
CHECKLIST for DOCTORAL DEGREE

Admission to the Doctoral Program

- All students who intend to pursue a doctoral degree must apply to the program through the [Office of Graduate Admissions](#).
 - After admission, consult your academic unit for coursework advising.

Planning Your Program of Study

- Work with your academic unit to form your committee and schedule the advisory conference. You will need to submit the [Advisory Conference Report](#) form (ACR) to the Graduate College no later than one semester before you plan to take the general examination.
 - You should consult your academic unit, since your program may have specific regulations or recommendations for scheduling the advisory conference.
 - If you are eligible to receive VA Educational Benefits, you will need to submit the ACR before coursework can be certified as eligible for coverage.

Before the General Examination

- If there are any changes to your approved ACR or committee membership, you will need to make updates before you apply for the general examination.
 - For ACR changes, complete a new ACR document and request approval via the online [Doctoral Advisory Conference Report \(ACR\) Submission](#) form. Your ACR must be up to date before the Graduate College can authorize your general examination.
 - For committee changes, submit the online [Request for Change in Committee](#) form. Changes in committee membership are not permitted within the 30 calendar days before the general examination.

General Examination

- When you are enrolled in or have completed the final semester of coursework, you should prepare for the general examination. No later than the end of the second week of the semester in which you will take the exam, submit the [General Exam Application for the Doctoral Degree](#) to the Graduate College. After your application is approved, the Graduate College will email the *Authority Report Form for the General Examination* to you, your committee and your graduate liaison. You may not begin work for the exam until you receive the *Authority Report Form*.
- No later than 72 hours after the exam, submit the completed *Authority Report Form* to the Graduate College. You will be admitted to doctoral candidacy after satisfactorily completing the general examination.

Beginning Dissertation Research

- Once you begin enrolling in Research for Doctoral Dissertation (6980), you must enroll in a minimum of two credit hours of 6980 each fall and spring until all degree requirements are completed. (Summer enrollment is also required if you are working on the dissertation during summer; see the “Enrollment Requirements for Dissertation Research” section of the [Graduate College Bulletin](#)).
- Before you begin writing the dissertation, review the [Thesis/Dissertation Instruction Packet](#). This packet contains important information about research-related issues and copyright, and explains the Graduate College formatting requirements for doctoral dissertations. If your dissertation research may involve human subjects research, vertebrate animal research, information that is protected from dissemination by applicable law or by contract, or intellectual property that may potentially be patentable, you should discuss this with your committee chair as early as possible in the research process.

Preparing to Graduate

- At the beginning of the semester you plan to graduate, [apply for graduation online](#) according to the deadlines indicated on the [Academic Calendar](#). Contact the [OU Commencement website](#) for information about attending college convocation ceremonies and May Commencement.
- If there are any changes to your approved ACR or committee membership, you will need to make updates before you defend the dissertation.
 - For ACR changes, complete a new ACR document and request approval via the online [Doctoral Advisory Conference Report \(ACR\) Submission](#) form. Your ACR must be up to date before the Graduate College can authorize your defense.
 - For committee changes, submit the online [Request for Change in Committee](#) form. Changes in committee membership are not permitted within the 30 calendar days before the dissertation defense.
- Before scheduling your dissertation defense, provide each member of your committee with a complete draft of your dissertation (see the “Dissertation Draft” section of the [Graduate College Bulletin](#)). Your committee will determine how far in advance you should provide the draft. The committee should have sufficient time to review the draft and approve any major revisions required before you submit the [Request for Authority to Defend](#) form to the Graduate College. After your committee has approved the draft, arrange the date, time and location for your defense.

Before Your Defense

- At least four weeks before your defense, submit the online [Request for Degree Check](#) to the Graduate College. The Graduate College will notify you of the result of the degree check via OU email.
- At least ten (10) working days before your defense, submit the [Request for Authority to Defend](#) and any required attachments (if applicable) from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). After your request for authority is approved, the Graduate College will email the *Authority Report Form for the Dissertation Defense* to you, your committee and your graduate liaison. You are not authorized to defend until you receive the *Authority Report Form*.

After Your Defense

- No later than 72 hours after your defense, submit the completed *Authority Report Form* to the Graduate College.
- If your dissertation involves human subjects research, contact the [IRB](#) office to obtain documentation confirming that your involvement as a graduate student in the research project is officially terminated. You will need to submit this additional documentation to the Graduate College before you submit the dissertation to SHAREOK.
- Complete the [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#).
- After your committee has approved your final dissertation, submit the online [Approval for Thesis/Dissertation Submission to SHAREOK](#) form to the Graduate College.
- Submit your dissertation to the [SHAREOK](#) institutional repository, according to the instructions you received in the Graduate College email authorizing your defense. Your submission is due no later than 60 calendar days after your defense. If you plan to graduate in a particular semester, you must meet the semester submission deadline given on the [Academic Calendar](#), usually the last day of the final examination period.

Congratulations!