

Completion of Ph.D. degrees in the School of Medicine

In addition to satisfying your degree requirements as tracked by DegreeWorks, there are several key actions you must take in your final semester to earn your Ph.D. degree. For specific dates, please see the Academic and Other Calendars section on our website at <https://medschool.vcu.edu/education/graduate/current-students/>

Action	Latest possible date
Discuss your graduation time-line with your advisor and program director	As early as possible
Define your dissertation scope, content and organization with advisor and graduate advisory committee	As early as possible
Confirm you are registered for graduate credit in semester of graduation	As early as possible
Work with your graduate program director to address any needed actions in DegreeWorks (e.g. degree candidacy form, courses, grades, credits, etc.)	As early as possible
Review SOM Student Resources-> Graduate Student Policies and Forms-> Oral candidacy exams and final defenses	As early as possible
Login to eServices, complete two actions: (i) check for holds and follow-up with appropriate offices, (ii) apply to graduate	See SOM Academic Calendar
Identify a suitable date/time/place for your final defense	As early as possible
Input your final defense date in GradTrak	At least 10 working days (2 weeks) before final defense
<i>Handle "Notice of X Examination" from GradTrak</i>	<i>No action required, we are no longer using this form</i>
Provide draft of your dissertation to your advisor and advisory committee	At least 10 working days (2 weeks) before final defense
Have your final defense	See SOM Academic Calendar
Provide your revised dissertation to committee	See SOM Academic Calendar
Initiate routing of your ETD approval form	See SOM Academic Calendar
Confirm signatures on your ETD approval form thru SOM (sign-offs by committee, program director, associate dean (Dr. Michael Grotewiel) and advisor)	See SOM Academic Calendar
Upload your approved finalized dissertation to Scholars Compass	See SOM Academic Calendar
Complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates	See SOM Academic Calendar

Other key dates

Ceremony/ Activity	Date
VCU diplomas certified	May, August, December
SOM Advanced Degree Recognition Event https://medschool.vcu.edu/education/graduate/recognition-ceremony/	May
VCU Commencement ceremonies (1) https://commencement.vcu.edu/ AND (2) https://graduate.vcu.edu/current-students/graduation/	May December

FAQs

- What if I receive other deadlines from other offices? **Do not follow other deadlines. Follow the deadlines above.**
- Does a graduation application for one semester carry-forward to another semester? **No. Students must submit an application in the semester of anticipated degree completion.**
- What if I submit a graduation application for a semester, but don't complete my degree in that same semester? **Send an email to Mr. Greenwald to cancel graduation application.**
- What is the difference between 10 business days and 2 weeks in GradTrak? **Two weeks= 10 business days.**
- Do I need to complete my current graduate program if I am accepted into the MD or DDS program at VCU? **Yes, those programs require students to complete their current program prior to enrolling. VCU Graduate School does not allow enrollment in two programs simultaneously.**
- What if I am struggling with scheduling my defense? **Contact your advisor and program director.**
- What if one of my advisory committee members cannot attend my previously scheduled defense? **Contact Dr. Grotewiel.**
- Do all signatures need to be original. **No. Digital signatures or email confirmations are fine.**
- Do I need bound copies of my thesis or dissertation? **Not for Grad Ed office, but consider personal and program needs.**
- Can I impose a delay on the public availability of my ETD? **Yes. Select 1 year, 2 years, 5 years, or never on page 2 of the ETD approval form. Selection of never requires letter of justification from advisor.**
- When is my degree awarded? **Degrees are awarded as indicated above.**
- What if I need to document my degree completion prior to awarding of my degree? **Contact Dr. Grotewiel.**
- What if I fake some of my degree completion documents? **The Grad Ed Office will report the alleged incident to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.**