

Procedural Guidelines for Defending Thesis

Students must be currently enrolled during the semester in which your thesis is defended and the semester in which the student files the thesis for graduation. The final defense takes place only in the fall and spring semesters. When the thesis is ready to be defended, the following steps are required:

1. The Thesis Committee chair and the student, in consultation with the committee members, agree that the thesis or project is ready for a defense.
2. The student is responsible for contacting all the committee members to find a suitable time for defense and asking the Administrative Assistant of the SCJ Department to reserve a room for the defense.
3. At the defense:
 - The final thesis defense is open to the public.
 - The defense is convened by the Thesis Committee chair who will explain the protocol of the defense.
 - The student will give an approximately 30-minute presentation of the thesis emphasizing the study's research questions, methodology, and findings.
 - After the student's presentation, the Thesis Committee chair will dismiss the audience to allow only the committee members to question the student (no more than 30 minutes) about the thesis.
 - After the questioning, the student will be asked to leave the room so that the committee members can discuss and vote (majority vote will determine the outcome) on whether the student has passed or failed the final thesis defense.
 - Once the committee votes, the Thesis Committee chair will invite the student to return to the room and inform him/her of the decision.
4. The student may expect the committee members to make suggestions for final edits. It is the responsibility of the student to take personal written notes of all the committee's suggestions and to complete all edits within a given time.

If the student fails to defend his/her thesis or project, the student may re-defend within five (5) months of the initial defense. Failure to pass the second thesis defense or failure to re-defend within five (5) months will result in the student's dismissal from the program without the awarding for the MSCJ degree.

5. **The Thesis Defense Outcome Form** is signed by all appropriate persons only after all revisions are made and approved by the thesis committee.
6. The student is responsible for preparing the thesis in the current APA (American Psychological Association) writing style and contacting the library for publication in the Digital Commons within a given date for that particular semester. Complete and submit **the Final Submission of Thesis form**.