

Recommended Timing of Events Leading to the Ph.D. Final Defense Examination

STEPS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE PROPOSAL EXAM

The Research Advisor and two members of the Electrical and Computer Engineering faculty are designated to be the PhD Dissertation Reading Committee. The two non-advisor members of the Reading Committee are usually recommended by the Research Advisor during the establishment of the proposal examination committee.

The "Request for Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy", generated by the student, is signed by the Research Advisor and the Reading Committee members and the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs. It is then forwarded to the Graduate Studies – VPR office.

The "Request for Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy" is approved by the Graduate Dean and an approved copy is sent to the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs.

In order to have proper information about the thesis format, electronic submission of the thesis, required forms and institute thesis submission deadlines, the student accesses the "Thesis & Dissertations" area of the website for the Graduate Studies – VPR office (<http://www.grad.gatech.edu/thesis/index.html>).

STEPS PRECEDING THE SCHEDULING OF THE PHD DISSERTATION DEFENSE

A petition to graduate must be filed with the ECE Graduate Affairs Office by drop day of the term preceding the one in which the student plans to defend the dissertation and graduate.

There must be a **minimum of six months** between the successful completion of the proposal oral exam and dissertation defense. Students wishing to be considered for an exemption to this requirement must request it in writing (with the Research Advisor's signature indicating approval) from the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs.

With the approval of the research advisor, the student submits the draft version of the completed dissertation to the reading committee.

The reading committee members should be allotted approximately four to five weeks between receiving the dissertation and giving their approval for scheduling the dissertation defense.

It is expected that the reading committee members will make their initial comments on the dissertation available to the student and the other members of the reading committee within two to three weeks of when they receive the dissertation.

Following the initial feedback from the reading committee, the student returns an updated (corrected) version of the draft of the dissertation for the approval of the reading committee. This step is repeated as many times as the reading committee deems necessary.

When the reading committee determines that the dissertation is acceptable, written approval for the scheduling of the final dissertation defense examination is given. The "Reading Comm Form" memo on the ECE website is used to convey this information.

STEPS FOR SCHEDULING THE DISSERTATION DEFENSE

The research advisor establishes a five-member dissertation defense committee consisting of the advisor, two reading committee members and two additional members.

In cases where there is a co-advisor in addition to the research advisor, a six-member committee is established.

Of the additional members, one must be from outside the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering with faculty standing approved by the Board of Regents. The second is a member of the ECE faculty, usually from a technical interest area the student's primary interest area.

Members from outside of ECE who do not have academic faculty standing must present a copy of their *curriculum vita* (or resume) for approval of the Graduate Dean.

The "Schedule Defense Form" memo on the ECE website is used to convey the examination schedule and committee information.

Upon approval by the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs, the membership of the defense committee is transmitted to the Graduate Studies – VPR office for approval.

There must be a full two weeks (14 days) between submission of the request to schedule the dissertation defense and the actual defense date.

Students wishing to be considered for an exemption to this requirement must request it in writing (with the research advisor's signature indicating approval) from the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs.

At the time that the "Schedule Defense Form" is submitted to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office, final versions of the dissertation should be provided to all committee members who do not already have the document.

An announcement of the dissertation defense is posted outside the ECE Academic Office and on the ECE website.

The student obtains the necessary thesis/dissertation submission forms from the website of the Graduate Studies – VPR office.

The "Certificate of Thesis Approval" is prepared by the student so that the dissertation defense committee members can sign it following successful defense of the dissertation.

STEPS FOR THE DISSERTATION DEFENSE AND FINAL SUBMISSION

The final dissertation defense examination is held.

The results of the examination are reported to the Graduate Studies – VPR office by means of the "Certificate of Thesis Approval" which is signed by all members of the examination committee and the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs.

The student submits the dissertation and the appropriate forms to the Graduate Studies – VPR office following the procedures for electronic submission and meeting the deadlines for graduation during a particular academic term.

Electronic submission procedures are available at:
http://www.grad.gatech.edu/thesis/electronic_submission.html

Submission deadlines are posted at <http://www.grad.gatech.edu/thesis>. Submission deadlines are firm.

STEPS FOR GRADUATING IN A LATER TERM WITHOUT BEING ENROLLED

Students who are unable to meet the submission deadlines in the term in which they intended to graduate may follow the procedures below and graduate in the next term without being enrolled. The timing indicated for the scheduling procedures listed above still applies in this option.

To complete the degree requirements and graduate without being enrolled, the dissertation (and all related paperwork) must be submitted to the Graduate Studies – VPR office **before the close of registration** in the term following the one in which the student originally intended to graduate.

The student must submit a degree petition (and diploma fee) for the new graduation term. This petition is marked “Reactivation” rather than “New” and must be submitted before the close of registration in the new graduation term.

The student requests a waiver of the enrollment requirement for the term of study (i.e. the one during which the student will actually graduate) by submitting a written request, approved by the research advisor and the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs.

This request must be submitted to the Graduate Studies - VPR office with the dissertation and other forms.

A link to the enrollment waiver form is provided on the ECE website at:
<http://www.ece.gatech.edu/internal/students/graduate/forms/index.html>

If needed for employment purposes, the student may obtain a completion letter from the Registrar’s Office which will certify that he or she has satisfied all requirements for the degree which will be granted at a specific (later) date.

This letter is requested electronically through the student OSCAR (registration) system.

All graduation requirements must be cleared before a completion letter is generated.

Defense Timing
6/15/05