



## INSTRUCTIONS:

### I. PH. D. DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS DEFENSE FORM

1. **Candidate** - Complete items #1-4 and return to the BME Graduate Programs Administrator at least *two weeks* in advance of the desired Prospectus Defense date. Attach a copy of your abstract.
2. **BME Graduate Programs Administrator** – Responsible for getting Associate Chair for Graduate Studies signature in Item 5. The original goes to the Defense Chair (abstract attached) and a **copy (abstract attached) to the BME Graduate Office**. The schedule must be set and appropriate parties notified at least **two weeks** in advance of the actual Prospectus Defense. The BME Graduate Coordinator is responsible for arranging publicity for the defense.
3. **Defense Chair** - Chair the Prospectus Defense and indicate the Committee's decision in item #6, and sign in item #7.

If Candidate **Passed With Conditions**, the conditions must be specified in an accompanying memo. When you have completed the form it is submitted to the BME Graduate Programs Administrator. The BME Graduate Programs Administrator is responsible for gaining the Associate Chairs signature on Item # 8.

4. **The original form with signatures (any conditions attached) will be returned to the BME Graduate Office.**
5. **Please schedule the next meeting of the prospectus committee. Committee members should indicate expected milestones. The student needs to sign the prospectus form.**

### II. STRUCTURE OF THE PROSPECTUS

1. **Title Page** - This should contain the name, department, phone number, and e-mail address of the author, title of proposed research, name of research advisor, other members of the committee, date and location of proposed defense.
2. **Projected Summary** – This is a summary of the proposed research. It should be limited to one page in length. The summary is not an abstract, it is a self-contained description of the proposed research. The summary should be written in the third person and include a statement of objective that defines what the proposed research is intended to accomplish, methods to be employed, and the significance of the proposed research to the advancement of knowledge. It must be understandable to a scientifically literate reader.
3. **Table of Content** –
  - **Introduction** – This should explain the background of the problem to be investigated, a critical review of research accomplishment of others and how those results lead specifically to what is proposed by the author.
  - **Research Design** – Method(s) and procedures to be employed include any special facilities, supplies, or equipment required.
  - **Preliminary results** (if any) suggesting feasibility of the proposed research. If no initial data, explain anticipated results and their significance (impact) to the problem proposed.
  - **Bibliography of pertinent literature**
  - **Author's vitae**
4. **Timetable** for completion of each aspect of the research.

**\*\*\* A prospectus should not exceed 20 pages \*\*\***

### **III. DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS DEFENSE GUIDELINES**

**Purpose** - The purpose of the Prospectus Defense is to ensure that the topic to be investigated is an acceptable research problem for the degree, and the student is prepared to conduct the proposed research.

**Schedule** - The prospectus defense should be completed within one year of completion of the required Qualifying Examinations (Mathematics and Subject). The prospectus defense should be completed before the more extensive phase of the actual research is undertaken.

**Dissertation Topic** - A research problem is selected after initial discussion between a departmental faculty research advisor and the student. When sufficient investigation of the topic has been undertaken to believe the subject is worthy of a dissertation, a Dissertation Committee is formed.

**Dissertation Committee** - This committee must include four members: three must be College faculty members who are tenured or tenurable, with at least two members from BME and one member must be from outside the BME Department. The composition of this committee must be reported to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies by the research advisor prior to scheduling the prospectus defense. Membership of the committee constitutes the nucleus of the Final Oral Examination Committee. The chairman of the committee is the student's research advisor.

The Dissertation Committee is charged with assessing the problem's appropriateness and the student's preparation, based on the written dissertation proposal and then oral presentation. The chairman of the committee reports the committee's actions to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies.

**The Dissertation Proposal** – The student must provide a copy of the dissertation proposal to all members of the Dissertation Committee before the Prospectus Defense Form is signed by the Committee members. The proposal should include a statement of the problem to be investigated, its background and significance, approach(es) to be followed for its resolution, preliminary results, anticipated timetable for completion, and pertinent bibliography. The document should be limited to 20 pages. The proposal should specifically document the anticipated contribution of the work to the body of knowledge. A separate page listing the proposed title, author's name, research advisor's name and an abstract of approximately 150 words must also be submitted.

The preferred proposal format is that of research proposals submitted to Federal Agency (eg., National Science Foundation or National Institutes of Health).

**Oral Presentation** - A public oral presentation of the proposal is held to describe the research and demonstrate the student's preparation. The oral presentation is scheduled once the student is advised by the committee that the proposal is accepted for the oral defense. The oral presentation will be scheduled no sooner than two weeks after the written prospectus is accepted by the committee. The title, abstract, date, time and location of the oral proposal defense must be submitted to the BME Graduate Programs Administrator at least two weeks prior to the oral defense to insure adequate publicity.

**Assessment** - The committee must decide if the student: passes, passes with conditions, or fails. The committee may determine that the student needs additional courses and may suggest revisions to the topic's goals and approaches to its solution.

**Reporting** -The student is to be advised of the committee's decision in writing, using the College's "Ph.D. Dissertation Prospectus Defense" form. If there are required revisions to the written proposal, or if the committee requires additional course work, such conditions must be appropriately documented on this form. The signed form is submitted to the BME Graduate Programs Administrator. Required revisions to the proposal should be completed satisfactorily before a final "pass" is given.