Procedures for the Oral Defense of the Dissertation

A public oral defense of the dissertation is required of all doctoral candidates. This final step in the doctoral program focuses on the candidate's research and how it is reported in the dissertation.

Preliminary Review

When the dissertation is completed to the satisfaction of the committee chair, the candidate will submit copies to committee members for their review. Review by committee members will note any errors, with particular focus on the content of the dissertation. The committee chair will arbitrate any disputes over what changes are necessary and will determine its defensibility.

Announcement of the Defense

At least two weeks in advance of the defense, the chair will inform the graduate dean by memorandum, and the University academic community by an announcement in the appropriate media, of the date, time, and place of the oral defense, including an invitation to members of the public. If arrangements for the defense must be changed, the chair will in like manner notify the graduate dean, the candidate, members of the dissertation committee, and the academic community.

The Defense

The chair and all members of the dissertation committee must be present at the defense (in person or by conference call). The defense will be open to the public. The chair presides over the defense and is responsible for the conduct of the oral presentation. The format of the defense must include an opportunity for each committee member, including the chair, to question the candidate. Each committee member must be satisfied that the research problem is of appropriate significance, that the research is appropriately exhaustive, that the research methodology constitutes good practice, and that the conclusions drawn from it are accurate, reliable, and defensible. After completion of questioning by the committee, the chair will invite questions from the audience. If, during the defense, any inappropriate incident occurs, or if any serious controversy develops among members of the committee, or if inappropriate informality is evident, the chair shall intervene, excuse the candidate, resolve the issue, and secure assent as to procedure before recalling the candidate and resuming the presentation. If the issue cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the presentation will be recessed or postponed, and the problem will be resolved in consultation with the department head/school director, college dean, and graduate dean. The student must be informed that the decision has been made to defer, and that resolution of the problem will be communicated within thirty days.

Approval of the Defense and Dissertation

Committee deliberations regarding the quality of the oral defense are in "executive session." After the committee is satisfied that all its questions, and those of the audience, have been answered, the candidate and audience are asked to leave the room. The chair will poll each committee member individually whether the dissertation has been successfully defended. The candidate will not be passed if there are any negative votes. Abstentions will be considered negative votes. The Committee will report its decision by signing the Oral Defense and Dissertation Approval Form, which is then forwarded to the dean of the Graduate School. After the committee has made its determination, the candidate will then be recalled and the chair will present the committee's report. If the candidate has failed, the chair will indicate to the candidate and to the Graduate School (under the "Recommendations" section) what additional work the candidate must do before a second presentation is held. The second presentation may not be held until at least one full semester has elapsed, but must be held within one calendar year following the first presentation. The second presentation is final. After a successful defense, the candidate may be required by the chair to make final revisions to the dissertation before submission to the Graduate School for final edit. The Graduate School editor's responsibility is to assure that the manuscript conforms to the guidelines of the Dissertation Manual, the applicable style guide as determined by the chair, and the formal requirements of publication, and will provide suggestions for correcting any stylistic or mechanical errors. The doctoral degree is formally awarded when the dean of the Graduate School has signed the Oral Defense and Dissertation Approval Form and the dissertation approval page. Committee chair will send Change of Grade Forms for dissertation credits to the Office of Records and Registration.

Rev. 9/07
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Graduate School

Oral Defense of the Dissertation Approval Form

Candidate__________________________ Date____________

Student ID# ______________________

Dissertation Title______________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

ORAL DEFENSE

Date________________ Time___________ Place________________

After review of the dissertation, and on the basis of the oral defense of the work presented in the dissertation, the doctoral committee certifies that the candidate:

[ ] Satisfactorily passed the oral defense of the dissertation
[ ] Did not satisfactorily pass the oral defense of the dissertation

Recommendations______________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Committee Signature:

Chair: ______________________________

Members: ___________________________ __________________________

Member approved by the Graduate School: ________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

DISSERTATION

I have read and approve the content of this dissertation, and hereby declare the candidate has completed the written requirements of the degree.

Chair: ______________________________

Members: ___________________________ __________________________

Member approved by the Graduate School: ________________________________

Dean’s Signature: ______________________ Date________________

Original goes to Records and Registration, copies go to committee chair and Graduate School student file.
APPROVAL

A Study of Effective Change Efforts
in Michigan Public School Districts

Eileen Hoffman

APPROVED:

_________________________________________ Date
Beverley Geltzer, PhD
Dissertation Chair

_________________________________________ Date
Jaelynn Tracy, PhD
Committee Member

_________________________________________ Date
Carol Haddad, PhD
Committee Member

_________________________________________ Date
Bert Greene, PhD
Graduate School Representative

_________________________________________ Date
James Berry, PhD
Department Head

_________________________________________ Date
Deborah de Laski-Smith, PhD
Interim Dean of the Graduate School