

Ph.D. Computer Science Dissertation Prospectus Procedures

A student cannot submit a dissertation prospectus in the semester or prior to the semester, in which the comprehensive exam is administered and passed. The comprehensive exam and the prospectus should not be done in the same semester. Students should plan in advance and must ensure that they are registered at all times in at least one credit graduate level course (e.g. 580, 792, 795, or 799). This includes if the Prospectus will be held in summer.

Dissertation Prospectus

Step 1: Student submits an electronic copy of the Dissertation Prospectus/Proposal to the committee and copies the Graduate Advisor. This should be done at least two weeks prior to the Prospectus Defense. The dissertation prospectus/proposal is not to exceed 20 pages and must contain:

1. A statement of the proposed research and why it is important.
2. An overview of the relevant literature.
3. A description of the student's competence to conduct the proposed research. Passing the comprehensive examination indicates competence in the area of the examination. The student is encouraged to provide evidence of initial results in the scope of the dissertation research.
4. A discussion of how the research will be approached (including specific criteria for the completion of the research broken down by research tasks, and the order in which the tasks will be completed).
5. A projected time-table and outline of the dissertation.

Step 2: The student contacts Monica Dugan, 5th Floor Brickyard, to reserve a room and provides with the date and time. Also, the student is required to send to Monica an electronic copy of the abstract of the Oral Defense for announcement. The student should plan to have the room reserved for at least 2-3 hours.

Step 3: The student downloads the [Doctoral Proposal/Prospectus Results Form](#) and hands it to the Dissertation Chair on the day of the oral exam. These form is located on the CIDSE Graduate Forms webpage.

Step 4: After the defense, the student drops of the [Doctoral Proposal/Prospectus Results Form](#) at the Advising Center, BYENG 225, for processing. Please keep a copy for yourself!

Absent Committee member procedure:

While it is desirable that all members of a student's supervisory committee be available during the oral exam portion, there are situations (e.g. faculty travel, faculty emergencies and/or faculty leave) that may necessitate holding the written and/or oral exam with one or more committee member(s) absent. The Academic Unit has established the following policies and procedures for such cases.

1. A minimum of 4 committee members (including chair/co-chair) from the student's official committee must be available during the student's written and oral exam.
2. The chair (or one co-chair) must be available for both the oral and written portion of the exam. If this is not possible, the exam must be rescheduled.
3. A committee co-chair or member who cannot be available during the oral exam, may participate in one of three ways. These options are listed in the order of preference:
 - a. The absent committee member videoconferences into the oral exam defense location.*
 - b. The absent committee member teleconferences into the oral exam defense location.*
 - c. The absent committee member provides a substitute to be physically present (approved by the committee chair & the head of the academic unit) for the oral exam defense only. The substitute must be someone who is approved to serve on graduate supervisory committees for that program. The absent committee member should provide the substitute questions, in writing, to be asked at the defense. The substitute, although respecting the opinions expressed by the regular committee, must be free to use his/her judgment in voting on whether the student passes or fails the defense. The substitute should sign the absent committee member's name, and add his/her initials directly after the signature.

*Students must provide a copy of their document and any other supporting presentation materials to the committee member at least 5 working days in advance of the defense. The defense location must have the necessary equipment to accommodate video/teleconference materials.

If the videoconference or teleconference option is selected, the absent member needs to e-mail the committee chair or co-chair to state that member voted to pass or fail the student and authorize that the chair sign their name on the form. The committee chair or co-chair should sign the name of the absent individual on the form and then add his/her initials directly after the signature.

If a committee member will be absent from the oral defense, the student or committee chair/co-chair must notify the Program Chair before or at the time of scheduling the oral exam defense. If the student is notified of an absence after scheduling the oral exam, the student must contact the Program Chair prior to the oral exam defense date, so he/she finds a substitute.