



Guidelines for a Successful Doctoral Dissertation Defense

Preparation

- **At least one month in advance of defense:** set a date that is approved by entire committee (3 advisory members and 2 readers, typically the same faculty members who made up your examining committee for the General Examination).
 - The defense should occur at least two weeks prior to the Graduate School thesis deadline ([check UConn academic calendar](#))
 - If the defense is in person: book a room with the music Program Assistant (music@uconn.edu)
 - Then, [submit the defense date to Graduate school](#)
 - Note: The defense must be public — that is, it should be open to the public and should be **posted** on the UConn online events calendar **for at least 2 weeks prior to the defense date**
- **At least 2 weeks before** defense, submit final draft of the dissertation to the committee as a single document (PDF or Word — check the preference of your committee) for review
- Prepare a 30-40 minute presentation of your work which includes background and methods, findings, significance of findings, overview of potential future work
 - We recommend a PowerPoint presentation that may include live performance, sound examples, score/diagrams, and/or handouts
 - The presentation should be aimed toward a knowledgeable general audience

The Defense

The defense is usually a two-hour session that constitutes five phases:

- Phase 1: Introductions and a 30-40 minute presentation of your work (see above)
- Phase 2: A public question and answer session
- Phase 3: A private question and answer session of the candidate by the committee; the public will leave the room before this phase
- Phase 4: Committee deliberation and voting; the candidate will leave the room before this phase
- Phase 5: The candidate is asked to return to the room, where the committee reports the results to the candidate

After the defense:

The following steps must be taken after the defense:

- Candidate submits [Report of the Final Examination](#) (a Quali form) for the Advisory Committee and additional readers to approve
- The candidate [submits any additional necessary paperwork](#)
- The candidate revises the final draft and [submits final dissertation](#) to the Graduate School