

GUIDELINES FOR, AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF, THE DOCTORAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION AND THE DOCTORAL FINAL EXAMINATION

The Preliminary Examination:

The Preliminary Examination is essentially an oral examination on a proposed dissertation topic and the student's academic preparation. The examination is to be taken by the end of the 8th semester, and not later than end of the 9th semester. All required coursework for the Ph.D. must be completed. The exam is administered by a committee which is appointed by the Graduate College in accordance with submitted departmental request.

The Dissertation Proposal:

The written dissertation proposal shall be no more than 20 double spaced pages in length including introductory pages, figures, etc. It should include: statement of proposed research, its objectives and significance; a brief review of previous work on related research; and a short discussion of tentative methods of analysis and / or experimentation. There are no specific format requirements for the proposal.

The Final Examination:

The Final Examination consists of an oral defense of the dissertation and is administered by the doctoral committee. The examination is open to the public. The Final Examination to be taken no earlier than six months following the Preliminary Examination for ME students, and not later than the end of the 13th semester. TAM students may schedule a Final Defense at the discretion of their academic advisor, but should not be later than the end of the 13th semester.

The Dissertation:

Detailed instructions for the preparation and completion of the thesis dissertation are available from the Graduate College website, www.grad.illinois.edu/graduate-college-thesis-requirements . Links to other information and resources for developing theses and dissertations may be found at www.grad.illinois.edu/thesis-dissertation .

The Examination Committee:

This committee shall have a minimum of four faculty members from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with at least one member not from the department of the candidate. Committee members from outside the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign are welcome, but would serve in addition to the four University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign committee members.

Three of the committee members must be listed as Graduate Faculty members and two must be tenured (Associate Professor or Professor). The committee should include faculty members from more than one area of specialization.

The "Chair" must be a member of the Graduate Faculty from the candidates department and may also be the Director of Dissertation Research. The chair is responsible for convening the committee, conducting the examination, and submitting the Certificate of Result to the department in which the student is enrolled.

A "Contingent Chair," if designated must be a member of the Graduate Faculty. The Contingent Chair serves if the original chair is unable to serve for any reason.

The Director of Dissertation Research is responsible for guiding/advising the student in their thesis research as part of an ongoing research project. He/ she may also discuss a tentative course of study or recommend a sequence of courses the student can take reflecting the interest of the student.

A Department Affiliate cannot serve as a "Chair" or a "Contingent Chair" of a Preliminary Examination or Final Examination Committee. Only faculty members of the Department of Mechanical Science and Engineering may serve in that capacity.

If a proposed voting member is not on the Graduate Faculty, a letter of justification from the Committee Chair needs to accompany Attachment A or C. This justification letter should include information about the proposed member's expertise in the area of research and association to the candidate. Non-voting members, such as an external reader, a member of the faculty who is off campus, or others who can make a significant contribution to the research, may be appointed. A letter of justification is not needed to appoint a non-voting member to the committee.

Both Voting and non-voting committee members may sign the "Certificate of Committee Approval" form that becomes part of the thesis document. Only the voting members of the dissertation committee sign the Certificate of Result.

If, for some reason, your examination committee has to be changed (committee member dropped or added, etc.), please inform the Graduate Programs Office immediately. A new "Request to Appoint a Doctoral Examination Committee" form must be submitted to the Graduate College (Form A or C).

Scheduling and Timing of the Preliminary and Final Examinations:

1. **At least three (3) weeks prior to the proposed PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION date**, the candidate must provide the Graduate Programs Office with the information requested in Attachment A.
2. **At least one (1) week prior to the proposed PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION date**, the candidate must provide the Graduate Programs Office with the information requested in Attachment B.

(It is preferred to hold the exam via zoom – but should the student and committee wish to meet in person for a Preliminary exam, this is allowable. You would need to contact mechse-ssso@illinois.edu to schedule a room.

3. **Within six (6) months after successful completion of the preliminary examination, and at least three (3) weeks prior to the proposed date of the Final Examination**, the candidate must provide the Graduate Programs Office with the information requested in Attachment C.
4. **At least two (1) week prior to the FINAL EXAMINATION date**, the candidate must provide the Graduate Programs Office with the information requested in Attachment D.
5. At least (1) week prior to the Final Examination date the candidate should provide the Graduate Programs Office with a pdf of the abstract, the 1 paragraph "Research Summary" in word doc. format and the zoom link information

(The final examination should be held via zoom. If the student and the committee wish to meet in person, they can do that, and a room can be arranged by contacting mechse-ssso@illinois.edu. However, a zoom must still be set up for other viewers to attend the defense.)

THE DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING REQUIRES A MINIMUM OF SIX MONTHS BETWEEN THE PRELIMINARY AND FINAL EXAMINATIONS

Following the Examinations:

After completion of the Preliminary examination, the Committee Chair should e-mail Kathy Smith in the Graduate Programs Office (cc the committee) the following information:

1) Date of the exam, 2) Result of the exam, 3) Names of committee members

After completion of the final examination, the Committee Chair should e-mail Kathy Smith in the Graduate Programs Office (cc the committee) with the following information:

1) Date of the exam, 2) Result of the exam, 3) Names of committee members, 4) How each committee member voted, and indicate if the document is accepted by the committee to deposit, or if there are revisions that must be completed.

Once any revisions have been made and the committee approves the document, the student should submit it as a pdf to the Graduate Programs Office for the department format review.

ATTACHMENT A

NAME _____ UIN: _____

LOCAL ADDRESS (not MechSE Department) _____

APPROXIMATE DATE OF EXAMINATION _____

AREA OF SPECIALIZATION _____

PRELIMINARY EXAM COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

| <u>VOTING MEMBERS:</u> | <u>RANK</u> | <u>Department</u> | <u>Specialization</u> | <u>Graduate Faculty Member</u> | <u>Tenured</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--|----------------|
| Chair | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Contingent Chair | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Director of Dissertation Research | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
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NON-VOTING MEMBERS:

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Attach a letter of justification, if needed, as described in the Guidelines.

**THIS FORM SHOULD BE RETURNED TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAMS OFFICE NO LATER
THAN THREE (3) WEEKS PRIOR TO THE PROPOSED DATE OF THE EXAM.**

Advisor Signature

Date

ATTACHMENT B

NAME _____

DATE OF PRELIMINARY EXAM _____

TIME _____

ROOM /ZOOM Link: _____

Attach a copy of your Preliminary Examination Dissertation Proposal and **return this form as a pdf to the Graduate Programs Office no later than one (1) week prior to the preliminary examination date.**

Dissertation Proposal Title: (Please type, do not hand write)

ATTACHMENT C

NAME _____ UIN: _____

LOCAL ADDRESS (not MechSE Department) _____

APPROXIMATE DATE OF EXAMINATION _____

AREA OF SPECIALIZATION _____

FINAL EXAM COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

| <u>VOTING MEMBERS:</u> | <u>RANK</u> | <u>Department</u> | <u>Specialization</u> | <u>Graduate Faculty Member</u> | <u>Tenured</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--|----------------|
| Chair | | | | | |
| Contingent Chair | | | | | |
| Director of Dissertation Research | | | | | |
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NON-VOTING MEMBERS:

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Attach a letter of justification, if needed, as described in the Guidelines.

**THIS FORM SHOULD BE RETURNED TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAMS OFFICE NO LATER
THAN THREE (3) WEEKS PRIOR TO THE PROPOSED DATE OF THE EXAM.**

Advisor Signature

Date

ATTACHMENT D

NAME _____

DATE OF EXAMINATION _____

TIME _____

ZOOM Link _____

MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY _____

DISSERTATION TITLE (Please type, do not hand write):

The abstract in pdf format, the 1 paragraph “Research Summary” in word doc. format, as well as this form, **MUST BE RETURNED TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAMS OFFICE NO LATER THAN 1 week PRIOR TO THE DATE OF THE FINAL EXAMINATION.**

A copy of your thesis should be given to the Committee **AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE DATE OF THE FINAL EXAMINATION.**