

The Robotics Institute - Doctoral Program

Student Procedures for Thesis Defense

All Qualifiers must be completed before scheduling the Thesis Defense.

The Dissertation itself is normally preceded by a year or more of research and writing after the proposal. The Dissertation is a scholarly document describing the problem, related work, the student's approach, the results and insights achieved, and the significance of the work. The written dissertation must be presented to the Thesis Committee for approval. When the committee gives preliminary approval, the Oral Defense can take place. At the Oral Defense, the committee and the entire community will have the opportunity to question the work critically. Finally, the Thesis Committee must decide whether to approve the thesis.

A student will be certified for graduation and allowed to attend commencement ceremonies when the thesis is unanimously approved by his or her Thesis Committee and has been delivered to the Program Coordinator in final form, at which time the student will be awarded the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy in the field of Robotics.

Timeline

At Least One Month Before

- Be sure to check with Suzanne Muth (lyonsmuth@cmu.edu) before finalizing the date, to make sure there are no other orals scheduled at the chosen time. Thesis presentations will not be scheduled to overlap. Inform Suzanne once you have settled on a date and time.
- 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. Work with your advisor to determine if your talk will be hybrid (in-person + Zoom) or fully remote (Zoom only). If delivered in-person, she will reserve an appropriate room. The room scheduled must be available to the public. Smaller rooms, such as conference-style rooms, are strongly discouraged.
- Thesis defenses 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 Zoom link and room location, if applicable, as well as date, time, title, abstract, and thesis committee members, including external member affiliation. URL link to thesis is optional.
- Suzanne will post your thesis defense announcement electronically. BE PROMPT!
- Provide thesis committee with final draft of thesis defense document.

- If delivery mode is Zoom, complete the Authorization Form to Publicly Live Stream your talk. <https://www.cmu.edu/es/docs/livestream-consent.pdf>
- When creating the Zoom meeting, make sure you assign your advisor as the co-host. Record your talk to Cloud. At the conclusion of your talk, provide the link to your thesis recording to the RI Web Team, Brian Staszal <staszal@cmu.edu> and Alex Krause <akrause@andrew.cmu.edu>