Sociology and Anthropology PhD Thesis Defence Guidelines

It is the student’s responsibility to follow these guidelines, be in regular contact with the Graduate Program Assistant and their Senior Supervisor while planning their defense, and to submit all necessary paperwork at the appropriate time. *Failure to do so, may result in the Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies office not giving their approval.*

- **8-10 weeks prior to the proposed defence date:**
  - The Senior Supervisor confirms via email to the Graduate Program Assistant that the dissertation is ready to be defended.
  - It is the responsibility of the Senior Supervisor to select an External Examiner from outside the University and an Internal/External Examiner (must be a faculty member from outside the SA department) and inform the Graduate Program Assistant via email at gradsecsa@sfu.ca.

  *Note: The Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies office will not provide funding for any travel costs, but there is sometimes partial funding for an External Examiner’s travel expenses. The Senior Supervisor should check with the grad chair.*

  - The Senior Supervisor will provide the Graduate Program Assistant with:
    - The proposed date and time of the defence; please provide three (3) possible dates and times of committee availability, and ensure all members of the examining committee maintain their availability on these dates in case of unforeseen changes in the future.
    - **Note that defenses should take place at least two weeks before the Library Thesis Submission deadline.**
    - The names of all members of the examining committee and their contact information.
    - A signed copy of the Approval of Examining Committee Form. The form can be hand written or digitally signed.
    - The C.V., and Contact information of the External Examiner

  - The Student will provide the Graduate Program Assistant with:
    - An electronic copy of the student’s abstract that is 350 words in length, and should include the full and final title of the thesis.
    - An electronic copy of thesis (in PDF format, titled as ‘Department – Student Last Name’). This must be submitted at least 6 weeks prior to the proposed defence date.
    - If applicable, the student must provide the Graduate Program Assistant with the completed and approved Research Ethics Approval form (the original and all renewals) under Policies R20.01 (human subjects) or R20.03 (animal subjects).

    *Please note that it is no longer a requirement for the Title of the Thesis submitted to the Library to match that of the title of the Letter of Ethics Approval. As such, the Office of Research Ethics will no longer be processing amendments for Title Change Requests if the request is of the purpose of matching the Thesis Title to the Title of Letter of Ethics Approval.*

  - Once this information is received, the Graduate Program Assistant will forward the documentation to the Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies.

  *Note: If any members of the examining committee are expected to be absent on the day of the defense, the senior supervisor will inform the Graduate Program Assistant at least a month in advance of the defense. Under GGR 1.9.5 allows for the external examiner coming in via remote or absentia. In addition, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies office allows for no more than one committee member coming in via remote or acting in absentia.*

- **6 weeks prior to the proposed defence date:**
  - Once the above information is received, the Graduate Program Assistant will forward the documentation to the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, including the electronic copy of the thesis.
The deadline for this documentation is **6 full weeks prior to the proposed defence date**, and any delay may result in the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies office not approving the defense date selected.

- The Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies office will then distribute the electronic copy of the PhD thesis to the examining committee.
- The Graduate Program Assistant will book a room for the defense, and arrange for the Chair of defense. If the student needs a day before or an hour before their defence to practice, please inform the Graduate Program Assistant so they can make arrangements ahead of time.
- The student should read the library guidelines, available at the Library's Thesis Home page (http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/publish/thesis), regarding thesis submission. This is a detailed process and it is more manageable if the student is aware of the process in advance. Another link of interest, https://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/current/thesis/getting-started.html, will provide you with information on the degree completion process.

- **4 weeks prior to defence date:**
  - If hard copies are requested, the student is responsible for ensuring hard copies of their thesis are in the hands of the requested Examining Committee members, including the Chair of the defense at least 4 weeks before the defense. Please contact the Graduate Program Assistant in advance to find out how many coil bound hard copies you are required to make for the examining committee since students are not permitted to contact the Internal/External Examiner. Please provide the Graduate Program Assistant with their copy as soon as possible so that they receive it 4 weeks prior to the defence date.
  - The student can use double-sided printing for these copies.

- **After a successful defence:**
  - The student may need to complete revisions. Upon completion, the Senior Supervisor will email the Graduate confirming the thesis is ready to be submitted to the library and that all revisions have been completed (or that no revisions were required). This email will accompany the documents needed for submission to the Library (https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/publish/thesis/submission).
  - The student will need a signed approval page and thesis revision memo for their thesis upload on the library website.
  - The library requires an electronic copy of the thesis to be submitted by the library thesis deadline (https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/publish/thesis/submission/deadlines). Student who do not meet this deadline must enroll in the following term.
  - The Graduate Program Assistant will have at least 2 (single-sided) copy of their thesis made for binding for the department and senior supervisor (which the department pays for). Student copies are at the student's expense and are arranged by themselves.
  - The student applies to graduate online (SIMS) before the deadline.

Useful websites:
https://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/current/defence/Procedures.html
https://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/current/defence/BestPractices.html#main_content_text_6
http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/publish/thesis
https://www.sfu.ca/convocation/checklist/apply-to-graduate.html

Thesis Submission Deadline Dates for this Academic Year:
http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/publish/thesis/submission/deadlines

[Updated: March 2019]