

Ph.D. Leadership Oral Defense & Final Approval

AA_AO_ST_68

Responsible Officer
Sandeep Gopalan
Responsible Office
John Wesley School of Leadership
Approving Body
Board of Trustees
Approval Date
2019-09
Last Revision
2019-09
Re-evaluation Date
2021
Departmental Impact
Academics

Policy Statement

PhD students are required to pass an oral defense at the completion of their research study to demonstrate mastery of the research topic. The Chair of the Dissertation Committee will consult with the Committee members and submit an official notification to the Dean of the School of Leadership and the student about the acceptability of the final draft. All members of the Committee will sign the signature page (Appendix E).

Policy Procedures

The Dissertation Oral Defense takes between one and two hours to complete and will follow the below guidelines.

- The oral defense can be scheduled after the Dissertation Manuscript has received final approval from the Chair and Committee. It will take place via conference call.
- The Chair must schedule the Candidate's oral defense no later than 14 days before the end of the Session 2 course in December or May.
- The Chair is responsible for providing the School of Leadership with the time and date of the call and the names and contact information of those attending the call. It is recommended that calls be scheduled with the School of Leadership and Committee at least 10 days before the defense.
- Every effort should be made to accommodate all Committee members; however, if a Committee member or Chair cannot attend, the Dean or Dean's designee may appoint a substitute familiar with the dissertation topic.
- After introductions by the Chair, the Candidate will make a 20-30 minute presentation, accompanied by a PowerPoint on the dissertation research. The PowerPoint handout and related materials are sent to Committee members and other interested parties prior to the date of the oral defense.
- Candidates should practice the lecture so that they can present the research in a clear, concise, and comprehensive manner in no more than 30 minutes. The suggested number of slides is 20-25 (however this varies), and the slides should be organized in alignment with the dissertation manuscript.
- After the Candidate concludes the presentation, time is devoted to questions. Committee members will ask questions first and then the floor will be opened to anyone else in attendance. It is critical that Candidates speak knowledgeably and clearly about the research, demonstrating a mastery of the topic. The Candidate should justify the work and be able to articulate the significance of the study and how it will add to the body of knowledge.
- Following the question-and-answer period, the meeting is closed. The Candidate will be asked to leave the call while the Committee members deliberate about the oral defense. The Candidate will then return to the call and is informed of the Committee's decision. The Committee will decide on one of the following decisions: Pass, Pass with Revisions, or Fail.