

**Frequently Asked Questions (With Answers) and Advice for
PhD and MS Students Filing Dissertations and Masters Theses in EEB**
Katie LaPadula, Biology Advisor for Graduate Affairs, biogrдав@indiana.edu
Spencer Hall, EEB Graduate Program Director, eebgpd@indiana.edu
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Below, we provide some helpful bits of advice and address key questions related to finishing and your PhD Dissertation or your MS Thesis with the University Graduate School (UGS).

See also [this webpage](#) on the Student portal

(1) How do I formally announce my defense to UGS? When?

PhD students: Please visit: <https://graduate.indiana.edu/academics-research/graduation.html>

It describes the requirement of filing your PhD Announcement by 30 days in advance. The Graduate Office and your Graduate Program Director strongly urges you to start this process **40-50 days** in advance, as you must have all committee members electronically approve your Announcement ... and that can take time. Submission of late Announcements creates big problems.

A few more details:

- * A [link to start your announcement](#) on One.iu.edu
- * Once scheduled, the time and place of the defense cannot be changed without prior permission. To request the change, the research chair on your NOR form (your advisor) must send the PhD recorder an email explaining the rationale for the change and the new time/place.
- * Presently, defense are permitted as in-person or purely online, with hybrid permitted with permission ([policy](#)).
- * If the defense is cancelled (to be defended later), a new e-doc Announcement can just be filed. That second e-doc must be submitted 30 days prior to the new defense, though (although it can be approved in less than 30 days).

MS students: there is no formal announcement with UGS.

(2) How do I format my dissertation or thesis for the University Graduate School?

Visit the appropriate site listed below. Students planning to file should visit the site at least 6 months prior to the defense to become familiarized with the process. These sites answer virtually all questions about the submission process.

PhD Dissertations: <https://graduate.indiana.edu/thesis-dissertation/index.html> and <https://graduate.indiana.edu/thesis-dissertation/formatting/doctoral.html>

MS Theses: <https://graduate.indiana.edu/thesis-dissertation/formatting/masters.html>

These sites have almost all of the information that you need: margins, fonts, etc. The Research Committee and Dissertation Advisor still have much input on number of chapters, requirements for and nature of Introductory and Conclusion chapters, etc.

A warning on timing:

When you submit your dissertation to UGS, it must contain all committee-requested changes and be completely formatted. You likely need two weeks to make changes and to format for UGS after your defense. So, do not defend a day before a key UGS deadline!

Also: Submit your abstract and signatures of committee members electronically via the UGS (type "Defense Signature Collection" at one.iu.edu)

(3) Who do I contact if I have questions about filing my dissertation or thesis?

- *Dissertations (PhD)*: Shelly Gerber is the PHD recorder for UGS – specific questions about submission should be directed to her (gerbers@iu.edu, 812-855-9345).

- *Theses (MS)*: Kerry Neal (finnek@iu.edu, 812-855-1117) is the MS/MA recorder in UGS.

(4) Do I have to submit a hardcopy of the finish dissertation or thesis to UGS, my department, my committee, etc.?

Nope. Sometimes, students make duplicate copies of the documents for themselves - they may wish to include them with a hard copy of the dissertation for themselves or for members of their committees. (Information about dissertation embargos [delayed release] can be found [here](#)).

Otherwise, students do not need to create a hardcopy of the dissertation for UGS, Biology, etc. They can make hardcopies for their families or their mentors, if they wish.

(5) Do I have to be registered when I defend?

It depends:

(A) PhD students: Yes!

PHD students must be registered at the time they submit the dissertation, during summer session I or II. If they graduate early in the summer, they should register for summer session I.

G901 or not?

PhD students need to check with the Biology Grad Office to see if they are eligible for G901 credits in the summer. If they are eligible for them (i.e., they have 90 credits but have not used up all of their six semesters of G901 eligibility) they must first submit and have the announcement page approved, i.e., set a date and time for the defense. The Grad Office will then seek approval to register for these credits from UGS. If they have exhausted all of their G901 credits they will have to register for 1 research credit (c. \$1,000) and will need to make arrangements for a fee remission for this credit.

OIS fees: International students who register in the summer – G901 or not – will be charged summer fees from OIS¹. These fees are in addition to those paid during fall and spring semesters.

(B) MS students: Maybe!

MS students are required to be registered only if they are supported as an AI or as an RA (i.e., as an SAA). Otherwise, they do not have to be registered.

(6) How do I announce my dissertation to the Biology department?

PhD students must ensure that their dissertation defense is announced in Biology's 'This Week in Biology' (TWIB) mailing list. The TWIB listing then triggers Biology's Grad office to ask the PI for a grade for L800. Most students have many L800 credits (for EEB and GCDB) or M800 (for Microbiology students) credits and possibly a few G901 credits which have been assigned an R grade for (deferred) research credits. Those must be turned into letter grades.

To register the talk with TWIB, please file it following the [directions here](#).

MS thesis do not require formal public defenses. However, students can defend them publically if they wish (strongly encouraged by EEB, i.e., it is definitely the norm, but not required in extenuating circumstances – please see Graduate Program Guide).

(7) What if a committee member can't attend in person (e.g., is on sabbatical elsewhere)?

Currently the UGS recommends in-person defenses, but allows committee members to attend on zoom in purely online or hybrid forms. (See policy [here](#))

(8) I successfully defended my PhD dissertation. By when do I need to submit my formatted dissertation to UGS? Tell me about other timing details that I might not think about.

You have **six months** to successfully file the dissertation with UGS, per the Bulletin under "submission of dissertation" ([here](#)):

Students are expected to submit the final version of the dissertation within six months of the defense date to maintain sufficient academic progress

Other timing considerations (first, see [here](#) for UGS' deadlines):

- * **Submit after defending:** Generally speaking, students submit their dissertation soon after the defense...
- * **> Two weeks before key UGS deadlines:** ... however, not too soon! Any given UGS deadline requires that all committee-requested changes must be complete by that date. You typically need two weeks, post-defense, to prepare your dissertation for UGS. (Thus, save yourself stress - do not defend the day before the deadline!).
- * **Final deadlines from UGS:** For most months (other than December [Fall semester] and May [Spring semester]), you must submit this initial dissertation to the University Graduate

¹ In 2022, those were > \$100 on top of \$714 or \$425 per academic year.

School by the 15th of the month in which you plan to graduate. (December and May graduations may be different – see the [deadlines](#)).

- * *Monthly UGS deadlines*: Then, you must have successfully submitted and received UGS-approval on all UGS-requested edits and submitted your Defense Signatures edoc by the 27th of the month in which you wish to graduate. Your graduation/completion date is the last day of that month.
- * *Degree completion date*: Thus, you “officially complete the program” and graduate on the last day of the month in which your final submitted dissertation formatting revisions are submitted and approved.
- * *Participation in graduation ceremony*: PhD and MS students can participate in the December (winter) ceremony if they finish between Sept and December. However, students must apply to participate, by c. last week of September (dates vary by year). To apply, visit one.iu.edu task center, then search for the appropriate eDoc:

For PhD students: PhD Commencement Participation Application

For MS students: Master’s Application for Advanced Degree

Students do not need to fill this out if they do not wish to participate in the ceremony.