

5775 Stodder Hall Orono, Maine 04469-5775  
Tel: 207.581.3217 Fax: 207.581.3232  
Email: graduate@maine.edu web: umaine.edu/graduate

**Oral Examination Instructions**

It is the responsibility of the student to bring the ‘Oral Examination and Final Project/Thesis/Dissertation Acceptance Form’ to the oral examination. Original signatures are required of all committee members voting at the examination with noted exceptions (see below).

**The Examining Committee Membership**

Master’s Thesis:

The primary advisor/co-advisors will serve as the chair of the examination. There shall be an examining committee of three (3) to five (5) members - inclusive of the advisor(s) - present throughout the examination. The student’s advisory committee usually serves as the examining committee, but a different examining committee may be appointed upon the recommendation of the Graduate Coordinator of the program with the consent of the Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School in advance of the final examination. The examining committee shall have the authority to require the candidate to repeat the examination in whole or in part. The committee vote must be unanimous for the candidate to pass the examination.

Doctoral Dissertation:

The primary advisor/co-advisors will generally serve as the chair of the examination. The candidate must present himself/herself for the final examination to an examining committee of no less than five (5) members appointed by the Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the Graduate Coordinator of the program. Other members of the faculty may be invited to attend and participate in the defense but only members of the committee may vote in determining the outcome. The committee vote need not be unanimous for a doctoral candidate to pass the final oral examination; however, only one (1) negative vote will be permitted.

**Proxies & Off-Campus Committee Members**

In all instances, appointed committee members should make every effort to be physically present at the student’s oral examination. In exceptional circumstances, an individual may participate in the exam via video conference or telecommunication, or by selecting a faculty member to act as proxy.

Proxy:

A faculty member who is sufficiently knowledgeable with the research area may act as a proxy for a committee member who is unable to attend the examination. The committee member should prepare a set of questions after thoroughly reviewing the project/thesis/dissertation for the proxy to ask during the examination. The proxy member votes on behalf of the examining committee member.

Off-Campus Committee Members:

In instances where a committee member is not able to be physically present at the examination, but is able to connect through other means, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain a copy of the Oral Examination and Final Project/Thesis/Dissertation Acceptance Form with signature(s) from the off-campus member(s). In certain instances, a scanned copy of the form or an email sent directly from the off-campus committee members with the following statement should be sent to the Graduate School: *I certify that I have read the manuscript and participated in the examination of [name of the student] and hereby vote in the [Affirmative/Negative].*