

## PhD Defense Timeline—Information for Students and Mentors

1. **4-6 months ahead of anticipated defense:** Have a thesis advisory committee to identify what else you need to do to complete your degree
  - Begin to write your dissertation/thesis, perhaps starting with methods and/or introduction
  
2. **2-3 months ahead:** Identify and ask at least 2 new faculty members, one from outside the University, to serve as readers for your dissertation examination committee (check your department/track for exact number of additional faculty and details; any Rutgers faculty member does not count as outside the University)
  - Submit dissertation examination committee form to the SGS office  
[http://njms.rutgers.edu/sgs/f f docs/DISSERTATION\\_EXAMINATION\\_COMMITTEE.pdf](http://njms.rutgers.edu/sgs/f f docs/DISSERTATION_EXAMINATION_COMMITTEE.pdf)
  - Identify potential dates for the defense with your mentor and committee, select date
  - Continue writing, work with your mentor on drafts
  
3. **At least 4-6 weeks ahead:** confirm date/time with committee
  - Reserve room(s) for defense and oral exam
  - Continue writing, work with your mentor on drafts
  - Begin to prepare seminar
  
4. **At least 3 weeks ahead:** send information about the defense to the SGS office for advertisement (abstract, date/time, location, your previous degrees, etc)
  - Ask your committee members if they would like electronic or hard (printed) copy of the thesis
  - Finalize seminar
  
5. **At least 2 weeks ahead:** send/hand out/mail completed thesis to your committee members
  - Practice seminar

- Print report of examination form  
<http://njms.rutgers.edu/sgs/f f docs/REPORT OF FINAL EXAMINATION DISSERTATION DEFENSE.pdf>

6. **Day of defense:** present, defend, celebrate!

7. **Post-defense:** follow committee's instructions (revise, more experiments, etc)

- Submit final copies to office (4 + any personal ones you want, one must be on 25% or greater rag content paper)
- Have mentor email the SGS office to confirm that you have satisfied the requirements of the committee
- Follow graduation procedures on website

**\*Please note: Failure to adhere to this timeline may result in delay of your defense\***