Due Dates for Dissertation Defense: Fall 2021

As the university resumes on-site operations in the fall 2021 semester, students can choose between two formats to defend their dissertation:

1. A virtual defense, which will be conducted via a scheduled WebEx meeting.
2. An in person defense, which will be conducted on either the Foggy Bottom or VSTC campus. For an in person defense, one committee member (not the chair) may participate virtually. If more than one committee member plans to participate virtually, the defense must be held virtually. This policy is stated in the Doctoral Handbook and applies for the duration of the fall 2021 semester; it may be altered in future semesters.

Our timelines are driven by the university’s ProQuest submission deadlines, the date by which the university requires you to submit the final, approved version of your dissertation in order to graduate. The date of your final ProQuest upload will therefore determine your graduation semester, regardless of when you defend. We understand that a number of students will be ready to defend in the fall semester, but will not be able to make the ProQuest deadline. With this in mind, we have provided students with three timelines for submitting materials and/or defending in fall 2021. Only timeline 1 allows you to be a fall graduate; however, timelines 2 and 3 allow you to submit your dissertation materials in late fall and graduate in spring 2022 at no additional cost.

1. **To be a fall 2021 graduate:**
   Students must submit all materials no later than October 19th. The last day to defend is November 19th. Your final document must be uploaded to ProQuest by December 10th at 5pm; this final deadline is set by the University provost and library and not within our control. GSEHD generally requires students to defend 30 days before the ProQuest deadline to allow ample time for revision; however, for the fall semester we have shortened this. Please be aware that you may have fewer than 30 days to make your final edits depending on the defense date you choose, and plan accordingly.

2. **To defend in fall 2021 and be a spring 2022 graduate:**
   Students who are unable to meet the October 19th deadline but still wish to defend during the fall semester must submit all materials by November 13th. The last day to defend during the fall semester is December 13th, the last day of classes. Any student defending between November 22nd and December 13th will be a spring graduate and enroll in Continuous Enrollment (CE), a zero-credit, no-cost option, for the spring semester. Please note: international students living in the US are not eligible for CE; instead, they may take a reduced course load in spring 2022.

3. **To defend and graduate in spring 2022 while enrolled in CE:**
   December 15th will be the last day to submit materials for anyone who wishes to enroll in CE, a zero-credit, no-cost option, rather than dissertation research credits, during the spring semester. Students who submit their materials by December 15th will schedule defenses in January and be spring graduates. Please note: international students living in the US are not eligible for CE; instead, they may take a reduced course load in spring 2022.

These pathways apply for the fall 2021 semester only. Please note that because these three options have been provided, there will be no need for exceptions or extensions. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Dannels (sdannels@gwu.edu).
Due Dates at a Glance: Fall 2021

Timeline 1:
October 19: Last day to submit dissertation materials for a fall 2021 graduation
November 19: Last day to defend for a fall 2021 graduation
December 10, 5pm: ProQuest fall submission deadline

Timeline 2:
November 13: Last day to submit materials to defend during the fall semester as a spring graduate
December 13: Last day to defend during the fall semester as a spring graduate

Timeline 3:
December 15: Last day to submit materials to defend in January while enrolled in CE

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Materials Due for Dissertation Defense

- [Request for Dissertation Oral Examination – Google Forms](#). While completing this form, which constitutes your formal submission of materials and request for defense, you will be asked to attach the following additional materials:
  - [Dissertation Approval Form](#)
  - CVs of any committee members or readers who are not current GW faculty members, if not previously submitted
  - Your completed dissertation in Word format. **Please be sure that your dissertation is formatted correctly** to ensure you will not have any issues with ProQuest upload and approval. Your dissertation must follow the [University Formatting Guidelines](#) and [Digital Accessibility Guidelines](#), and must match the template provided on the [GSEHD Style Guide](#).
- Submit an online [Application for Graduation](#) for the appropriate semester. All graduation application deadlines are listed on the [Office of the Registrar's website](#).
- For students taking options 2 or 3, submit a [Continuous Enrollment Form](#) for the spring 2022 semester, filled out and submitted via email to [docgsehd@gwu.edu](mailto:docgsehd@gwu.edu).

Please note, these materials must be submitted in full at least **30 days before** your dissertation defense. Partial submissions cannot be accepted.