

INTERNAL POLICY

Thesis Proposal Doctoral Program

1. After successfully completing the comprehensive examination (SVS 9997) or the practicum (SVS 9901), the student enrolls in the research project (SVS 9998). Normally, the student has one term, with the possibility of extension to a second term, to complete the research project. The student will not be able to submit a request to the ethics committee or independently collect data before the thesis committee authorizes the project. In case of failure, the student will only be allowed one term to resubmit the research project, and a second failure will result in the student being asked to withdraw from the program.
2. In the research project report, which should be **30 pages, double-spaced**, the student will describe the research problem, the research goals, question(s) and hypotheses, the theoretical framework, methodology, potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge, a provisional thesis plan and a bibliography. The student may consult members of the thesis committee when preparing the research project but not once the student has submitted the report to the thesis supervisor. This submission must take place at least **six weeks before the end of term** (check the [end-of-term dates in the university calendar](#)).
3. Once the thesis supervisor receives the research project report, he or she will send it, along with the online form entitled [Evaluation of the Research Project](#), to the other members of the thesis committee for evaluation. The thesis committee members have **15 working days** to evaluate the research project and return the form containing their written comments to the thesis supervisor, who will pass these forms on to the student. The thesis supervisor and the student must be given sufficient time to review the evaluators' comments before the defence of the research project, which must take place before the end of the term (check the [end-of-term dates in the university calendar](#)).
4. During the evaluation period, the **thesis supervisor** is responsible for contacting the thesis committee members and the student to set a date and time for the defence of the research project. Once this date and time are set, the thesis supervisor contacts the School secretariat to reserve a room.
5. When evaluating the written project report, a mark of "P" will mean "satisfactory for the purpose of presenting a defence" and "F" will mean "unsatisfactory for the purpose of presenting a defence." **If two or more thesis committee members***

mark the research project as unsatisfactory, the project will be not be considered suitable for defence. In this case, the student will be allowed to re-submit a project report, but only once. The re-submission must take place during the term following receipt of a mark of “F”. The re-submitted project report must take into account the thesis committee’s comments and criticisms of the first submission. An unsatisfactory mark for a second submission will result in a failing mark and the student will be asked to withdraw from the program.

*In the case of co-supervision, the opinions of both co-supervisors will be considered equal to one committee member vote.

6. The defence

Unless the student requests that the defence be public, the only individuals allowed to attend the research project defence are the student and the thesis committee members. The thesis supervisor chairs the research project defence, which proceeds as described below:

- First, the student will take 20-to-25 minutes to briefly present the research project
- Next, the student will answer questions asked by the thesis committee members
- Finally, the thesis committee will ask the student to leave while the committee deliberates

VERDICTS

A) If the committee members are generally satisfied with the research project report (even if it could benefit from minor changes), the report will be **accepted**. After deliberation, the committee members will come to an agreement on the comments and suggestions that the student will need to take into account when working on the thesis.

B) If a single committee member feels that the research project is unsatisfactory, the report will be accepted, but the dissenting evaluator will explain his or her objections and the committee members will need to clearly agree on, and state, which concerns the student will need to address, to their satisfaction, when pursuing the thesis.

C) If two or more committee members agree that the research project does not meet the requirements of the program, the student will need to rewrite the report and conduct a second defence before the end of the following term. If a mark of unsatisfactory (“F”) is assigned to the second attempt, the student will have failed the research project and will be asked to withdraw from the program.

Once the committee members have taken a decision on the verdict, and on the comments, suggestions or concerns that the student will need to address when pursuing the doctoral thesis, the **thesis supervisor and committee members** will sign the online form called Defence of a Research Project.

The student is then called back into the committee room and the thesis supervisor, as chair of the proceedings, describes the results of the committee’s deliberations to the student, and the defence is complete.

After the defense, the **thesis supervisor** sends the signed form by email to the School secretariat for the entry of the final grade and the indexing in the student's file. The supervisor keeps the original as well as the members' comments and recommendations and must give a copy to the student for their ethics protocol.

IMPORTANT:

If the student fails the oral or written part of research project, the student will only be allowed one more attempt, which must take place no later than the end of the following term.

The entire process (written report, defence and if necessary, second attempt if a rewriting or re-defence is required) can take no more than two terms of enrolment in the research project.

Policy approved by the Graduate Studies Committee on March 13, 2012 and by the Departmental Assembly on March 27, 2012.