



THE FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION

Guidelines from the *Graduate Handbook* Chapter 3: The Doctoral Degree, Section L - Final Examination:

The Examination

- The examination is a public oral examination normally lasting about two hours, at which the candidate presents and defends the dissertation.
- All members of the examining committee (or substitutes appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School) are expected to be present throughout the examination.
- At least three-fourths of the examining committee including substitutes appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School must approve the candidate's performance before he or she is deemed to have passed. A refusal to vote by the chairperson or any other member of the examining committee shall be recorded as a negative vote.
- With the permission of at least three-fourths of the committee, a failed oral examination may be retaken, but no sooner than three months from the date of the failure.

Responsibilities of the Outside Chair

- Conduct the final exam in an orderly manner.
- Evaluate the candidate's performance and cast a vote.
- Evaluate the examination as a test of the candidate's overall performance.
- Submit the final ballot to the Graduate School and other reports as appropriate or required. If the ballot is not returned to the Graduate School within 24 hours, please notify the Graduate School with justification.

Please submit the final examination ballot to the Graduate School and complete the [online evaluation form](#).