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Dissertation Writing and Defense Guidelines
A condensed guide to completing the dissertation requirement of your PhD degree.
For complete details, see the Graduate Studies Handbook.

Dissertation Writing

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The Dissertation Topic: You must **pass** both parts of the *Doctoral Comprehensive Examination* in order to proceed with the following steps, and the topic on which you actually write <u>must</u> correspond to the dissertation proposal that was approved as part of your *Doctoral Comprehensive Examination*.

Researching and Writing: You will need to work with your dissertation supervisor who will oversee your research and writing as well as your second reader throughout the process. The *dissertation supervisor* must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member from the Philosophy Department. We encourage you to have a third or fourth reader from outside of Boston College.

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Preparing for the Defense of your Dissertation

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- ❖ *Organize a Dissertation Defense Committee:* Your committee is comprised of your dissertation supervisor and **at least** two other readers, one of whom must be a tenured or tenure-track member of the department. Please refer to the Graduate Studies Handbook for details.

- ❖ *Complete Form A, Approval of the Composition of the Defense Committee:* Please submit this document to the Philosophy Department **two months** before your planned defense date. Fill out the form with the names of your supervisor and your readers. Return the form to the Graduate Program Administrator at Dustins@bc.edu.

- ❖ *Schedule a time and date for your defense:* We strongly discourage scheduling a defense from June 1st-September 15th. If you must defend over the summer, you will need permission from the department chair and graduate program director. If you wish to have your defense virtually, please let the Graduate Program Administrator know.

- ❖ *Register for an ORCiD and review the formatting guide for the ETD*
  Morrissey College Graduate School requires an ORCid number for your result form.
  Please see this link for more information: https://libguides.bc.edu/orcid
  For *eTD* and other formatting information, please use this link:
  https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/mcas/graduate/current-graduate-students/dissertation-checklist.html#tab-elements_of_your_dissertation.

- ❖ *Complete Form B, Submission of the Dissertation to the Department:* <u>A minimum of 30 days</u> before your scheduled defense, return Part B (**with signatures of the dissertation supervisor and the second reader**), to the graduate program assistant along with **an electronic** copy of your Dissertation and a separate electronic copy of your Abstract. Your defense will be announced to the Philosophy Department and your dissertation will be available for review. If you have not already done so, reserve a room for your defense or schedule a Zoom meeting.

Dissertation Defense and Graduation

❖ **Defend your Dissertation:** After your defense is announced to the department, all members of the Philosophy Department will be able to request electronic access to read your dissertation and attend your defense. If you wish to graduate in May, you must defend on or before April 1ˢᵗ. After that date, your graduation date will be in August or December.

❖ **The Morrissey College Result Form "Signature Page"** (aka "ballot") is now an online document that can be signed electronically. Please see complete instructions at the end of this document. If all signatures are electronic, your supervisor may send the signature page to Sarah Dustin Smith at dustins@bc.edu. For an in person defense, three original signature pages are required and should be returned to Sarah Dustin Smith.

❖ **Submit your Dissertation to the Dean**: After the successful defense, **you are required** to submit an **electronic** copy of your dissertation to the Graduate Dean's Office through eTD@BC. Please see attachment as well as this website for complete instructions on formatting and submitting your dissertation *https://libguides.bc.edu/graduate-etd.* You **will not be cleared for graduation until after your dissertation is submitted**.

❖ You must also submit one **printed** copy of your dissertation to the **Graduate Program Administrator.**

❖ It is the responsibility of the candidate to comply with the regulations of the Morrissey Graduate School and with the requirements of the University Registrar: *https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/mcas/graduate/current-graduate-students/dissertation-checklist.html.*

If you have additional questions, please refer to the Graduate Studies Handbook or contact the Graduate Program Administrator at Dustins@bc.edu.

ETD Checklist for Students

This to-do list is compiled by Boston College Libraries and includes action items for students who will be submitting dissertations or theses to ProQuest.

Decide

- ❏ Do you want to make full text available in eScholarship@BC?
    - *Note: Optional but recommended. Open Access works see an average 17% increase in citations compared to works behind a paywall such as ProQuest.*
- ❏ If yes, do you want to apply a Creative Commons license? Which one?
- ❏ Do you need a temporary embargo? How long? (6 months, 1 year, or 2 years)
- ❏ Do you need to prevent search engines from accessing your dissertation in ProQuest?
- ❏ Have you registered for an ORCID?
    - *Note: Optional but recommended.*
- ❏ Do you want ProQuest to register your copyright?
    - *Note: ProQuest charges $55 to register a copyright for you. You may register it yourself at Copyright.gov for $35.*

Prepare

- ❏ Have you followed your school/department guidelines for the format and structure of your dissertation?
- ❏ Are the first three pages (in order) title page, copyright page, abstract page?
- ❏ Is the title consistent on the title page and the abstract page?
- ❏ Is your name consistent on the title, copyright, and abstract pages?
- ❏ Did you review your document for third-party copyright materials and acquire any necessary permissions or document any Fair Use rationale?
- ❏ Did you check to ensure that all fonts are embedded in your PDF?
    - *Note for LaTeX users: Make sure you are not using Type 3 fonts, which cannot be embedded.*
- ❏ Check the security settings on your PDF. Are they set to *Security Method → No Security*?
- ❏ Check the Document Restrictions Summary. Is it set to *Document Restrictions Summary → Everything allowed*?

Submit

- ❏ Have you gathered together the information you need for your ProQuest submission?
    - ○ Your current and future contact information
    - ○ Name of your committee chair
    - ○ Year your manuscript was completed; year your degree was awarded
    - ○ Type of degree
    - ○ Department
    - ○ A copy of your abstract that you can cut and paste into your ProQuest account
    - ○ PDF of your dissertation/thesis; any supplemental files
    - ○ Subject categories and additional keywords or phrases
    - ○ If your dissertation/thesis is in a foreign language, the title and abstract in English
- ❏ Is your name and the title of your thesis or dissertation on the ProQuest account the same as on your PDF?

For details, more information, and the link to ProQuest, visit bc.edu/etd.

PhD DISSERTATION DEFENSE PREPARATION (Form A)
(Please submit this form 60 days prior to your defense date)

Name: _____ **Date**: _____

A. Approval of the Composition of the Defense Committee

_____
Name of the dissertation supervisor (first reader):

_____
Name of the second reader   **Institution**

_____
Name of the third reader   **Institution**

_____
Name of the fourth reader   **Institution**

1. Approval of the Defense Committee:

_____
Signature of the Graduate Program Director   **Date**

2. Filing with the MCAS Graduate Dean's Office:

_____
Signature of the Graduate Program Assistant   **Date**

PhD DISSERTATION DEFENSE PREPARATION (Form B)

(Must be submitted with your dissertation and a separate abstract at least 30 days before your scheduled defense.)

Name: _____ **Date**: _____

B. Submission of the Dissertation to the Department

1. Approval of the dissertation by the first and second readers:

_____

Reader 1 Signature   **Date**

_____

Reader 2 Signature   **Date**

1. Date of the defense:

_____

(Must be a minimum of 30 days after submission of Dissertation to the department)

3. Submission to the Department:

_____

Signature of the Graduate Program Assistant   **Date**

_____

Signature of the Graduate Program Director   **Date**