**COMMITTEE REGULATIONS**

- The defense examination committee must have at least 6 members, distributed as follows:
  
  o **THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE** [3-4 members] — A director, co-director [if applicable] and two readers who have advised the student during the dissertation research process.

  o **TWO EXAMINERS** [1 Inside, 1 Outside] — Examiners cannot have had a direct role in the dissertation research process. One examiner must be from within the academic unit [the student's PhD program/department], with the other examiner coming from outside of the academic unit. The outside examiner may be at GW in another program/department, at another university, or at another institution. The student may be required to submit the outside examiner’s CV.

  o **CHAIR** — The examination is chaired by a member of the academic unit in which the student is enrolled. The chair cannot be drawn from the dissertation committee or examiners. It is recommended that the Graduate Program Director, if not an examiner or on the dissertation committee, serve as chair. The chair takes no part in the examination itself, except, if asked, to pose an introductory question to elicit an opening summary from the student.

- The dissertation must be distributed to the committee at least one month prior to the scheduled defense.

**STEPS IN DEFENSE AND GRADUATION**

- **STUDENT PREPARATION CHECKLIST** [Sept-Oct]
  
  o [Apply to graduate](#) in Gweb [deadline Nov 15]

  o Visit the [GW Electronic Dissertations](#) [ETD] website for information on formatting requirements. Upon acceptance, your dissertation will be published electronically—take some time to understand the copyright and patent implications. Attend the mandatory ETD Workshop.

  o Identify your Examination Committee [see above]

  o Determine your defense date. Confirm the date and time with all committee members.
    
    - You will need 3 hours for your defense. For the 1st hour, you will present a public seminar, followed by a closed 2-hour defense with your committee.
    - Contact the IBS office to request a room and submit your program details.
- When planning your dates, keep in mind you are required to submit your dissertation to your committee at least 1 month prior to your defense and the last day to defend for Fall graduation is **December 1**.

  - **1 MONTH PRIOR TO DEFENSE**
    - Defense chair submits [Dissertation Examination/Defense Form](#) to CCAS [copy IBS] [deadline Nov 2]
    - Student submits:
      1. [Program information](#) to IBS [deadline Nov 2]
      2. Final draft of dissertation to committee members for review [deadline Nov 1]

  - **POST-DEFENSE STUDENT CHECKLIST** [deadline December 4]
    - Make any required changes to the dissertation.
      - Submit your dissertation with all corrections made as instructed to the [ETD](#). Also complete the UMI Dissertation Publishing Agreement form at the time of submission.
      - Make hard copies of your dissertation for your mentor and other committee members if they request them. The university no longer needs hard copies.

      - **We STRONGLY suggest uploading your dissertation prior to Dec 4.** It can take up to a week for your document to be reviewed and approved, and if it is sent back to you for corrections, *it may cause your graduation to be delayed an entire semester.* It is common for there to be formatting issues which prevent approval on the first attempt, meaning that most people need more than one week to achieve approval. If your dissertation is not fully approved by Aug 15 in the ETD system, your graduation will be bumped to the next semester (no exceptions), so please take this timing into account.

        - Work with your mentor, dissertation chair, and program director to submit (1) [ETD Access/Approval Form](#) and (2) [Final Dissertation Committee Sign-Off](#) to CCAS [copy IBS]
        - [Register for](#) and [complete](#) the online Survey of Earned Doctorates. Forward the confirmation email to CCAS after you have completed this requirement.
        - Complete the [GW Graduation Survey](#)

**COMMENCEMENT**

- Commencement ceremonies are optional and happen only once per year [in late May]. Summer 2020, Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 graduates are eligible to participate in the commencement events taking in May 2021.

        - If you intend to participate in commencement ceremonies, please ask your research advisor to participate and hood you. IBS graduates take part in the CCAS doctoral hooding ceremony typically held on the Thursday of graduation weekend in Lisner Auditorium (full details will be sent by CCAS).