

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE'S DEAN'S REPRESENTATIVE FOR M.S. THESIS DEFENSES AND FINAL EXAMINATIONS

The purpose of the M.S. thesis defense and final examination is to: (1) determine a student's general knowledge in their chosen field of research and (2) assess the student's mastery of the background, techniques, experimental approaches, results and conclusions of their thesis project. Once initiated, an examination may not be continued at a later date. The student will either pass or fail the examination as administered on that date.

Responsibilities of the Dean's Representative. For the M.S. thesis defense and final examination, one member of the student's graduate advisory committee (GAC), other than the advisor, will be designated as the Dean's Representative by the Associate Dean for Graduate Education. The Dean's Representative fully participates as a member of the GAC and will also:

1. Chair the examination meeting and ensure that the examination process is appropriate, equitable to the student and maintains the standards of excellence in our programs.
2. Instruct the GAC as a whole on the purpose of the exam, focusing on the points above.
3. Together with the other members of the GAC, establish the general protocol for the questioning period (e.g. 10-15 minutes per GAC member and number rounds of questions). If the examination is lengthy (e.g. longer than 2 hours) or if the student is exhibiting signs of distress, the Dean's Representative may call for a brief recess.
4. At the conclusion of the questioning period, the Dean's Representative excuses the student and requests a motion and a second of PASS or FAIL for the examination outcome from the other GAC members. The Dean's Representative calls for and participates in discussion from all GAC members. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Dean's Representative calls for a vote on the motion by show of hands. All GAC members including the Dean's Representative must vote either PASS or FAIL on the student's performance. The GAC members including the Dean's Representative are the only persons allowed to vote. More than one negative vote constitutes failure of the examination. The Dean's Representative completes the examination outcome form and gathers all required signatures.

If the student passes the exam, the Dean's Representative, GAC as a whole should establish a date by which the student should provide them with a final version of the thesis such that adequate time is allowed for review, ETD routing and (presumably) approval. Allowing at least one week for thesis review and one additional week for ETD routing/approval is suggested.

If the student does not pass the exam, the Dean's Representative should ask the advisor and other GAC members if they support a re-examination and, if so, the approximate date at which a re-examination seems appropriate. The Advisor (or Program Director) is responsible for petitioning for the re-examination to the Associate Dean for Graduate Education for review by School of Medicine Graduate Programs Committee.

5. The Dean's Representative recalls the student and informs them of the outcome. If the examination has not been passed, the Dean's Representative (or Advisor) relays to the student the recourse decided by the GAC.
6. The examination outcome form indicating whether the student passed or failed the exam must be signed by all committee members including the Dean's Representative. The Dean's Representative is responsible for returning the signed signature page to the Office of Graduate Education.