
If you have a thesis defence question that is not answered below, please email GradStudies@twu.ca.

Can a thesis defence be recorded?

Requests to alter the precedent format or procedure of a defence or to record a defence in any manner must be made to the Office of Graduate Studies for consideration well in advance of the anticipated defence date. Only the student presentation portion of the defence may be considered for recording. No portion of the defence will be streamed. The exam chair has the right to discontinue a recording if it is interfering with the proper conduct of the defence.

Can audience members be admitted late to a defence?

Protocols for physical and virtual defences are held to the same standard as a typical exam wherein once the defence has begun, there will be no further admittance to the exam room, whether physical or virtual.

Can the terminology for examination members or oral examination protocols be changed to accommodate a culture difference or a particular research focus?

If an exception to precedent terminology or protocols is desired, a request must be submitted in writing to the Office of Graduate Studies well in advance of the scheduled defence, so that a fulsome exploration of the request may be conducted. The Office of Graduate Studies may require a subsequent submission of the request by the thesis supervisor to the Graduate Academic Council, who meet on a monthly basis during the academic year.

Can members of the audience be present when the student is receiving their exam results?

Whether a defence is in-person or virtual, the Office of Graduate Studies upholds the student's right to privacy when receiving their exam results. No audience members will be permitted into the physical or virtual defence room when results are being provided to the student. The student may choose whether to share their exam results when the entirety of the defence proceedings have concluded.

May the student or program request or secure an exam chair?

Securing an exam chair is the sole responsibility of the Office of Graduate Studies.

Can a TWU student have a non-TWU thesis supervisor?

A TWU student may have a non-TWU co-supervisor, provided that the lead co-supervisor is an eligible TWU faculty member and the non-TWU co-supervisor has been formally approved by the Office of Graduate Studies. See policy for non-TWU co-supervisors. In a case of co-supervision, only a further third reader is required.

After the defence, are students automatically eligible for graduation?

After a successful defence, a student must complete all post-defence requirements and submit a Degree Completion Verification form to the Office of the Registrar. Additionally, applications for graduation are due on January 31 (for spring convocation) and July 15 (for fall convocation).

What if there is a bad connection during a virtual defence that is interrupting the exam?

Measures should be taken to complete the defence during its scheduled time. If the student, an examining committee member, or the exam chair are experiencing an interrupted virtual connection that is affecting the process of the defence, use of the phone connection should be explored. If problems persist, the exam chair, in consultation with the Graduate Studies Coordinator and thesis supervisor, must make the decision whether to continue or reschedule the defence.

What if one of the required parties is late to the defence?

If a required party – being the student, the examining committee members, and the exam chair – is late to the defence, a 15-minute grace period will be extended, and all efforts will be made to contact the absent party. Beyond the grace period, the Graduate Studies Coordinator will determine whether the defence be rescheduled.

