

DGP GRADUATION INSTRUCTIONS

To meet the requirements for graduation from the DGP, a student must:

- 1) submit a written dissertation to the thesis committee
- 2) pass an oral defense (private final examination meeting before the thesis committee)
- 3) provide documentation of publication(s)
- 4) give a thesis seminar (advertised, public event open to the Northwestern community)
- 5) make any corrections to the dissertation that are requested by the committee and submit final version to Graduate School via ProQuest site

The instructions and guidelines below should be followed as DGP students approach graduation.

1) Permission to write dissertation.

The thesis committee is responsible for determining when a student has met the research requirements necessary to submit a completed dissertation. When a student and advisor determine that all or most of the experiments required of the thesis have been completed, the student will convene the thesis committee to request permission to write the dissertation. This is usually done within six months of the anticipated date of final completion.

The student will submit to the committee and to the DGP an outline of the proposed dissertation, including a list of the likely figures and tables. At the meeting, the student will present a comprehensive overview of the research he/she has accomplished and plans to accomplish prior to graduating. Based on the dissertation outline, the figure and table list and the oral summary, the thesis committee will determine whether the body of research is sufficient and consistent with a PhD degree or whether additional experiments are necessary. If additional work is required, the extent and nature of this work will be listed on the report form. In some situations, the remaining work may be judged to be so extensive or ill-defined that completion is not possible in the near future. The meeting will have three possible outcomes:

- (i) **Approval** —the completed work is of sufficient quality and significance to support a PhD thesis. This option will be used when the student's body of work is essentially complete. Signed approval from the committee will then be provided at the end of the meeting.
- (ii) **Conditional** —additional experimentation is necessary to complete a dissertation, but the student should be able to complete these experiments within the next six months. This option would be used when the student has already completed substantial and significant research but when a few experiments are required to bring the work to conclusion. Signed approval from the committee will be obtained after the additional work is completed or after the student provides an accounting of his/her attempts at completing the additional work and an explanation of why the additional work could not be completed. Committee approval at this stage may not require an additional meeting, although a follow-up meeting can be requested by any committee member prior to the student receiving signed approval.
- (iii) **Incomplete (Reschedule)** —The student's graduate work remains incomplete and considerable progress is necessary before a dissertation can be written. The meeting should be rescheduled once substantial progress has been made.

If a student does not yet have a first author publication in press at the time the thesis committee grants permission to write the dissertation, a plan for completing the publication requirement before graduation must be included on the committee report form. The plan should include the likely date of submission of a paper, and indicate what will be the student's expected participation in any revisions for resubmission.

2) Graduate School forms to be completed prior to defense

A) Students must notify the Graduate School of their intent to graduate in either March, June, August or December by completing the ***Application for Degree*** form on-line using CAESAR. Please note that the application for degree is due several weeks before the actual date of graduation. Students must check the Graduate School web site for deadlines.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-services/calendar/index.html>

B) The student will complete the ***Final Examination Form*** on-line using CAESAR. This form will include the title of the dissertation, expected defense date, and the names of the advisor and all thesis committee members. The student will submit the form on-line and print out a paper copy. This printed form is used to obtain signatures from the committee members when the defense is completed and the dissertation is approved. Once the form is signed and all revisions to the dissertation have been made, the form should be brought to the DGP Associate Director.

3) DGP Approval of Dissertation and Defense form

The DGP *Approval of Dissertation and Defense form* (contained in this PDF) is to be filled out by the dissertation advisor and signed by the thesis committee members. Signing Page 1 of the form indicates that the committee members (1) approve the written dissertation and (2) agree that the student has passed the final dissertation defense. The committee must determine whether the dissertation is in a form suitable for submission to the Graduate School or requires edits or revisions. Any edits or revisions required by committee members should be conveyed to the student by providing a written list or by providing marked copies of the dissertation. The advisor (or someone designated by the committee) will be responsible for confirming that all edits have been completed in the dissertation prior to submission. Approval of the edits is indicated by the advisor signing the form in the appropriate space. Once all revisions to the dissertation have been, the signed form should be brought to the DGP Associate Director.

4) Documentation of student publication

Every DGP student is expected to make significant contributions to an area of biology or medicine. Before awarding the PhD, the DGP requires each student to have published at least one first-author, peer-reviewed, original research paper in the primary literature (i.e. not a review article) that contains substantial data stemming from the student's dissertation research. At least one paper must be published or in press before a student has finished the PhD requirements.

The advisor uses the *Approval of Dissertation and Defense form* to list the student's paper(s). Please see the instructions on Page 2 of the form below.

5) Written dissertation document, private oral defense and public seminar

Students are responsible for scheduling the final defense with the committee. Students must provide the committee with the complete dissertation at least two weeks before the date of the defense.

The committee may accept the dissertation as is, accept it with revisions, or reject it as unsuitable. The committee will also decide whether to grant permission for the student to give their final seminar. This decision can be based on the quality of the dissertation and/or the quality of the defense.

Please note that the committee will hold the private defense meeting before the public seminar. It is most common to present the seminar one to two weeks after the defense, but students can schedule the seminar at the convenience of their advisor, family members, committee members, etc. Students should revise or correct the dissertation as instructed by the committee before the public seminar. The dates of the defense and seminar should be early enough to allow the student sufficient time to meet the published deadlines for submitting the completed dissertation and all supporting materials to the DGP office and The Graduate School.

Any student with extenuating circumstances regarding the timing of the seminar and the private defense should contact the DGP office.

Although the student will often have formally defended his or her dissertation to the committee prior to the public seminar, the student will not have completed all of the requirements for the DGP. Both the mentor and the student should recognize that the public defense is the culmination of their PhD experience and represents an important moment in both of their academic careers. While family and friends are welcome, it is important that the student understand that the final seminar is meant to be a scholarly presentation. The professional standards that are expected of either outside speakers at Northwestern or of students at large international symposia should be maintained. Items such as the acknowledgements should be brief and professional as would be expected at a normal scholarly seminar.

6) Completing the process

Once the student has submitted an acceptable dissertation and passed an oral defense, the committee should sign the **TGS Final Examination** and the **DGP Approval of Dissertation and Defense** forms. The advisor (or designated committee member) should sign the forms after the student has made all necessary revisions to the dissertation as instructed by the committee. The completed and signed forms should be brought to the DGP Associate Director.

Students should contact the Student Service Representative in The Graduate School for instructions on submitting the dissertation electronically.



CHECKLIST FOR DOCTORAL DEGREE COMPLETION

REQUIRED ITEMS:

- Check deadlines for submission of all paperwork listed below.** Deadlines may be found on the webpage <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-services/calendar/>
- Application for Degree form:** This can be filled out via [CAESAR](#). Login to CAESAR, click on "For Students" -> "TGS Forms" and navigate to "Application for Degree" online form
- PhD Final Exam form:** Login to [CAESAR](#) to complete and submit the form. Print out a hard copy of the completed form to take to your final exam. Have each committee member sign the form next to their name. The signed form should go to your Director of Graduate Studies (or program/department assistant) who will finish the approval process online; the form will be submitted to The Graduate School electronically for final approval, with the signed hard copy to follow.
- Dissertation submission** via ProQuest, <http://www.etdadmin.com/cgi-bin/home>. Once your dissertation has been approved by your committee and all edits and revisions are complete, submit online via ProQuest. The dissertation must conform to TGS formatting standards: www.tgs.northwestern.edu/documents/academic-services/guidelines_for_students.pdf
- Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED).** Take the web survey via <https://sed.norc.org/survey>
- The Graduate School PhD Exit Survey:** <https://www.snapsurveys.com/swf/surveylogin.asp?k=129856244307>
- If you have any **Y or K grades** on your transcript, your department will need to submit the appropriate change of grade form to The Graduate School by the published deadline.

ADDITIONAL REMINDERS:

- If you have **student health insurance** through Northwestern University and you would like to cancel it, see the cancellation instructions: <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/graduate-life/health-services/health-plan/cancellation/index.html>
- For information on **commencement and hooding ceremonies** see: www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-services/hooding/index.html.
- The Intent to Participate form is required for students taking part in The Graduate School **Hooding Ceremony** and must be filled out by the deadline: www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-services/hooding/fag/index.html
- For **regalia** rental/purchase deadlines: <http://www.northwestern.edu/commencement/students/index.html>
- Check CAESAR** for holds on your record. Your diploma and copies of your transcript may not be released if you have holds. Contact the Office of Student Accounts with questions: <http://www.northwestern.edu/sfs/>

If you have questions about the above, or would like to verify what The Graduate School has received to date, please contact your student services representative at gradservices@northwestern.edu or call The Graduate School at 847-491-5279 and ask to speak with a student services representative.

Driskill Graduate Program in Life Sciences (DGP) Committee Approval of Dissertation and Defense

Name of Student	Signature of Student
Date of Dissertation Defense:	

Committee Members - Please sign to indicate that you:

(1) approve the written dissertation* and (2) agree that the student has passed the final defense.

Printed Names of Committee Members	Signatures of Committee Members	Approve Dissertation *	Pass Defense
Chair:		Y N	Y N
Advisor:		Y N	Y N
		Y N	Y N
		Y N	Y N
		Y N	Y N
		Y N	Y N

*If the dissertation requires more than minor corrections (typos, etc), this form should not be signed until the document is in the final form. Please provide required revisions to the student via either a written list or by marked copies of the dissertation.

Due Date for Revisions: _____

Both minor and major revisions must be confirmed by at least one member of the committee. Please indicate who has verified edits or corrections before submission to Graduate School:

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Use the space below to list the student's first author published, peer-reviewed, original research paper(s) that are in print or in press to fulfill the DGP publication requirement. Please attach documentation for papers that are currently accepted but not yet in press. If the student has no paper in print or in press, list any submitted paper(s) and proceed to page 2.

DGP Director Approval: _____ **Date:** _____

Instructions:

A paper that is submitted and reviewed (but not published or in press) can fulfill the requirement if the reviewers' and editor's comments indicate that only minor editorial revisions (formatting, additional discussion, reference corrections, etc.) are needed before publication. A submitted paper that requires substantial changes (e.g., additional experiments or resolution of disagreement between the reviewer(s) and the authors concerning experimental interpretation) will not fulfill the requirement. The student and advisor will submit the reviews and editor's comments to the DGP office. Determination of whether the student has met the publication requirement with a paper needing minor revision will be at the discretion of the DGP Director.

Please attach correspondence from the journal for papers that require minor revisions. Use the space on Page 3 of this form to elaborate if needed.

Co-first authors

A paper on which a student is a co-first author will not automatically fulfill the requirement, but co-first authorship can meet the publication requirement in many cases. As with a sole author publication, the student's contribution should represent both a substantial amount of the work of the paper as well as a significant portion of the student's thesis. There are two characteristics of co-first author papers that will make approval likely: 1) if there are only two co-first authors, and 2) if the publication comes late in the student's career and represents a major portion of the thesis project. Publications that have more than two co-first authors or that are published early in a student's career are less likely to be approved. In all cases, approval requires that the student and advisor first explain to the thesis committee the student's contribution to the paper and the proportion of the thesis represented in the paper. If the thesis committee determines that the student's contribution meets the spirit of the requirement, they will petition to the DGP to allow the publication to meet the requirement. The thesis committee members should indicate their approval (or disapproval) to a petition by initialing the appropriate boxes on page 3 of the Thesis Defense form. Specific comments from the thesis committee may also be included in a petition package. Petitions to allow a co-first author publication to meet the requirement may be approved by the DGP Director, or may be passed to the Program Committee.

Please use the space on Page 3 of this form to document the student's contribution to any co-first author paper(s).

If the student has not met any of the above conditions at the time of the dissertation defense, the student and advisor, with agreement of the thesis committee, can petition the DGP Director and DGP Program Committee to allow the student to graduate prior to completion of the requirement. The petition should provide a compelling explanation for why the body of work in the thesis has not been able to meet the publication requirement thus far, and specific plans for a successful publication. At a minimum, the student's manuscript should have been submitted and gone through at least one round of review in order for the thesis committee to comment on the likelihood of publication after revision. Manuscript reviews and author rebuttals should be included in the petition package. Unanimous consent of thesis committee is preferred but not required to submit a petition. The thesis committee members should indicate their approval (or disapproval) to a petition by initialing the appropriate boxes on page 3 of the Thesis Defense form. Specific comments from the thesis committee may also be included in a petition package.

The petition package should be submitted via email to the DGP office. As the Program Committee will need to meet for discussions, any petition must be submitted at least four weeks before the PhD materials submission date published by TGS for each quarter. The DGP Program Committee expects that such exceptions will be granted only rarely.

Please use the space on Page 3 of this form as part of any petition for permission to graduate without having met the publication requirement.

The members of the committee should initial the boxes on Page 3 to indicate their approval of petition.

Printed Names of Committee Members	Initials of Committee Members to Indicate Approval of Petition	Approve or Disapprove of Petition (Circle one)	
		Approve	Disapprove
		Approve	Disapprove
		Approve	Disapprove
		Approve	Disapprove
		Approve	Disapprove
		Approve	Disapprove