

2022-23 Covid 19  
Pandemic  
Addendum to the **Graduate  
English Guidelines for the  
Preparation of  
Ph.D. Theses**

**Graduate English Department  
University of Toronto**

*(This document was produced using the SGS Thesis MS Word Template available here:  
<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/academic-progress/program-completion/formatting/> )*

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## 11 Submission of the Thesis to the Department

In consideration of the limitations and restrictions put on in-person meetings during the pandemic, the Department of English and the School of Graduate Studies have modified the procedures to accommodate the public health requirements of the current situation. The Department of English is allowing digital submission of dissertations in advance of Final Oral Exams (FOEs), and the School of Graduate Studies is allowing both modified in-person or “hybrid” examinations and on-line or “remote” examinations, both until further notice. These exceptions to SGS requirements are subject to change at minimal notice depending upon public health requirements at the time of submission and examination.

The candidate should begin by emailing MS WORD drafts of their Curriculum Vitae and Abstract to the Director and the Graduate Assistant. This should happen at least a month before the candidate plans to submit. **The Abstract must be no longer than 350 words** (excluding title, name, etc.) and should list the degree or date as “Expected,” until after the Oral Examination has been successfully completed and the candidate is submitting the dissertation to the School of Graduate Studies. Please refer to the SGS **Producing Your Thesis > Formatting** page, <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/current-students/program-completion/formatting/>. The candidate’s Academic CV should include their prospective PhD degree, thesis title, supervisor, and committee members. The Abstract and CV are used to secure an external appraiser and therefore should include any related academic activities.

In order to secure an external appraiser, the Director may suggest edits to both the Abstract and the CV. The final version of the Abstract and CV are then emailed in PDF format to the Director and the Graduate Assistant, and the final version of the Abstract is incorporated back into the dissertation.

Once the supervisor and other committee members agree that the thesis has been completed to their satisfaction, the supervisor then emails the Director of Graduate Studies, stating that the thesis is ready for examination and suggesting

names of a minimum of four to five external examiners and two to three potential Departmental examiners.

The candidate would normally be required to submit six copies of the thesis, printed single-sided, not stapled or bound, in a thesis box to the Department Assistant.

However, during the pandemic, it has not been possible to always accept submissions of dissertations, nor to provide hard-copies of dissertations to the committee members. Therefore, **until further notice, we are requesting a final PDF of the dissertation to be submitted to the Graduate Assistant (again, this exception to the requirement is subject to change, as the pandemic situation is ongoing and evolving. Please check with the Graduate Assistant to confirm the required format before submitting).** The dissertation PDF must be formatted as per the instructions in the *Graduate English Guidelines for the Preparation of Ph.D. Theses*, and the entire file should be between 1 and 3 MB in size. (If you have a dissertation with a number of coloured illustrations, it could be up to 8 to 10 MB in size but may need to be submitted via a shared drive.) Please contact the Graduate Assistant if you need assistance with producing this version of your thesis.

During the pandemic, all candidates who are scheduled for either a hybrid or a remote Final Oral Exam will be required to complete an attestation form, stating that they agree to their Final Oral Exam being held remotely.

The oral examination takes place, under normal circumstances, about ten to thirteen weeks after the submission of the thesis to the Department; however, during the pandemic this length of time may be weeks longer. The summer months and the holiday break in December and January create major exceptions to this timing: no defences occur during the SGS “black-out period in December – January, and **Final Oral Examinations are not scheduled in July and August except for emergency situations.** Also, note that it may be difficult to schedule committee members for late May or for June.

Other factors that may influence the timing of the oral examination, include delays in securing an external examiner and the external examiner’s own schedule.

Candidates are advised to speak with the Director of Graduate Studies at least one or two months before the planned submission.

## 12 The Oral Examination

Please note that during the Covid 19 pandemic, SGS and the Department of English exclusively hosted all Final Oral Examinations via ZOOM teleconferencing and no “in-person” exams were allowed. We used a secure passcode protected version of ZOOM with a “Waiting Room,” to control access to the exam and to where we could virtually “withdraw” the candidate during deliberations.

**The Oral Examination committee is appointed by the School of Graduate Studies on the advice of the Department, which makes arrangements for the examination.**

The Oral Examination Committee consists of the following:

**Non-Voting Members of the FOE committee:**

- Chair: a member of the graduate faculty from another department; ensures that the rules are followed and that the candidate is treated fairly.

**Voting Members of the FOE Committee:**

- External Appraiser: an expert in the field from another university, who writes a short appraisal of the thesis: the appraisal will state definitely whether or not the thesis is acceptable “in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.” This report is submitted 10 business days in advance of the oral defense, at which time a copy will be given to the candidate and the examining committee.
- Supervisor: usually asks a leading question or two to begin the FOE.
- Two Supervisory Committee Members
- Internal Examiner: a member of the Department with the same functions as the external appraiser, except that there is no written report.
- Departmental Representative: The Director of Graduate Studies or a delegated member of the graduate faculty in English. (During the pandemic, also acts as the Departmental tech and host for the ZOOM teleconferencing)