

Ph.D. Thesis

Students in a Ph.D. program in the Physical Sciences Division are expected to complete all requirements for the Ph.D. degree in no more than seven years.

If a student has to go beyond 7 years,

- (students who entered the Ph.D. program prior to Autumn 2017) she/he would have to petition to the Department Chair for an extension and get permission for the extension from the Chair.
- (students who entered the Ph.D. program since Autumn 2017) she/he would have to petition to the Department Chair for an extension. The Department Chair would then have to petition the PSD Dean, who ultimately would give permission for the extension.

Process

1. Formation of the Committee (by the end of the 2nd academic year)

The process shall be initiated by students. Students contact the Executive Officer (David Reid) before the autumn quarter of the 2nd year to discuss the candidate committee members. The Executive Officer forms the Committee.

Dissertation/Thesis Committee:

Once you have achieved candidacy and are certain with whom you will perform your dissertation research, you and/or your advisor should contact me to discuss forming your thesis committee.

The committee consists of four or five people, three of which must be Department of Physics faculty. Normally, there is to be one member of similar research style (theory or experiment) whose specialty is very different from yours and one member of opposite style whose specialty is related to yours. If your research advisor is not a faculty member in physics, a member of your committee who is on the department's faculty must be designated as your Department Sponsor.

Faculty Committee:

If you do not have a set thesis advisor by that time, the committee is considered to be a temporary committee which may change once you have an advisor.

2. First Committee Meeting (by the end of the fall quarter of the 3rd year):

Once the committee is formed, students should contact the committee members and schedule the first meeting by the end of the fall quarter of their third year. Students should contact Amy Schulz to get the necessary paperwork.

At the meeting, students (a) discuss their academic status regarding candidacy and course requirements, (b) give a brief description of what research they have been doing (if any), (c) state their academic and research plans for the coming year, and (d) solicit the committee for any comments or advice they haven't already volunteered.

3. Annual Meeting:

Following the first committee meeting, students must meet with their committee at least once per year until they graduate. These meetings should be initiated by students. Students should contact Amy Schulz to get the necessary paperwork.

4. Pre-oral:

The pre-oral should take place about one quarter prior to the defense. Students arrange this pre-oral meeting and contact Amy Schulz to get the necessary paperwork.

At this meeting, students update the committee on academic and research progress, discuss any departmental or other issues the student and/or advisor wishes to discuss, student should solicit any comments or advice from the committee.

The research that will be part of the thesis should be done and the student is effectively ready to put the final touches on the thesis. The early draft of the thesis should be distributed to the committee a couple of weeks prior to this meeting. The student should be able to present the bulk of what will be in the thesis and what plans are remaining. Any concerns that committee members have about the work, the thesis, or how it is presented should be raised here. There should also be a final check of academic requirements if needed.

5. Final Oral Defense:

The defense must be publically advertised. The student gives a public presentation of the results of his or her research. The intent is for this to be more of a celebration. Any concerns should have been brought forth at or after the pre-oral. The form that designates the student as having passed the defense should be signed.