

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE DOCTORAL PROGRAM**  
**GUIDELINES FOR DISSERTATION COMMITTEES AND DEFENSES**

**Establishing committees**

To establish a committee, students must complete and submit to the APO a Committee Registration Form.

Committees (proposal and dissertation) must have 4 members: 3 CJ PHD faculty (often referred to as “core” members) and 1 “outside reader,” an individual who is not on our CJ PHD faculty.

Students must obtain EO approval of outside readers by submitting the Approval of Outside Readers form along with the CV of the proposed reader. AFTER approval, students may invite the individual to join his or her committee. All completed forms should be submitted to the APO.

Students/chairs must notify the EO and APO of ANY committee changes. To change outsider readers, students must submit a new Approval of Outside Readers form along with the CV of the intended new reader. To change core members, students must submit a new Committee Registration Form.

**Preparing for proposal and dissertation defenses**

Students should work on drafts (proposal and final dissertation) with their chairs. Based on chair feedback, students should revise their drafts, until the chair deems the document ready to be sent to other committee members.

The chair-approved draft should be sent to all committee members for feedback.

Students should contact the APO for the Defense Signature Form, which enables them to schedule a defense (exam 2 or 3), only AFTER all committee members deem the work ready to defend. Committee members should not sign the Defense Signature Form if they do not believe the work is ready to defend.

**Scheduling proposal and dissertation defenses**

Students may only defend their proposal (exam 2) AFTER they have passed all parts of exam 1 (comprehensive exams). Students may only defend their dissertation (exam 3) AFTER they have passed their proposal defense (exam 2).

For any defense, students/chairs must submit their Defense Signature Form to the APO 35 days in advance. At that time, the forms should have all signatures.

The student and chair are responsible for ensuring that the student has consulted the GC website (<http://libguides.gc.cuny.edu/dissertations>) to apprise themselves of all deposit formatting procedures and deadlines. This includes the dissertation cover page, which is needed for deposit. The student is also responsible for submitting his or her intent to deposit the dissertation via the CUNYFIRST system.

**Day of the defense**

ALL committee members must physically or virtually be present for any defense. If a committee member is late, the defense must not start until he or she arrives. The defense must be postponed if a committee member is absent.

The dissertation proposal defense (exam 2) is a closed session. Only committee members may be present. The session may not be recorded. The dissertation defense (exam 3) is an open session. All are invited to attend.