

### Pre-Defence

- Enter the virtual defence location 15 minutes prior to the defence, to participate in a conversation, facilitated by the Graduate Studies Coordinator, about the proceedings:
  - Consultation with the supervisory committee to determine which examination option to use.
  - Consultation with the student and examining committee to determine which deliberation method to use. The exam chair may make the final deliberation method decision.
  - Check with the supervisor as to whether they would like to offer an opening prayer. If not, the exam chair will normally do so.
- **Optional:** In some programs, the examination committee will meet for 5 min in-camera (without student or audience) to share with the other members of the committee the preliminary grade they have assigned to the written thesis.

### Call to Order and Introductions (5 min)

- Welcome all those in attendance and provide TWU's land acknowledgement: "Trinity Western University, Langley campus, is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Stó:lō people."
- Introduce yourself as the exam chair who is acting on behalf of the Vice Provost of Graduate Studies, and provide detail as to your position at the university and research expertise.
- Open with prayer (normally supervisor or exam chair).
- Introduce the examining committee members individually by name, allowing an opportunity for each to provide details about their academic credentials – e.g., position, program, institution, research expertise. Begin with the supervisor, then second reader, and conclude with the third reader/external examiner (opposite order than the examination).
- Remind the audience that this is an exam. Ask them to remain muted with video off for the presentation and examination.
- Review the exam procedures. Inform the audience that, time permitting, they may have a chance to ask questions when the official portion of the examination is over, during which they may turn their videos on and unmute themselves.
- Remind all those in attendance that recording of any kind is not permitted.

### Presentation (20-25 min)

- Introduce the student, and invite the student to make their presentation (20-25 minutes).

### Examination (1 hour)

Explain the ground rules for the defence. There are two options for the examination.

Examination Option #1 (1 hour total)	Examination Option #2 (1 hour total)
<p>Two rounds of examination questions, normally one to two questions per examiner per round, in the following order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Third reader/external examiner</li> <li>• Second reader</li> <li>• Thesis supervisor</li> </ul> <p>If time permits after two rounds of questions, the audience may be invited to ask questions.</p>	<p>One round of examination questions, wherein each examining committee member may engage in questions for a period of time not exceeding 20 minutes respectively, in the following order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Third reader/external examiner</li> <li>• Second reader</li> <li>• Thesis supervisor</li> </ul> <p>If time permits after all of the committee members have completed their question periods, the audience may be invited to ask questions.</p>

NOTES:

- The exam chair has discretion to extend the oral examination, should it be deemed necessary. For example, if, in the chair's opinion, it would be helpful to a fair process to allow an opportunity for examiners to ask additional clarifying questions.
- Should the exam chair, student, or other members of the examining committee experience difficulty with virtual connection (e.g., Wi-Fi or other technical difficulties), the exam chair will oversee any troubleshooting. If additional support is required, the Graduate Studies Coordinator (or designate) may be contacted to assist (see below). Should the connection prove not restorable, the exam chair has consideration whether to delay the defence to address the issue, or to postpone the defence. (Please note: the exam chair is not responsible to attend to connection or other technical difficulties of audience members).

**Deliberation – *In camera* (20-25 min)**

- Thank the student for their presentation and the audience for their attendance, and advise everyone that it is time to allow the examination committee privacy for deliberation. Only the examining committee and exam chair may be present in the deliberation.
- Let the student know that a deliberation normally takes 20-25 minutes and reassure them that length of time is not an indicator of how well (or not) they performed.
- There are two deliberation method options (See Pre-Defence section above):

Deliberation Method #1	Deliberation Method #2
The student and audience may all log off, and the exam chair can message the student to return online when it is time to receive the results of the examination.	After dismissing the audience, the exam chair may create a breakout room for the student during deliberations, inviting the student to rejoin the committee to receive the results.

- After a private virtual location is secured, ask the examination committee to review the program's evaluation criteria (located on the second page of the *Thesis Evaluation & Agreement*) and arrive at a **recommendation** and **grade**, through discussion.
- If the discussion becomes too lengthy, intercede and request a final decision.

**Conclusion (5-10 min)**

- Invite the student to return to the room and inform them of their exam results. Only the student may be present to receive their grade privately. No audience members may return to the room with the student.

**Grading Form**

- On the *Thesis Evaluation & Agreement* (TEA), fill in the grade and recommendation and insert your signature.
- Return the TEA via email to the Graduate Studies Coordinator.
- The Graduate Studies Coordinator will circulate the TEA for the remaining signatures post-defence.

**THANK YOU!**

NOTE: If urgent support is required, contact the Graduate Studies Coordinator at [Alethea.Cook@twu.ca](mailto:Alethea.Cook@twu.ca) (or alternate contact information as provided).