

Procedures for Scheduling the Prospectus Hearing

Please note that all coursework and any incompletes must be finished prior to scheduling the prospectus hearing

Development of Prospectus and Selection of Dissertation Committee

After successful completion of the Qualifying Examination, the candidate and the first reader proceed to select a dissertation problem and a framework for the research. The first reader must have a primary appointment in the psychology department. The Brain, Behavior & Cognition Program requires that the first reader is also a member of the student's program. However, the Program will entertain petitions for exceptions to this policy, subject to the requirement that a member of the Program is actively involved in the student's dissertation research and serves as second reader on the dissertation committee. A second and third reader are chosen and consulted during this period. The second or third reader are, preferably, from outside the student's program area. All three readers critically review the Prospectus drafts. **Please note that all three readers are required to attend the prospectus hearing. One committee member, who is not the first reader, can attend via audio/video communication without a proxy during the prospectus hearing.**

Special Service Appointments: Any reader who is not a member of the Graduate School Faculty (cf. Graduate School Bulletin) must receive a Special Service Appointment from Boston University. Initiating such appointments requires a letter from the student's first reader to the Chairman outlining the person's expertise. A current CV must be attached. The letter and CV should be brought to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (Rm. 149A).

Research Ethics: Research involving human subjects must be reviewed by the University Institutional Review Board. The applications are available at <http://www.bu.edu/irb/application-forms/>. If you have any questions please see Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (Rm. 149A). All animal research requires review by the University Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

Format of the Prospectus

The prospectus should contain: 1) an introduction, 2) a description of methods, 3) a description of research design (including the hypothesis of each experiment and information such as the number of subjects and a data analyses plan), and 4) a bibliography. The abstract should not be included in the prospectus. The abstract is submitted separately. (Please see instructions under prospectus hearing procedures.) The prospectus must not exceed twenty double-spaced pages, not including the title page or the bibliography. The title page should not be numbered. Margins should be 1" on all sides and the font of the entire document, including headers, should not be smaller than 11 point. Appendices should be reserved for non-essential information. Please note that a description of measures is essential information and should, therefore, be included in the text of the prospectus. Students may see Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (Rm. 149A) to a look at previously filed copies of prospectuses.

Prospectus Hearing Procedures

- I. Two weeks before hearing:
 - A) One copy of the full prospectus, which must not exceed twenty double-spaced pages, must be submitted to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (Rm. 149A).
 - B) A 2 to 3 page abstract of the Prospectus along with an invitation to the faculty (p. 19) should be sent electronically to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai at jpalfai@bu.edu. The invitation should indicate: 1) time and location; 2) committee members; 3) place (Rm. 149A) where faculty and others may find a full prospectus. The Senior Staff Assistant will assign the hearing room for those students who would like to schedule their defense at 64 Cummington Mall. Nicole Clement, Clinical Program Coordinator, will schedule the room for those students who would like to schedule their hearing at 648 Beacon Street.
 - C) A Dissertation Prospectus Approval Page should be obtained from the GRS web site (www.bu.edu/cas/students/grad-resources/forms under Deadlines, click on Graduation (Ph.D.), then on Dissertation Prospectus). The Approval Page is used as the Prospectus Cover Sheet.

II. The Hearing:

The candidate, the three readers and any other interested faculty meet to assess the Prospectus. The Prospectus must be approved and signed on the Dissertation Outline Approval Page by all three readers, after any required revisions are made by the student. The three readers now become the candidate's permanent Dissertation Committee.

III. After the Hearing and approval by the three readers:

The candidate submits the original and one copy of the prospectus and approval page to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai, who will obtain approval from the Director of Graduate Studies, and Professor Michael Lyons, Chairman. After approval by Professor Martha Tompson (Fall)/Professor James Cherry (Spring), the Director of Graduate Studies and Professor Lyons, five copies of the Prospectus are submitted as follows:

Two signed copies of the Prospectus to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (Rm. 149A).
One of these signed copies will be sent to Martha Khan, GRS, Rm. 112.

The three remaining copies (may be unsigned), are for the readers.

Please be aware that the approved prospectus must be submitted to GRS no later than the first Friday in October for May graduation and the first Friday in April for January graduation.

SAMPLE INVITATION TO PROSPECTUS HEARING
(Attach to abstract)

TO: Psychology Department Faculty

FROM: Your Name

RE: Dissertation Prospectus Hearing

The assessment for my dissertation prospectus will be held on Monday, October 14, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. in the Psychology Department, Room 150, 64 Cummington Mall.

The dissertation title is "The Problems Encountered and Pitfalls Avoided in Writing a Graduate Student Guide to the Psychology Department".

The first reader is _____, Ph.D.; the second reader is _____, Ph.D.; and the third reader is _____, Ph.D. of the University of Massachusetts.

Attached is an abstract of the prospectus. A copy of the complete prospectus is on file in the office of Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (Room 149A).