

**CHECKLIST FOR DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS**  
**Gender and Women's Studies, Revised 9-16-2021**

**Note: Students must pass their qualifying exams before formally beginning the dissertation process.**

- **Once you and your advisor have agreed upon a direction for your dissertation, you need to write a prospectus (proposal) for your planned work.**

Your prospectus should include a) a description of the dissertation project and its aims, b) a discussion of the significance and contribution of the project to the relevant field(s), c) a review of the relevant literature(s), d) a discussion of the theoretical and/or methodological approaches you plan to use, and e) a list of references. For more information on the prospectus, please see the GWS Graduate Handbook.

- **Schedule a dissertation proposal defense.**

The dissertation prospectus must be defended in front of your entire advisory committee *within 6 months of passing the qualifying exam*. If that date is during the summer, then you must defend within 3 weeks of the beginning of the following semester. Please notify Michelle Del Toro of the date, time, and location of your defense.

- **Discuss the format for feedback with committee members.**

You should ask each member of your committee (other than your advisor) whether they would like to see drafts of individual chapters, wait to see a draft of the complete dissertation, or use some other format for feedback.

- **Enroll in GWS 767 every semester while you are working on your dissertation.**

During this period, you need to meet with your advisor at least once each semester and submit a progress report to your advisor at the end of every semester. If you want/need to make any changes to the project plan approved in your prospectus, you should discuss those changes with your advisory committee *before implementing them*.

***When your dissertation is near completion...***

- **Ensure that your current advisory committee has been approved by the Graduate School.**

If the membership of your committee has changed, submit a "Doctoral Advisory Committee Modification Request" form on the Graduate School webpage: [https://iris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gS/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](https://iris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gS/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm). Forward your official approval to Michelle Del Toro.

- **Identify the relevant Graduate School deadlines for your desired graduation semester.**

There are two key deadlines:

- a) Every semester, the Graduate School has a final date to submit the Notification of Intent to Schedule the Final Examination (NOTIF) form to graduate that semester. You can find those dates here: <https://gradschool.uky.edu/key-dates>
- b) You must submit the NOTIF form *at least 8 weeks prior to your desired defense date*.

**You must submit your NOTIF form by the EARLIER of these 2 dates!**

- **Submit your NOTIF form to the Graduate School before the above deadline.**

The form can be found at:

[https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm). After the Graduate School approves this form, they will conduct an audit of your coursework and appoint an external examiner for your defense.

You must have completed a minimum of two semesters of residency following your qualifying exams and have sent a complete draft of your dissertation to your advisor before submitting the NOTIF form.

- **Submit an application for your degree via myUK by the deadline for the semester in which you wish to graduate.**

You can find the form in the myUK portal: <https://myuk.uky.edu/irj/portal>. Click on Student Services / myRecords / Graduate Degree Application. You can find the deadlines for degree applications for each semester here:

<https://gradschool.uky.edu/key-dates>. If you submitted a degree application for a previous semester, but did not graduate, you must complete a new degree application for the current semester.

- **Ensure that your Chair and the majority of your advisory committee has seen a *complete* draft of your dissertation and believes that it is ready to defend.**

- **Ensure that your dissertation is formatted consistently with the Graduate School dissertation standards.**

You can find these standards at: <https://gradschool.uky.edu/electronic-dissertation-preparation>

- **In conjunction with your advisor, schedule a date and time for your dissertation defense.**

The dissertation must be defended in front of the entire advisory committee, including your external examiner. The final examination must take place no later than 8 days prior to the last day of classes of the semester in which you expect to graduate. Final examinations may only be scheduled when classes are in session (fall, spring, or summer sessions). You can find the deadlines for scheduling final examinations here: <https://gradschool.uky.edu/key-dates>. Please notify Michelle Del Toro of the date, time, and location of your defense.

- **Submit the Request for Final Doctoral Examination form to the Graduate School *at least two weeks before your defense*.**

It's best to submit it as soon as you know the date, time, and location. The form can be found at: [https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm).

- **Distribute your dissertation to your committee, including the external examiner, *at least two weeks before your defense.***

Be sure to check with your committee members about whether they prefer electronic or paper copies.

- **Defend your dissertation.**

Following your defense, your committee and the DGS will sign an exam card and submit to the Graduate School.

- **Complete any/all revisions requested by your advisory committee.**

- **Complete the Electronic Thesis or Dissertation (ETD) Approval Form, and have it signed by your advisor and the DGS.**

The form can be found here:

[https://gradschool.uky.edu/sites/gradschool.uky.edu/files/Forms/StudentForms/2019-2020/ETDApprovalForm\\_1.pdf](https://gradschool.uky.edu/sites/gradschool.uky.edu/files/Forms/StudentForms/2019-2020/ETDApprovalForm_1.pdf)

- **Electronically submit your revised dissertation and the signed ETD approval form to the Graduate School via the UKnowledge repository *within 60 days of your defense or by the final day to submit dissertation for formal review in your desired semester of graduation.***

Instructions for submission can be found here:

[https://uknowledge.uky.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=uknowledge\\_docs](https://uknowledge.uky.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=uknowledge_docs). There is a required fee for dissertation submission.

You can find the final date to submit for formal review for each semester here:

<https://gradschool.uky.edu/key-dates>.

Within 2-3 days of submission, the Graduate School will review your dissertation and check the format to ensure that it meets all requirements. *Note:* The last few weeks of the semester are peak periods for dissertation submission, so it is best to submit your dissertation as soon as possible so that the final version can be accepted by the semester deadline.

- **Make any final edits from the formal review and electronically submit the final version of your dissertation via UKnowledge repository *by the final day to submit final revised dissertation in your desired semester of graduation.***

You can find the final date to submission for each semester here:

<https://gradschool.uky.edu/key-dates>.