

DGP Permission to Write Meeting Report

Instructions The form is to be completed by the student (bottom half of page 2) and a committee representative then signed by the Committee Chair on behalf of all committee members and signed by the Advisor and the student (page 5) if appropriate. **The student is responsible for ensuring that the completed final form, their dissertation outline, CV, and IDP are submitted to the DGP Office at which time all documents enter the academic record.** A PDF copy of the Meeting Report should be emailed to grace.musante@northwestern.edu, the Research Advisor(s), and student. The student copy will serve as a written notification from the DGP of adequate annual research progress (in compliance with The Graduate School requirement).

Guidance for Student and Advisor

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 the DGP Office 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 they have accomplished and plan to accomplish before graduating.

Guidance for Thesis Committee

Based on the dissertation outline, the list of figures and tables, 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. 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 a complete conclusion. Signed approval from the committee will be obtained after the additional work is completed or after the student provides an accounting of their attempts to complete 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.

Student Name		
Date of Meeting		
Recommended final defense (check one):	3 months	6 months

I have reviewed the final report and certify that it is complete and represents the views of the entire committee.

Chair's Signature: _____

Is the student given permission to begin writing the dissertation?

Approval	Conditional	Reschedule	Committee Members	Initials

Notes for Conditional or Reschedule Decisions

Indicate Yes (Y) or No (N) by checking the boxes below:

Were all committee members in attendance? Y N

Did the committee receive the student's written thesis outline? Y N

Did the committee receive an updated CV? Y N

Since the last meeting, are there new presentations/seminars? Y N

Since the last meeting, are there new publications? Y N

Does the student have a first-author publication? Y N

If the student has not yet submitted a first author publication, complete Page 5-A.

Since the last meeting, are there new student awards (e.g., external fellowships, etc.) with start and end dates? Y N

Has the student completed an annual Individual Development Plan and discussed the form with their PI within the last 12 months? Y N

Will the student leave the lab before completing the thesis? Y N

If yes, complete Page 5-B.

STUDENT'S RESEARCH PROGRESS:

POSITIVE aspects of student's work:

Aspects of student's work that need improvement:

Thesis Committee Verifications Checklist

Learning and practicing the essentials of “Responsible Conduct of Research” (RCR) and “Rigor and Reproducibility” (R&R) are essential parts of graduate student training. While the DGP offers classroom instruction in these areas, the primary responsibility for establishing good practices in a student’s habits lies with the thesis advisor and other members of the student’s lab. In addition, the thesis committee can help ensure that students understand and adhere to the best principles.

To aid in efforts to hold students accountable, the DGP asks that thesis committees use the checklist below as a starting point for questioning students and evaluating the student’s practice of RCR and R&R in their presentations to the committee and their written documents, particularly the dissertation. At the final stage, before approving a dissertation as complete, the committee should be assured that proper procedures have been followed and reported.

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|----------|----------|--|
| Y | N | Does the student indicate, in text and in figure legends, the number of times experiments have been repeated? |
| Y | N | Are replicates clearly identified as biological or technical? |
| Y | N | Has the student used appropriate statistical methods to determine the significance of the results? |
| Y | N | Are conclusions supported by adequate repetition of experiments? |
| Y | N | Are data and conclusions that are based on one or few observations labeled as preliminary? |
| Y | N | Are the methods written in sufficient detail in the dissertation to make it a useful resource for the lab and the broader scientific community? |
| Y | N | Has the student properly attributed any work that was done by others?
Has the student-generated their own new figures, especially for models of their system? If the student uses copied figures for the thesis, has the student obtained permission and indicated that such permission was obtained? |
| Y | N | Has the student authenticated reagents (cell lines, animals, DNA constructs, etc) and properly notated the source(s)? |

If possible scientific misconduct (fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism) is found while evaluating a student’s work, the committee should report the specific occurrence(s) to the DGP Office and Northwestern’s Office for Research Integrity. If any data presented by a student, either in writing or oral presentations, is later found to violate the principles of RCR or R&R, a committee may revoke “Permission to Write” or may withdraw approval of a final defense.

A - Plan for First Author Publication

If the student is given permission to write the dissertation but does not yet have a first author publication, please indicate below the plan for completing this requirement before graduation. Include likely date of submission and expected student's participation in revisions or resubmission (if needed).

B - Student Leaving the Lab Before Completion

A student who has completed all experimental research and is no longer working on the thesis project may in some cases depart the lab before completing all requirements. Typically, such students will be in the process of writing the dissertation. Before leaving the lab, the student must obtain "Permission to Write" from his or her thesis committee. The student will not be eligible for stipend or salary from the lab, and must remain registered in TGS 512 during Fall, Winter and Spring quarters. The student must complete and defend the dissertation within two quarters (six months) of leaving the lab. If the student does not complete the thesis requirement by the six-month deadline, they will be considered to not be making adequate academic progress and may therefore be placed on Academic Probation for two quarters. If the student has not completed the requirements by the end of the probation period, he or she will be subject to dismissal from the program.

Indicate by signing here that the student and advisor are aware of the policy stated above for timely completion of the thesis.

Advisor	
Student	