CGU Policy Regarding Dissertations

A. Dissertation Committee
1. Each dissertation committee will consist of at least three members drawn from the core or research CGU faculty or the Claremont Colleges extended faculty on the condition that at least one committee member must be a core CGU faculty member in the candidate’s school. The chair of the candidate’s committee must be a member of the core or research CGU faculty or the Claremont Colleges extended faculty. There may be committee co-chairs.
   a. For joint PhD programs, which faculty member(s) can serve as chair of the committee must be specified in the program agreement.
2. CGU encourages the inclusion on each dissertation committee of an expert in the student’s field from outside the Claremont Colleges. There may be an outside examiner on a four-person (or more) committee, but not on a three-person committee. The outside examiner may be a faculty member from another institution, or a qualified practitioner. The outside examiner can be appointed to the committee either before or after the proposal has been approved at the discretion of the other members of the committee. The outside examiner has a vote in the committee’s proceedings if the academic unit has approved such a policy. The outside examiner may receive an honorarium depending on the policy and/or budget of the academic unit.
3. The student selects the Chair of his/her dissertation committee. Together, the student and the Chair of the dissertation committee nominate the remaining two (or more) members. Although it is expected that the student and the Chair would be in positive agreement about the co-nominated choices, both the student and the Chair have veto power over each other’s choices. The Designation of Dissertation Committee Form is used to recommend the committee membership for approval by the Dean of the student’s school.
   a. In the case of an Interfield PhD, the appropriate Dean/School will be determined by who is the Chair of the dissertation.
   b. If there are co-chairs of the dissertation, and they are from different schools, only one dean needs to approve the committee.
4. Exceptions to the above policies must be applied for in writing to the Provost.

B. Dissertation Proposal
1. The dissertation proposal is a written agreement between the student and the dissertation committee that specifies the requirements for the dissertation. CGU does not have a standard layout for the proposal document; however, the document must contain a clear statement of the above-noted requirements. The content, organization, length, and format of the document are determined by the committee.
2. The dissertation proposal must be approved by all voting members of the committee. The requirement for a proposal oral defense is determined by academic units.
   a. At least one voting member of the committee and the student must be physically in the same location for the proposal oral defense. Members
that are not physically present will attend the proposal oral defense via videoconference or teleconference. Exceptions to the requirement to have a committee member present with the student can be considered by petition to the Dean of the student’s school.

b. If there is to be a proposal oral defense, the student and the Chair will determine jointly when the proposal is ready to be defended. All committee members must agree to a time, date, and location for the meeting, which must be held within one month of receipt of the proposal document. The document, which the Chair deems to be defendable, must be received by the committee members at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Revisions to the document may be required before the committee approves the proposal.

3. The Advancement to Candidacy Form, must be signed by all Committee members. The approved version of the dissertation proposal document must be archived in the academic unit office.

   a. If subsequent significant modifications (i.e., major changes in scope or focus, etc.) to the dissertation proposal are required during the research process, all committee members must be informed and indicate their approval in writing to the Chair. The Chair will archive an addendum to the proposal in the academic unit office.

4. Exceptions to the above policies other than those mentioned above must be approved by the Provost.

C. Dissertation Defense

1. A dissertation is deemed completed when the student defends the dissertation via an oral exam and submits the dissertation document (assuming that the document meets CGU’s guidelines for dissertation preparation and submission).

2. There may be circumstances that require a change in the membership of the dissertation committee subsequent to approval of the dissertation proposal. The student is responsible for facilitating the change.

   a. The approved committee change, which must be approved by the Chair and Dean of the school, must be transmitted to the Registrar via the Change of Committee Form.

3. CGU’s academic calendar specifies deadlines for the dissertation oral exam that define whether a student may graduate in a given semester.

   a. All committee members must agree to a time, date, and location for the meeting, which must be held within one month of receipt of the complete dissertation draft document that the Chair deems to be defendable. The document must be received by the committee members at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. However, there must be a six-month minimum period between the time the proposal has been approved and the dissertation oral exam.

   b. At least one voting member of the committee and the student must be physically in the same location for the oral. Members that are not physically present will attend the formal meeting via videoconference or teleconference. Exceptions to the requirement to have a committee
member present with the student can be considered by petition to the Dean of the student’s school.

c. The Registrar will schedule all defense meetings in conjunction with the academic units.

d. To foster the tradition of public defenses, the event will be publicly announced by the Registrar.
   i. The announcement of the oral must be e-mailed to all faculty members at CGU and to extended faculty of the academic unit(s).
   ii. The announcement must be made at least a week before the scheduled defense.

e. The dissertation oral must be approved by all voting members of the committee. This is reported to the Registrar via the Final Approval Form – Oral, which must be signed by all voting committee members.

4. CGU’s academic calendar specifies deadlines for submission of the dissertation document that define whether a student may graduate in a given semester. The dissertation document must be approved by all voting members of the committee. The content, organization, and length of the document are determined by the committee. Revisions to the document after the oral may be required before final approval. This process will be managed by the Chair with the goal of meeting the submission deadline; however, the requirements for change may not allow for this goal to be met.

5. The final version of the dissertation document must be submitted to the Registrar by the student following the guidelines for electronic submission. The Final Approval Form – Document, which is submitted to the Registrar, must be signed by all committee members.

6. Exceptions to the above policies other than those mentioned above must be approved by the Provost.

Approved by the FEC 11-3-97; amended by the FEC, 4-19-99, revised by the FEC 11/29/99; Amended and Approved FEC 11/13/06 and Faculty 11/27/06; Amended and Approved by faculty at 2/4/13 Faculty Meeting