

# Dissertation Defense CHECKLIST

*USF Sociology Graduate Committee, updated December 2024*

## BEFORE:

- Student has completed **required** ETD workshop (on dissertation formatting) and applied for graduation.

**Note:** Any changes to the committee after the proposal defense must be made via the form [Changes to the Graduate Student Supervisory Committee](#). A valid committee must be on file at least two (2) weeks before the dissertation defense is scheduled.

## DEADLINES:

- Students are responsible** for meeting all graduation deadlines (application for graduation, final submission), sent out by Graduate Director at beginning of semester. Students must follow all defense and submission procedures of the [USF Office of Graduate Studies](#) and [CAS](#).

## PROCESS:

- Committee chair and members agree that the student's dissertation proposal is ready to be defended. An outside chair must be appointed to preside over the dissertation defense. See the USF Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) rules for selection criteria of outside chairs (see [link](#)). Department rules stipulate that outside chairs must be at the rank of Assistant Professor or higher.
- Committee chair, members and student agree on a day, time (at least 2 hours) and location for the defense. A room must be reserved if held in-person.
- A [request](#) must first be submitted to OGS to schedule and announce the defense. The student has the committee chair and members sign the [Request for Dissertation Defense](#) form and send a copy to the APS to submit to OGS.
- Upon OGS approval, committee chair distributes the approved flyer announcing the dissertation defense in the Department via email at least 24 hours prior to the defense.
- All committee members must attend the defense.
- Procedures at the dissertation defense are explained by the USF Office of Graduate Studies (link above) and must be followed.
- At the end of the meeting, student must be told if dissertation defense was successful or not.
- After a successful defense, all committee members will be given a copy of the anonymous [Dissertation Assessment Form](#) by the committee chair. Chair and members must fill out this form and deliver it to the Academic Program

Specialist (APS) no later than two business days after the final submission of the dissertation.

- If defense was successful, and once dissertation is completed, all committee members sign the Successful Defense of a Ph.D. Dissertation form. A copy must be given to the APS.
- Student must file the final draft of the dissertation and related paperwork, including proof of a plagiarism check, with the USF Office of Graduate Studies. Information on requirements for submission of the finished and approved manuscript copies is available online at the Thesis and Dissertation website at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php>.
- After the dissertation has been defended and completed, the Graduate Program Coordinator will complete and file the Graduation Certification Form on behalf of the graduating student.

#### AND IN CASE:

- If the dissertation defense is not successful, the committee chair communicates this outcome to the APS and the committee does not fill out the Successful Defense of a Ph.D. Dissertation form. The dissertation defense must be rescheduled according to the above procedures. Dissertation defenses can only be rescheduled once. If the student's dissertation defense is still not considered acceptable at the second meeting, the student will be dismissed from the program.

#### WHAT ELSE?

- Student **must** be enrolled in at least two (2) credit hours of "dissertation" for the semester during which the dissertation is being filed.
- Students **must** close out IRB approval for their dissertation research project by filing a final report with the USF Office of Research Integrity & Compliance.