

DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACOLOGY AND TOXICOLOGY

Students defending their thesis at a Departmental examination must be prepared to give an oral presentation outlining their thesis work. The following is a suggested format for the oral presentation at a thesis defense:

Total length = 20 minutes

- **5 min: brief introduction of the topic, hypotheses and rationale**
- **10 min: an outline of your research strategy and the key results**
- **5 min: conclusions, significance and impact, future directions**

Checklist for M.Sc. Defenses (& Concurrent Ph.D. Screening)

- 1) Chair collects candidate's file from the Graduate Office.
- 2) Committee assembles. The chair confirms that a quorum of four voting members is present. Should a quorum not be present, the Chair must decide either to delay the examination or to postpone it to another date.
- 3) Chair requests that the candidate leave the room.
- 4) Chair:
 - informs Committee whether all course, etc. requirements for the Degree have been met (see "Certificate of Completion" in file).
 - confirms that each member of the Committee has sufficient knowledge of the thesis to form a judgement as to its acceptability and hence that there will be no abstentions in voting on grounds of ignorance of the thesis content.
 - reminds the Committee that the examination covers both the thesis and the oral defense.
- 5) Chair requests that the Appraiser read the written appraisal to the Committee.
- 6) Student is invited back into the room.
- 8) Chair invites student to give presentation of work (maximum 20 minutes). No questions are asked during the presentation.
- 9) *1st Round:* Chair invites the Committee to comment/ask questions on the oral presentation and thesis; usually beginning with the Appraiser, followed by the other Committee members. (The Appraiser usually spends more time as compared with other Committee members).
 - If the student is being screened simultaneously for the PhD program, the Screening Committee are also invited to ask questions/make comments at this time. (There is no separate "exam" for PhD screening).
 - At this point, the Chair is also free to ask any general pharmacology questions he/she wishes to ask.

2nd Round: After all members of the Committee have had a chance to speak, they are allowed to ask any further questions that may have come up during the first round.
- 10) When there are no further questions, the Chair asks the Candidate and all non-voting committee members to leave the room.
- 11) The Chair reminds the Committee that: **(a)** they should discuss the thesis and the voting options before the vote is taken; **(b)** the examination covers both the thesis and its oral defense.

- 12) Committee discusses the student's presentation, ability, knowledge of research field, defense of thesis (and potential for PhD program if relevant).
 - Members must vote yes or no on the question of whether or not the thesis and its defense are acceptable. **More than one negative vote (or abstention) causes the thesis examination to be adjourned.**
 - Members of the Committee will have agreed to become sufficiently acquainted with the content of the thesis to form a judgment as to its acceptability; hence there should be no abstentions from voting on grounds of ignorance of the thesis content. A member of the Committee can indicate an abstention for other reasons by writing "abstention" on the ballot.
 - Those committee members who find the thesis acceptable must **also** indicate whether the thesis is acceptable as is, or requires minor corrections or minor modifications. For procedure in case of a split vote, see the explanation on the voting ballot.
- 13) Chair invites the student back into the room and informs student of the Committee's decision.
 - **For students undergoing concurrent PhD screening, only the decision on acceptability of the M.Sc. defense is given at the defense.** [The recommendation on suitability for the PhD program will be given to the student and supervisor in writing after the next planned GEC meeting].
- 14) Chair gives to supervisor:
 - Copy of Appraisal, retaining one in the file.
 - Thesis Approval form to complete and certify that minor corrections or major modifications to thesis have been made by student.
- 15) Chair returns candidate's file to Graduate Office.