

Thesis guidelines

Department of Geology & Geophysics

Guidelines for students:

-  You should begin preparing for your thesis defense the semester prior to your actual defense. This means you should meet with the entire committee (in person or teleconference) to update them on the results of your research and your progress toward a complete thesis draft, and to get a general consensus that you are on track to defend your thesis on your planned schedule. Such a meeting and approval should take place in the semester prior to, and no later than the start of, the semester in which you plan to defend. This will help avoid surprises about when you receive feedback on your thesis drafts and the schedule for your defense.
-  You should plan to provide a complete draft of your thesis to your committee chair (advisor) for review at least by end of the semester prior to the semester in which you plan to defend. You should continue to work with your advisor regularly as you work on thesis drafts and expect that there may be several iterations before your advisor agrees that your thesis draft is ready to be reviewed by the entire committee. You should allow at least six weeks for this process. However, the time required for review and revision can vary greatly depending on your subject area, how well your thesis is written, the quality of your data, analysis, and interpretations, and the schedule and expectations of your advisor.
-  A complete draft of your thesis as approved by your advisor should be submitted to the entire committee for review at least four weeks before the date by which you hope to defend. Again, the time required for this process can vary, depending primarily on how close the draft you give to the committee is to an acceptable final product. The defense date should be set only after the entire committee has reviewed the draft and you and the committee have agreed that revisions to produce a defensible draft can be completed in time.
-  If this process is followed, then only minor corrections should be required after the defense to produce a final draft to be submitted to the department chair.

Guidelines for faculty:

-  The student should plan to write his/her thesis at least one semester prior to the actual defense. The advisor should plan to meet with the student regularly to provide interaction and feedback during writing.
-  The advisor should try to review thesis drafts and provide the student with meaningful feedback within four weeks of receiving a complete draft of the thesis. More than one iteration may be required before the advisor decides that a draft is ready to go to the entire committee.
-  Committee members should try to review thesis drafts and provide the student with meaningful feedback within three weeks time once the student has submitted a complete draft of the thesis.
-  Advisors and committee members should be prepared for a quick turn-around of the post-defense corrected version of the thesis to the student. Should the required corrections (determined during the post-defense closed-door meeting) be minor - this turn-around time could be one to two weeks. Should the required corrections be more intensive, then this time could be three weeks. In all cases, this turn-around time should be less than a month.