

The Dissertation Defense:

The Dissertation Defense is one of the most important moments in a graduate student's career and in the life of the History Department. The Defense aims to accomplish two goals. First, it will provide an occasion for the presentation and recognition of completed doctoral work. Second, it will furnish the opportunity for discussion and formal evaluation of the dissertation.

The timing of the Defense will be set by the student, in consultation with his or her Dissertation Committee, on a date no earlier than four months before the deadline for submission of the dissertation and no later than one month before the deadline for submission of completed dissertation materials. **Students should send their dissertations to the members of their committees two/three weeks prior to the Defense.** The time and place of the Defense shall be announced on the department's calendar of events.

The chair of the student's Dissertation Committee and at least one other Committee member from the Graduate Group in History must be present. In the event that the Committee chair is unable to attend, she or he may either participate by conference call or delegate this responsibility to another member of the Committee. The Defense must be open to all faculty and students within the Graduate Group in History. Broader public attendance will be left to the discretion of the student in consultation with his or her Committee.

The Dissertation Defense shall consist of two parts, which need not take place at the same time.

Part One shall be an open presentation by the candidate on the main aspects of the research reported in the dissertation, followed by questions, comments and a discussion period. The chair of the Dissertation Committee shall act as the moderator of this discussion and shall have discretion to decide whether questions are germane to the topic of the dissertation. After discussion is completed, the Committee will decide privately whether the dissertation has been satisfactory. The Committee has the following alternatives:

1. To accept the dissertation without any recommended changes and sign the Report of the Dissertation Defense. The graduate student should also have prepared the formal title page of the dissertation in accordance with Graduate Division rules, so that the Committee may sign it at that time.
2. To accept the dissertation with recommendations for changes, and, except for the chair, sign the Report of the Dissertation Defense. The chair will check the dissertation and, upon his/her approval, sign the Report of the Dissertation Defense.
3. To recommend revisions to the dissertation and not sign the Report of the Dissertation Defense until the student has made the recommended changes and resubmitted the dissertation for the Dissertation Committee's approval. The

Dissertation Committee members sign the Report of the Dissertation Defense if they approve the revised dissertation.

4. To recommend revisions and convene a second meeting of the Dissertation Committee to review the dissertation and complete the student's Defense.
5. To rule the dissertation unsatisfactory. In that circumstance, the student fails.

The student passes if one member of the Committee refuses to sign the Report of the Dissertation Defense, but the other members of the Committee agree to sign, before or after the approval of the recommended changes. Two or more negative votes constitute a failure of the candidate to meet the dissertation requirement. In cases of failure, the Dissertation Committee must specify in detail and in writing the nature of the deficiencies in the dissertation that led to failure. This statement is to be submitted to the History Department's chair of graduate studies, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the student. A second Defense may be permitted with the approval of the Department's graduate chair and the Dean of the Graduate School. If the student fails this second Defense, or if a second Defense is not permitted, the student's standing in the graduate program will be terminated.

Part Two shall be a private discussion between the student and the Dissertation Committee. This private meeting shall offer the opportunity for further questions and candid evaluation of the dissertation. At the discretion of the committee, this meeting shall either follow immediately the public presentation or it shall be set at a later date.