

PhD Progress Checklist

During your first year (second semester), you should be doing the following:

1. Have an approved plan of study approved with the Graduate Committee by the 12th week of your second semester.
 - You need to have at least 42 credit hours of course work plus 18 credit hours of research (COM 69900).
2. Have an electronic plan of study approved and filed with the Graduate School.
 - You can access the electronic plan of study form via myPurdue. To begin your plan of study (POS), click on the Plan of Study Generator (POSG) link, then click on "Create new plan of study" link. Once in the POSG, refer to the Help buttons located on each page to assist you in using the electronic POSG. You do not need to complete the entire form in one sitting; you may save your plan of study and return to it later. You may not bookmark any pages within the Graduate School link. To return to the POSG you must login to myPurdue.
 - Note: No Prelims can be scheduled until the student has an approved electronic plan of study on file with the Graduate School.

During your sixth semester, you should be doing the following:

3. Preliminary Examination "Prelims"
 - Written Preliminary Examination
 - The questions asked in the written exam are not "course questions" but are based on general knowledge of the area examined.
 - All questions should be sent to the Graduate Coordinator at least one week prior to the beginning of the exam period, but may be sent as early as the committee member has the question prepared.
 - The examination consists of 20 hours of questions typically distributed in the following manner:
 - 8 hours devoted to the major area
 - 8 hours in the substantive minor areas
 - 4 hours in research methodology

- At least 8 of the 20 hours must be conducted in house closed book format. Up to 12 hours of the exam may be in the form of take-home questions, special research projects, open book questions, etc.
 - Written examinations must be completed within a 30 day period.
 - Timing of the written exam aligns with the last semester of coursework and can be done at any point during the semester, as negotiated with the committee.
- The day of your in-house prelim you will go to the Graduate Coordinator's office to pick up a flash drive with your question on it and a laptop. Return them to the Graduate Coordinator directly after each exam time. The Graduate Coordinator will distribute copies of your response to the prelim question to your chair or co-chairs and the person whose question you are responding to. Make sure your committee has adequate time to read and evaluate your exam (at least two weeks).
- Oral Preliminary Examination
 - An oral defense of the student's response to the written exam must be held within 30 days following completion of the written exam.
 - At least three weeks before the oral exam, you will meet with the Graduate Coordinator to locate a room for the defense on the day/time you established with your committee.
 - After the space is confirmed, you will initiate the Graduate School Form 8 "Request for Appointment of Examining Committee". This triggers the Graduate School to generate the paperwork required to report the results of the written/oral preliminary examination.
 - The day of your in-house prelim you will go to the Graduate Coordinator's office to pick up a flash drive with your question on it and a laptop. Return them to the Graduate Coordinator directly after each exam time. The Graduate Coordinator will distribute copies of your response to the prelim question to your chair or co-chairs and the person whose question you are responding to. Make sure your committee has adequate time to read and evaluate your exam (at least two weeks).

- You must hold your Prelim Oral Defense within thirty (30) days after the two week lapse period between your last question and the first date eligible to schedule your prelim defense.
- At least three weeks before the exam period, the student should complete and submit a Prelim Defense Request so the Graduate Coordinator may schedule a room for the prelim defense. You will also need to submit an electronic Form 8 “Request for Appointment of Examining Committee.” The Form 8 must be at the Graduate School **at least two weeks** prior to the scheduled oral defense.
- After an audit of the student’s records, the Graduate School will make available the electronic Form 10 “Report of Preliminary Examination” to your committee chair or co-chairs. Complete the Oral Defense. Make sure that your advisor completes the electronic Form 10. Once you have completed prelims, you officially are a doctoral candidate. This is also referred to as ABD “all but dissertation.” The next stage is writing your dissertation.

During your seventh semester, you should be doing the following:

4. With the guidance of your Advisor, write a Prospectus.
 - The length and scope of a prospectus varies according to the expectations of different advisors, but in general the prospectus constitutes an overview of the dissertation that includes: Purpose, Justification, Literature Review, Method, and Organization of Study.
 - Most students later convert their prospectus into the first chapter of their dissertation.
5. Go to the Thesis/Dissertation Office website for templates and guidance for dissertation formatting. It will be easier if you write the dissertation from the beginning using the required format.
6. Once you and your advisor are satisfied with the Prospectus, distribute copies to your other committee members.
7. Schedule a prospectus defense meeting with your committee. Make sure your committee has adequate time to read your prospectus (at least two weeks).
8. At least three weeks before the exam period, the student should complete and submit

a Prospectus Defense Request so the Graduate Coordinator may schedule a room for the prospectus defense.

- The Graduate Coordinator will put the department form “Prospectus Report of Advisory Committee” with which to report the results of the defense, in your chair or co-chairs mailbox.
- The form should be returned to the Graduate Coordinator.

9. Defend your prospectus.

- Ideally this meeting is a working session in which you and your committee elaborate and agree on the scope and design of your project. Make sure you understand each committee member’s feedback.

10. Check the list of deadlines on the Graduate School’s website for the semester in which you plan to graduate.

11. In consultation with your advisor, finish writing your dissertation.

During your final semester, you should be doing the following:

12. When you have a more-or-less final version, you should make your appointment to deposit your thesis/dissertation as soon as possible.

- Once the deposit appointments fill up, the Thesis/Dissertation Office will not take any more appointments and you will have to wait until the next semester to make a deposit appointment and graduate.
- Go to the Thesis/Dissertation Office website to schedule your deposit appointment (this includes long distance deposits). Schedule a final defense. You must give your dissertation to your committee at least 2 weeks before the defense.

13. Notify the Graduate Coordinator at least 3 weeks prior to the date you would like to hold your final exam (defense) so she may reserve a room and send out a notice of your final defense.

- Graduate School Form 8 (Request for Appointment of Examining Committee) is initiated by the student in the Graduate School database and submitted to the Graduate School to generate the paperwork required to report the results of the Final Exam (Defense).

14. Defend your dissertation.

15. Make sure your committee completes your electronic Form 11 “Report of the Final Examination” and the “Electronic Thesis/Dissertation Acceptance Form” (The electronic thesis/dissertation acceptance form replaces the paper GS forms 9, 32, 15, and 36).