list of up to three possible Internal Examiners (Trent faculty that are members of Graduate Faculty)
  - c. targeted time frame for the defence, for example “We are hoping for a defence in December”. Keep in mind that we need to allow the externals to have the dissertation for 4-6 weeks before a defence – and we prefer to require their judgement as to whether or not the dissertation can go forward to defence 1 week before the defence. (so in reality, the external has the document for 3-5 weeks) unless they agree to something quicker – which some do. But it is important to let them know what we are hoping in terms of timing right from the get-go
  - d. Title of thesis, and abstract
4. The Director will contact the External Examiner to determine availability. If the preferred candidate is unavailable, the Director will contact the next person on the list, consulting again with the Supervisor if unsuccessful.
5. The Director will contact an Internal Examiner to determine availability. This step can sometimes take place once a tentative defence date is established.
6. Once the External Examiner has been secured, the Frost Centre Office will
  - a. Ensure copy of dissertation is sent to Externals – must have for 4-6 weeks
  - b. Ensure dissertation defence package of information is sent to Externals
  - c. Coordinate the date, time and location for the oral defence.
7. Externals submit Step 2 Form to Director/FC Office

8. FC office communicates results to Director; Committee; Student
9. FC office secures a Chair for the oral defence
10. FC office arranges announcement of defence (facebook, email, TrentU events page, posters)
11. FC Office coordinates Chair's Defence Folder. It will include a) **Dissertation Approval Form**, b) **Dissertation Defence Report**, c) Card for student, d) Frost Centre pen.
12. Defence takes place.
13. The Supervisor will make sure that required revisions are completed by the agreed upon date. Supervisor to inform Director that required revisions have been satisfied.
14. Student completes final steps as required by Graduate Studies Office (submission of final copy, signing of licence etc. – please refer to GSO webpage section for complete instructions on "final steps")
15. FC Office to confirm completion of all degree requirements. Director communicates this directly to Grad Studies Office. As of this date, the student is considered to have finished.

#### An example of timing:

- Final draft of Dissertation to Committee Members: mid-July
- Committee Members Step I Forms due to office: beginning of August
- Director makes official request to external: beginning of August
- Thesis to Externals: beginning of August
- External Step II Forms due: beginning or middle of September
- Defence: mid- or late- September
- Revisions must be completed and approved by September 27 if you are hoping to be done before the fee deadline (September 28)

NB: 1) the dissertation copy that is sent to the externals must be the version that was signed off by the committee 2) the externals must have a minimum of four weeks with the document unless they have agreed to a compressed timeframe that must have been suggested from the initial contact