



DOCTORAL STUDIES AND DISSERTATION CHECKLIST - PROCEDURES

Annual Planning – Prepare for Candidacy

All PhD students undergo a 'candidacy' process at the end of which they receive the designation Candidate on their transcripts indicating they have completed all the requirements for their doctoral degree except their dissertation. There are three major requirements for advancing to candidacy:

- Coursework complete
- Comprehensive Examinations
- Dissertation Proposal/Prospectus

NOTE: Students are expected to complete their comprehensive examination within **24 months** from the date of initial registration. A student who is not admitted to candidacy within 36 months from date of initial registration must withdraw from the program. Extension of this period may be permitted by the Dean of Graduate Studies in exceptional circumstances. A completed request form and supporting documentation must be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies.

Comprehensive Exams

The type, quantity and due dates for the comprehensive exam must be determined in advance and clearly articulated on the [IGS Doctoral Planning Report](#). Students will select one of three comprehensive exam formats:

- Written responses to a series of exam questions
- Portfolio including a field essay and focus essay
- Combination of the written and exam formats

It is expected that all PhD students (no matter the format selected) will move through Part I (written component), Part II (oral component), & Part III (dissertation proposal). See [Candidacy and Comprehensive Exam Formats and Processes](#) for details.

As soon as a student has satisfied all requirements, the graduate program must recommend to the College of Graduate Studies that the student be admitted to candidacy. This status is then entered on the University's Student Information System (SIS). "Advancement to candidacy" and the date which this status were met will appear on the student's transcript.

- Recommendation for Advancement to Candidacy [Form](#)

Thesis

Preparing and Formatting the Dissertation

Please refer to the following websites for information on preparing and formatting the dissertation:

- [Formatting Requirements](#)
- [Thesis Basics](#)
- [Structure and Format](#)
- Additional [resources](#)



Research Ethics

Before you apply for ethics:

- Register with RISE <http://www.rise.ubc.ca/>
- Complete the Research Ethics Tutorial (TCPS2: *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*)*
- Read the [Guidance Notes](#) before you complete the online ethics application form
- Check out [how to start a Human Ethics Application in RISE](#)

* To access the tutorial please click on the following links: [English version](#), [French version](#). Queries? Email Dr Kirsten Bell, consultant Research Ethics Analyst, UBC Office of Research Ethics (kirsten.bell@ors.ubc.ca).

Certificate Numbers in Thesis

The numbers of the UBC Research Ethics Board's Certificates of Approval for all research reported in your thesis must be listed in the Preface.

Personal Information

The final copy of your thesis must be free of all personal information as defined in the Privacy Act. Signatures are considered to be personal information, and must be removed from the final copy of the thesis.

Dissertation Examination

Dry Run

Before the oral exam, do at least one dry run in front of trusted friends or colleagues who can give you honest and helpful comments.

Dissertation Examination Composition

The Doctoral Examination Committee includes:

- the Supervisor and other Supervisory committee members.
- The University Examiner: one UBC examiner from either campus **recommended** by the Supervisor, who must be from a department/program not affiliated with the Student/Research supervisor (**see D. 3.2.3 in CoGS Handbook**).
- An External Examiner: external to the University and **recommended** by the Supervisor (**see D.3.2.2 in CoGS Handbook**).

All examiners, either in person or via teleconference, must be present during the entire questioning process. The Supervisor must attend the examination in person.

The examination is chaired by a neutral member, normally from outside the student's graduate program, and is **appointed** by the Graduate Program Coordinator (**see D. 3.1 in CoGS Handbook**).



PhD Dissertation Scheduling and Graduation Deadlines

FEBRUARY GRADUATION DEADLINE DATES

Last date for the submission of thesis/documents to initiate an examination	Last date for an examination	Last date for the submission of final thesis/documents for formatting review	Final thesis approved by Grad Studies
OCTOBER 1st	DECEMBER 11th	JANUARY 12th	JANUARY 23rd

MAY GRADUATION DEADLINE DATES

Last date for the submission of thesis/documents to initiate an examination	Last date for an examination	Last date for the submission of final thesis/documents for formatting review	Final thesis approved by Grad Studies
JANUARY 5th	MARCH 13th	APRIL 3rd	APRIL 17th

SEPTEMBER GRADUATION DEADLINE DATES

Last day for the submission of documents to initiate an examination	Last date for an examination	Last date for the submission of final thesis/documents for formatting review	Final thesis approved by Grad Studies
MAY 5th	JULY 14th	AUGUST 11th	AUGUST 21st

NOVEMBER GRADUATION DEADLINE DATES

Last day for the submission of documents to initiate an examination	Last date for an examination	Last date for the submission of final thesis/documents for formatting review	Final thesis approved by Grad Studies
JULY 3rd	SEPTEMBER 11th	OCTOBER 9th	OCTOBER 22nd

See: <http://gradstudies.ok.ubc.ca/current-students/thesis-dissertation-info/doctoral-dissertation-timeline-graduation.html>

NOTE: It is highly advisable to schedule your defence prior to or after the summer months of July and August given the unavailability of many faculty members. Restricted periods for scheduling a defence will be **August and December**. Due to the proximity to the start of the new academic term, limited defences will be scheduled during this time.



Initiating the Dissertation Examination

The Doctoral Dissertation Oral examination process is initiated once the student has been deemed by both their Supervisor and their committee, as ready to proceed to defense. It is the responsibility of the Supervisor to recommend all examining committee members, including the External Examiner and the University Examiner, to the Graduate Program Coordinator for approval and to conform to the timelines and processes established in Part III Doctoral Dissertation and Examination Administrative Processes ([See page 40 of CoGS Handbook](#)). **Under no circumstances are students permitted to make arrangements for an examination.**

Supervisor Responsibilities once dissertation meets the minimum standard:

- Ensure all supervisory committee members have reviewed the student's research and/or draft, and have provided written consents to that effect (email is acceptable).
- Contact a potential External Examiner to determine their willingness to serve as External Examiner and their availability for the proposed examination dates (three different possible dates/times 2.5-3hrs).
- Submit an email request (which includes their CV) to CoGS for approval of the External Examiner at least 10 weeks prior to the proposed examination date.
- Upon receiving CoGS approval for the External Examiner, complete and forward the **Notice of Doctoral Dissertation Oral Examination form** to the Graduate Program Coordinator for submission to CoGS **no later than eight weeks prior** to the proposed dates for examination.
- Send **electronic copy** of the final dissertation to gradtheses.ok@ubc.ca
- Send **Doctoral Dissertation Oral Examination Announcement form** to CoGS (leave the date, time & location blank for CoGS to complete once exam has been scheduled).
- Provide **electronic copy** of dissertation to CoGS, Supervisory Committee Members, Neutral Chair and the University Examiner **at least 4-6 weeks prior** to defence.
- Download Neutral Chair's forms and ballots below from CoGS website and send filled in forms and voting ballots to Neutral Chair prior to exam:
 - A. **Final Doctoral Dissertation Oral Examination – Neutral Chair's Report form**
 - B. **Doctoral Dissertation Approval and Program Completion form**
 - C. **Voting Ballot forms**

Teleconference/Videoconference

Normally, if they are unable to be at the examination in person, the External Examiner is allowed to teleconference or videoconference; if an additional examiner, for example a University Examiner from UBC Vancouver, wishes to teleconference/videoconference for the same examination, approval of the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies is required. Please note that these two methods **cannot both be used for the same examination**, since they will be unable to hear each other. Telephone backup must be available for all videoconference examinations. **The Supervisor must attend the oral examination in person.** In extraordinary circumstances and with approval of the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, a student may be given permission to attend remotely and a proctor may be required by the College of Graduate Studies.

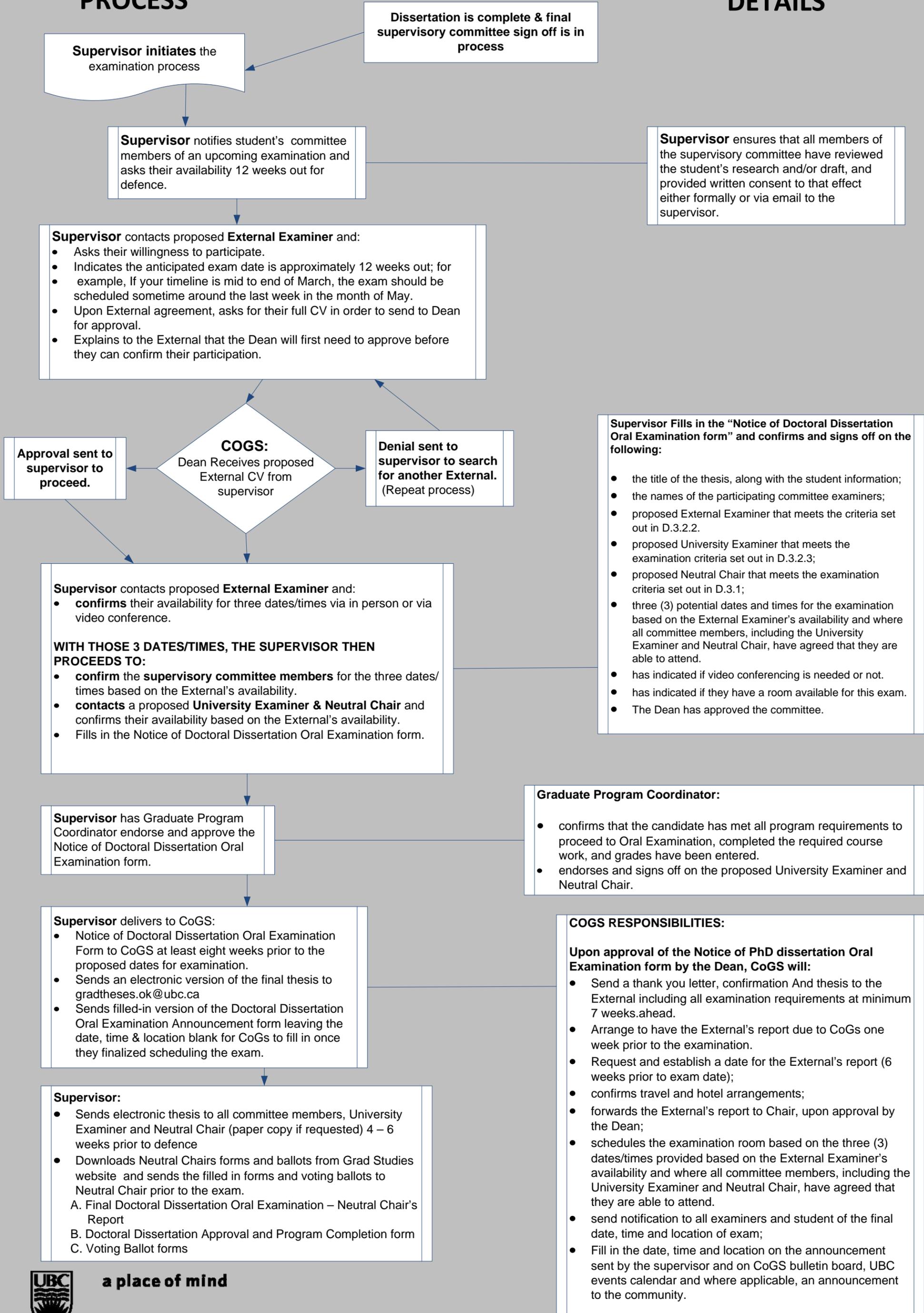
Doctoral Dissertation Oral Examination Scheduling Process chart (see next page)

Part III: Doctoral Dissertation & Dissertation Examination Administrative Processes

Appendix D: Doctoral Examination Scheduling Process

PROCESS

DETAILS





Preconditions for a PhD Dissertation Examination

Candidates must have fulfilled the following requirement of the degree prior to the examination:

- All coursework
- Examination requirements
- Language requirements

PhD Dissertation Examination – Final Oral Examination

Structure:

- the Neutral Chair explains defence process
- the Candidate makes a 10-30 minute (max) presentation of thesis
- the External Examiner questions the Candidate
- the University Examiner questions the Candidate
- the Examining Committee questions the Candidate
- members of the audience are invited to ask questions of the Candidate
- the Examining Committee holds an in-camera discussion
- the Neutral Chair conveys the findings of the Examining Committee to the Candidate

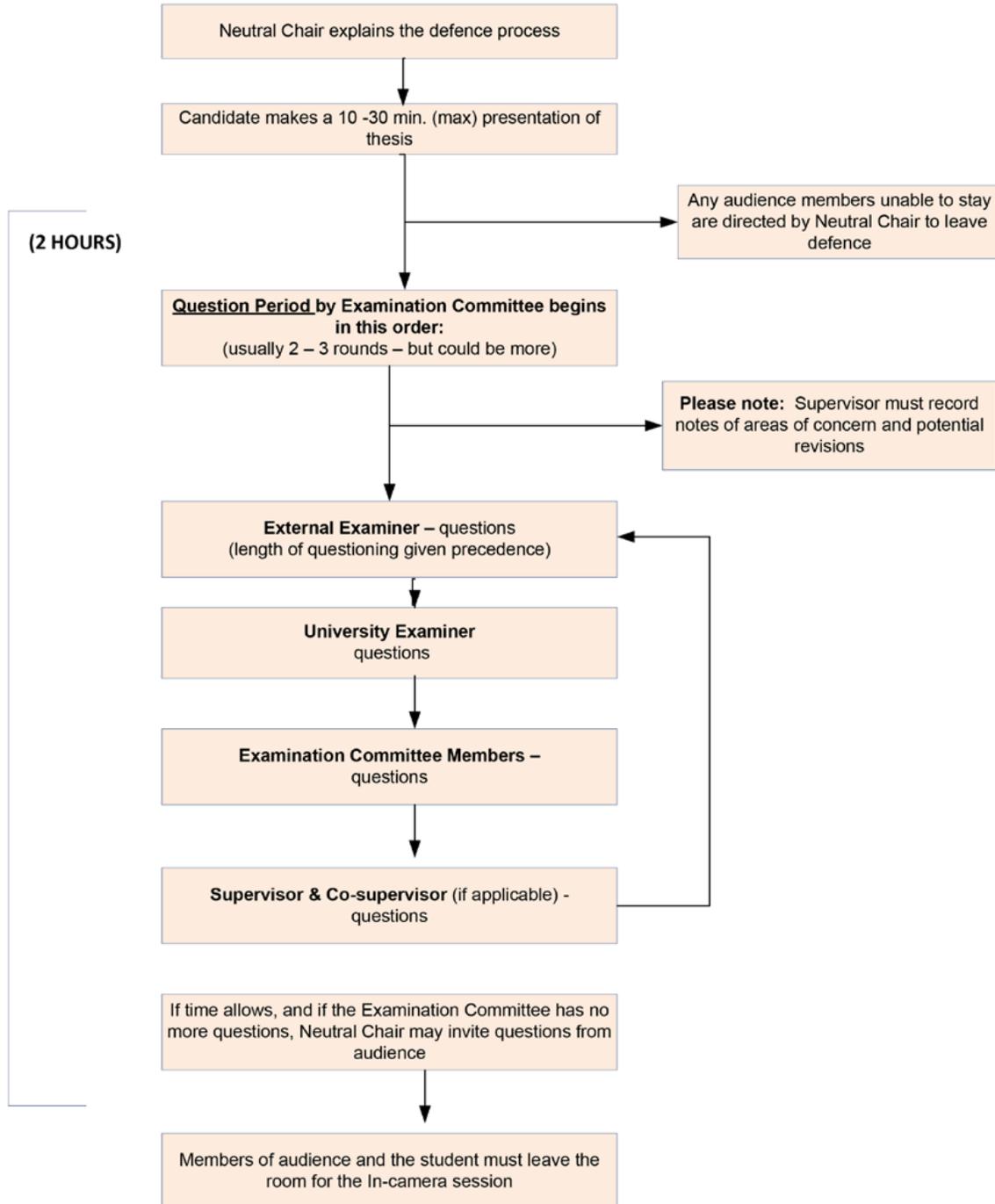
The Final Oral Defence usually lasts two and a half hours to three hours.

Doctoral Dissertation – Oral Examination Process chart (next page two pages)



Doctoral Dissertation – Oral Examination Process

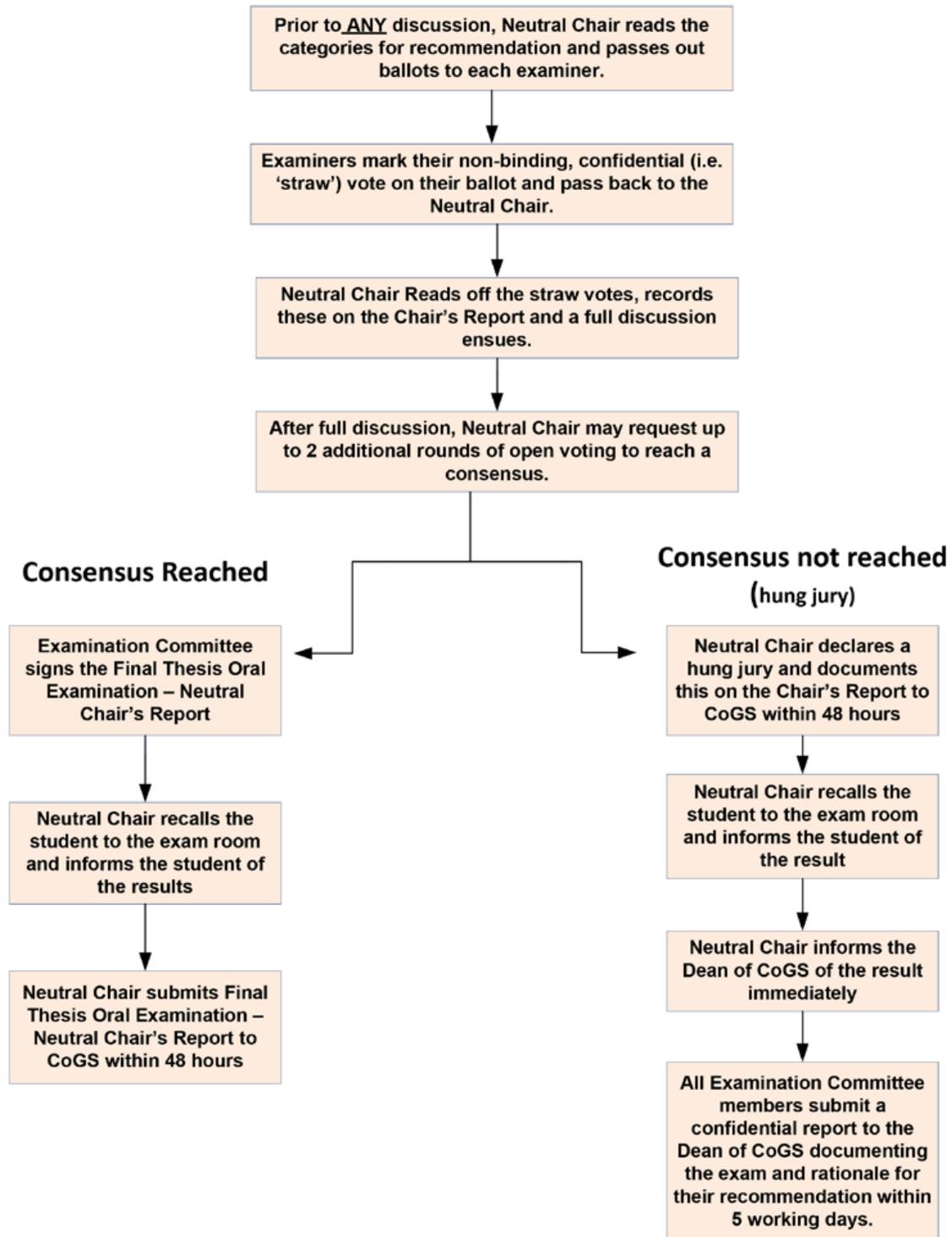
Part I





Doctoral Dissertation – Oral Examination Process

Part II: In-Camera Session with Examination Committee

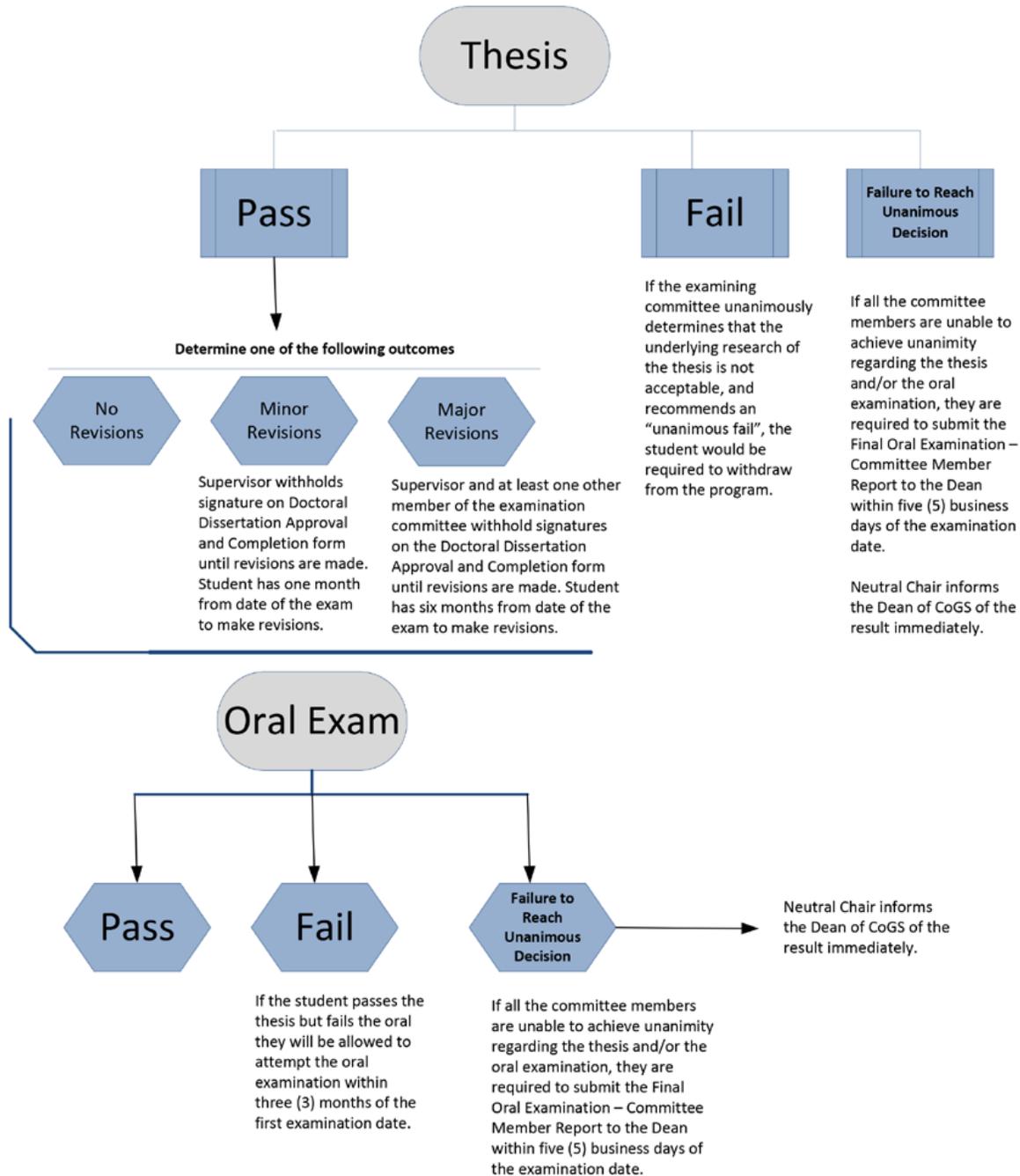


Final Submission of Thesis

Doctoral Dissertation Examination Recommendations

The Examination Committee will make final decision as to whether the dissertation/ oral exam should pass or fail.

Doctoral Dissertation Oral Examination Outcome Flowchart





Committee Forms to be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies within the specified periods:

- Final Doctoral Dissertation Oral Examination – Neutral Chair’s [Report](#) (within 2 business days of exam)
- Final Oral Examination – Committee Member [Report](#) (within five business days after the examination)
- Doctoral Dissertation Approval and Program Completion [Form](#) submitted with final version of defended dissertation

Student Mandatory Forms/Documents:

- Final Approved Dissertation – one hard copy either single or double sided
- Dissertation Submission Cover Sheet
- Formatting Checklist
- Library and Archives Canada Non-Exclusive License Form
- ciRcle Non-Exclusive Distribution License
- ciRcle Uploading Form

Optional Forms:

- BC Bibliography
- Withhold Thesis from the Public Domain

See <http://gradstudies.ok.ubc.ca/forms/thesis-final-submission.html>

Applying for Degree Conferral

Every candidate for a degree must make a formal application for degree conferral via the [Student Service Centre \(SSC\)](#). The student must apply regardless of whether or not they plan to participate in the graduation ceremonies. The SSC deadline dates are set out below:

Application Deadlines

Degree Conferral Date	Applications Begin	Final Application Deadline
February	November 1	January 15
May	January 16	April 15
September	June 1	August 31
November	September 1	October 15

Final Dissertation Upload Deadlines

Degree Conferral Date	Final Date to Upload to ciRcle
February	January 30
May	April 30
September	August 30
November	October 30

The Final Dissertation Upload Deadline is the last day to upload your dissertation to ciRcle in order to be considered for the corresponding degree conferral period. Students who are uploading to ciRcle must have



completed all program requirements and had their dissertation formatting approved by the College of Graduate Studies.

Degree Conferral & Parchment

Students may have their degrees conferred in either February, May, September or November annually. A graduation ceremony is only held in June, so students who choose to have their degrees conferred in February, September, or November will be invited to participate in the June ceremony.

Please note that **degree parchments are only printed in May and November**, so students who choose to have their degrees conferred in February or September will need to wait for the next printing period to receive their degree parchments.

Degree Completion

In order for thesis-based programs to be closed-out for degree completion, the following must first occur:

- All grades must be entered:
- Successfully defended thesis;
- Submitted all required documentation to the College of Graduate Studies as per final submission requirements;
- Completed all degree/ course requirements set out by UBC Okanagan, College of Graduate Studies
- Successfully uploaded thesis to ciRcle