

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 Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences. 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. 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 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 outlining the person's expertise. A current CV must be attached. The letter and CV should be sent electronically to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (jpalfai@bu.edu)

Research Ethics: Research involving human subjects must be reviewed by the University Institutional Review Board. The applications are available at <http://www.bu.edu/researchsupport/compliance/human-subjects/submitted-an-irb-protocol/>. Please contact Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (Rm. 149A) with any questions. All animal research requires review by the University Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Please discuss with your mentor the specific ethics training requirements necessary for the conduct of research in your area.

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), 4) a trouble-shooting section at the end of your document indicating what might go wrong and is the study valuable if hypotheses are not supported, etc., and 5) 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 contact Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (Rm. 149A) to arrange to look at previously filed copies of prospectuses.

Prospectus Hearing Procedures

I. Two weeks before hearing:

- A) One hard 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, should be sent electronically as a single document 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 (Rm. 149, 64 Cummington Mall) will assign the hearing room for those students who would like to schedule their defense at 64 Cummington Mall. The Clinical Program Coordinator (Rm. 401, 648 Beacon St.) will schedule the room for those students who would like to schedule their hearing at 648 Beacon Street.
- C) A Dissertation Prospectus Approval Form should be obtained from the GRS web site (<http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/graduate/grs-forms-policies-procedures/grs-phd-forms-policies-procedures/grs-dissertation-and-graduation-procedures/>, click 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 Prospectus Approval Form 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 both a hard copy and an electronic copy of the final version of the prospectus and approval page to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (jpalfai@bu.edu), who will obtain approval from Professor Alice Cronin-Golomb, Director of Graduate Studies, and Professor David Somers, Chair. After approval has been obtained, the candidate will be notified.

SAMPLE INVITATION TO PROSPECTUS HEARING
(Attach to abstract)

TO: Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences Faculty

FROM: Your Name

RE: Dissertation Prospectus Hearing

The assessment for my dissertation prospectus will be held on Friday, October 13, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. in the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences, Room 150, 64 Cummington Mall.

The dissertation title is "The Problems Encountered and Pitfalls Avoided in Writing a Graduate Student Guide to the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences".

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).