

# The Robotics Institute - Doctoral Program

## Student Procedures for Thesis Proposal

### Thesis Committee Members

The committee will consist of at least four members: a minimum of three from Carnegie Mellon, at least two of whom must be faculty members in the Robotics Institute, and one faculty member with a primary appointment in Robotics, and at least one qualified researcher who is external to Carnegie Mellon. The student's advisor is the chairperson of the Thesis Committee. The entire composition of the committee must be approved by the Chair of the Program before the Thesis Proposal is presented.

Prior to presenting the Thesis Proposal, the four core courses of the Course Qualifier and the research, speaking and writing skills portions of the Research Qualifier must be complete.

### *Timeline*

#### At Least One Month Before

- Get approval of your thesis committee members from the Chair of the Program, David Wettergreen, [dsw@ri.cmu.edu](mailto:dsw@ri.cmu.edu)
- Be sure to check with Suzanne Muth ([lyonsmuth@cmu.edu](mailto:lyonsmuth@cmu.edu)) before finalizing the date, to make sure there are no other orals scheduled at the chosen time. Thesis proposals will not be scheduled to overlap.
- Your committee members should be available for a minimum of 90 minutes, preferably two hours.
- Inform Suzanne once you have settled on a date and time. She will reserve an appropriate room. The room scheduled must be available to the public and must accommodate a reasonably large number of people (~30). Smaller rooms, such as conference-style rooms, are strongly discouraged.
- Thesis proposals should not be scheduled after the last day of finals in the fall semester and not before the start of the spring semester. This is generally from mid- December to mid-January. Check the academic calendar for specific dates.

#### 10 Days Before

- Send email to Suzanne with the date, time, room, title, abstract, URL link to thesis, and thesis committee members, including external member affiliation. If you would like a specific photo displayed on the posters, other than the one on your RI webpage, email the photo to Suzanne.
- Suzanne will post your thesis proposal announcement both electronically and physically. These must be posted at least one week before your proposal. BE PROMPT!

- Provide thesis committee with final draft of thesis proposal document.
- If your external member is not able to be physically present, many students opt to Skype or Zoom with their external member. To reserve a loaner computer, submit the Help Desk Technology Reservation Online Request Form: <https://computing.cs.cmu.edu/help-support/forms/request-hd-tech-loan.html>

### **Practice Talks**

If you would like give a practice talk or two, please contact Suzanne to reserve a conference room.

### **Day of Proposal**

Give yourself an extra half hour to make sure the room you've reserved is set-up the way you would like it.

### **Refreshments**

The department does not provide refreshments for thesis proposals.

### **After the Proposal**

- Complete and provide Suzanne with the All But Dissertation Status Agreement Form <https://www.cmu.edu/es/docs/abd-status-agree.pdf>
- Make sure your advisor sends email to Suzanne indicating whether or not you have successfully passed your thesis proposal.