



BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

DEFENSE OF PROPOSALS & DISSERTATIONS

Process of defending a proposal

- 1) The student is assigned a dissertation supervisor by the Faculty Dean or his assignee.
- 2) The student, under the guidance of the dissertation supervisor, writes the proposal.
- 3) After the proposal is completed, the student gets clearance from their dissertation supervisor before submitting it to the respective Faculty Deans (or their assignees). The following should be submitted at least seven days before the proposal defense date;
 - a. Soft Copy of the proposal document in word format.
 - b. Proposal submission form signed by the dissertation supervisor and the student
 - c. At least three (3) progress log forms signed by the dissertation supervisor and student

NOTE: Before submission of the proposal, the student must have cleared all outstanding fees. Students with outstanding fee balances will not be allowed to submit their proposals unless they obtain clearance from the Student Finance Office.

- 4) After submission, the student will be notified by the Faculty coordinator (or an assignee) of the date for the oral defense of their proposal. Remember the proposal must be submitted at least seven (7) days before the defense date. This allows the Faculty Dean (or assignee) constitute the defense panel who have to read the proposal before the defense.
- 5) When you present your work before the defense panel, there are four possible decisions that can be made concerning your work;
 - a. Accept without qualification
 - b. Accept with minor revisions
 - c. Accept with major revisions
 - d. Reject

The decision referred to in 5) above, is based on a majority vote of the defense panel. Here below is a brief description of what each decision means and the process that follows thereafter.

Accept without qualification

This means that the work presented is outstanding and the student is not required to do any revisions save for spellings and typos. This means the student can now progress to the data collection stage. The student will be required to deposit a copy of the proposal with the Board of Postgraduate studies.

Accept with minor revisions

The work is satisfactorily good but there are minor revisions required before the student can be allowed to proceed to the field to collect data. The process of doing the revisions and getting clearance is as follows;

- i. Student receives a written report of the required revisions from the Faculty Dean (or assignee).
- ii. Student makes corrections to the proposal and submit it to the dissertation supervisor
- iii. The dissertation supervisor checks and verifies that the required revisions have been made and if satisfied signs the correction verification form (see attached)
- iv. The student submits one copy of the proposal together with the signed correction verification form to the Board of Postgraduate school
- v. The Board of Postgraduate school issues a letter confirming that the student has been cleared to collect data.
- vi. Student proceeds to the field to collect data and thereafter writes the dissertation

Accept with major changes

The panel was not satisfied the work meets the threshold rigor. The student would be required to overhaul the work and return to re-appear before the panel. The process is as follows;

- i. Student receives a written list of the required revisions
- ii. Student makes corrections to the proposal and it to the dissertation supervisor
- iii. The dissertation supervisor checks and verifies that the required revisions have been made and if satisfied signs the proposal submission (attached)
- iv. The student prepares a list of revisions titled “Response to the Panel”. This response should clearly explain how each of the concerns expressed by the panel were addressed and the pages in the proposal where such revisions are found (see attached copy for an illustration).
- v. The student then re-submits the following to the Faculty coordinator (or assignee) of postgraduate studies
- vi. The student presents before a panel. The student will present to the panel a list of the corrections that were required and how each was addressed in the revised proposal. The student will thus not be presenting the whole proposal but the revisions made.
- vii. The panel then evaluates if the panelists’ concerns have been adequately addressed and decides whether the proposal to accept or reject it

Note that for re-submission there is no “accepting with major revision”, the proposal is either accepted or rejected

Rejection

This means the work fatally flawed and the student is required to start afresh. In this case, the student afresh to re-write the proposal, which can even be on a different topic. The process of submission is the same as articulated in 3) above.

Dissertation Defense

- 1) Student collects data and writes the dissertation under guidance of assigned dissertation supervisor.
- 2) When writing of the dissertation is completed, the student gets clearance from their dissertation supervisor and submits the dissertation to the **Board of Postgraduate Studies**. The following should be submitted at least **one month** before the dissertation defense date;
 - a. Softcopy of your dissertation document.
 - b. Dissertation submission form duly signed by the dissertation supervisor and the student
 - c. At least three (3) progress log forms signed by the dissertation supervisor and student

Note: Student must ensure that submitted dissertation is free from errors (grammatical, spellings and typos) and that all citations and references are in the required writing style. Students should request their respective faculties to supply them with the details of the required writing styles

- 3) The Dissertation is sent to examiners for marking.
- 4) The Board of Postgraduate Studies receives reports from the examiners and thereafter communicates the dissertation oral defense date to the student. Such communication to the student shall be made at least seven (7) days before the scheduled defense date.
- 5) Students defend their dissertation before a dissertation defense panel. The panel after listening to the viva voce and taking into account the examiners’ reports shall decide whether to;
 - a. pass the dissertation without qualification
 - b. pass the dissertation with minor revisions
 - c. pass the dissertation with major revisions
 - d. reject the dissertation

Once again, the decision will be based on a majority vote of the defense panel. The implication of each decision is outlined below.

Pass without qualification

This means the student's work is exemplary and no revisions are required. The student will be issued with a letter of completion after clearing with the Graduate School while awaiting graduation.

Pass with minor revisions

Student's work is satisfactorily good but some minor revisions are required before the student can be allowed to graduate. The process is as follows;

- i. Student receives a written report of the required revisions
- ii. Corrections to the dissertation are made and submitted to the dissertation supervisor.
- iii. The dissertation supervisor checks and verifies that the required revisions have been made and if satisfied signs the Correction verification form.
- iv. The student prepares a report of revisions titled "Response to the Panel". This response should clearly explain how each of the concerns expressed by the panel were addressed and the pages in the Dissertation where such revisions are to be found.
- v. The student submits a spiral-bound copy of the revised dissertation plus the "Response to the Panel" to the Graduate School.
- vi. The revised dissertation and the "Response to the Panel" are sent to an examiner for examination.
- vii. A report is sent to the Graduate School by the examiner, who must have been part of the defense panel, detailing if the issues raised are adequately addressed. If the examiner is of the opinion there are some issues that need additional input, the student will be requested to do the revisions and re-submits the dissertation to the Graduate School.
- viii. After the examiner is satisfied all issues raised by the panel are adequately addressed, the student submits the dissertation to the Graduate School
- ix. The student is issued with a letter of completion after clearing with the Graduate School while awaiting graduation.

c) Pass with major changes

The panel was not satisfied that the work meets the required rigor. Student would be required to overhaul the work. The process is as follows;

- i. Student receives a written list of the required revisions (This should within one working day after presentation)
- ii. Corrections are made under the guidance of the dissertation supervisor
- iii. The dissertation supervisor checks and verifies that the required revisions have been made and if satisfied signs the Correction verification form
- iv. The student prepares a list of revisions titled "Response to the Panel". This response should clearly explain how each of the concerns expressed by the panel were addressed and the pages in the Dissertation where such revisions are to be found.
- v. At least two weeks before the oral presentation, the student re-submits the revised dissertation to the Graduate School.
- vi. The revised dissertation and the "Response to the Panel" are forwarded to at least two examiners for re-evaluation

- vii. Next step is oral presentation of the “Response to the Panel” before a defense panel. The student will present to the panel a report of the corrections that were required and how each was addressed in the revised Dissertation. The student will thus not be presenting the proposal but the revisions made.
- viii. The panel then re-examines the

Note that for re-submission there is no “passing with major revisions”, the dissertation either passes or fails

Rejection

The dissertation is fatally flawed and the student fails the unit. The student will therefore be required to repeat the unit i.e. starts afresh from the proposal stage. The implication here is the student pays a full fee for the repeat unit.

NOTE: This rule only applies to re-submission of the dissertation and not the proposal. Rejection at the proposal level does require repeating the unit.

CAUTION AGAINST PLAGIARISM:

PLEASE THAT THE WORK YOU SUBMIT IS YOUR OWN ORIGINAL CREATION. ALL SUBMISSIONS TO THE BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES WILL BE CHECKED FOR PLAGIARISM USING TURNITIN, WEB-BASED ANTI-PLAGIARISM SOFTWARE. STUDENTS FOUND TO HAVE PLAGIARIZED THEIR WORK WILL FACE DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

STUDENTS CAN CHECK IF THEY HAVE PLAGIARIZED BEFORE SUBMITTING USING STUDENTS ACCOUNTS. FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT THE DIRECTOR, BOARD OF POST GRADUATE STUDIES.