Thesis Defense

After completing the research proposal successfully, the Ph.D. candidate must conduct the necessary research and publish the results in a Ph.D. dissertation. The dissertation must be submitted to the thesis defense committee two weeks prior to the oral defense. The Office of Research and Graduate Affairs must be informed and approve of the committee's make up one month prior to the date of the defense. The oral presentation involves a public 45-minute presentation by the candidate followed by an unspecified period during which the committee will ask questions. After the question and answer period, the candidate will be asked to leave the room and the committee will determine if the candidate has passed or failed the Thesis Defense. The Office of Research and Graduate Affairs must be informed of the outcome of the thesis defense examination. The candidate will be granted one more chance to pass the final defense if (s)he fails it the first time. Once the dissertation has received final approval and all other degree requirements met, a Degree Completion form should be filed with the Office of Research and Graduate Affairs.

There are five forms required for the thesis defense: D-5, D-6, D-7, thesis approval form and completion form. The D-5 form should be filed with graduate studies 3 months prior to the defense. The D-6 from should be filed with the graduate studies 4 weeks prior to the defense. It's the student's responsibility to bring enough copies of the D-7 to the defense for the committee members. The committee chair is responsible for forwarding the D-7 forms to the graduate coordinator. The thesis approval form should be brought to the defense and upon successful completion the form should be signed by all committee members. The completion form should also be brought to the defense and the student should obtain all required signatures.