Statistics & Actuarial Science Procedure for Completely Remote Defences
Jay Young 24th June 2020

• On advice from Grad Studies, please note, all signatures on forms must be either physical signatures subsequently scanned or digital signatures, emails stating approval in writing are not acceptable.

• Preparation for Exam/Defence
  o An exam/defence date should not be agreed upon, between the supervisor and the candidate, until the project/thesis is substantially written and in the required format. See the following link for details on formatting, https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/publish/thesis/format.

• 7 weeks before defence:
  o For PhD Candidates, Supervisor informs Grad Sec of defence info including date, time, full name of candidate (including student ID if possible), title of thesis and full committee details (including who will chair the defence) and a CV, covering at least 6 years, if the external examiner is non-SFU.
    ▪ Supervisors please note, the external must have previously supervised at least one PhD student through to completion of their degree. The minimum rank is usually associate professor, but if you wanted to recruit an assistant professor to the role, the CV would need to be submitted to the Grad Sec 8 weeks ahead of the defence, to allow time for pre-approval by Grad Studies.
    ▪ Grad Sec completes and emails Exam Committee form to Exam Committee Members for signature. Each Committee Member signs their own form and returns it to the Grad Sec, who forwards them to Grad Studies.
  o PhD Candidate to submit the final draft of their thesis (the one that will be defended) to the Grad Sec, for forwarding to Grad Studies, by 6 weeks and 1 day before the defence, at the latest.
  o The Exam Committee form, external’s CV and thesis has to be received by Grad Studies at the latest, 6 weeks before the defence.

• 5 weeks before defence:
  o For MSc Candidates, Supervisor informs Grad Sec of defence info including date, time, full name of candidate (including student ID if possible), title of project and full committee details (including who will chair the defence).
    ▪ Grad Sec completes and emails Exam Committee form to Exam Committee Members for signature. Each Committee Member signs their own form and returns it to the Grad Sec who forwards them to Grad Studies.
    ▪ The Exam Committee form has to be received by Grad Studies at the latest, 4 weeks before the defence.
  o Grad Sec updates department website to show defence details, candidates should check the website to confirm that the details of their defence are correct. Note the website will request that anyone who wants to attend the defence remotely should send their email address to the Grad Sec.
  o Candidate emails the final version of their abstract, as soon as it is available, to the Grad Sec for inclusion on the website. The Candidate also needs to email the Grad Sec their approval page when it’s ready.

• Between 4 weeks and 7 days before defence:
  o MSc Candidate to submit a digital copy of the written project sent to the Committee, and copied to the Grad Sec, at the very latest 2 weeks before the date of the defence. However, it is highly recommended to send this out before then, say in week 3 before the defence, to ensure that all members of the Committee have sufficient time to read the project thoroughly.
  o Candidate or Exam Committee Member can inform Grad Sec of name and email address for any audience members, from outside of the department, who want to remotely attend the defence.
  o Grad Sec emails the department, including Grad Students, details of the defence and requests email address of anyone who wants to remotely attend.

• 7 days before defence:
Grad Sec sets up the defence as a meeting on the Blue Jeans platform. Grad Sec emails the BlueJeans meeting ID and information on using BlueJeans to the Candidate and Committee.

If link not received within a few days, the Candidate can email Grad Sec to check on it.

**Sometime during the week before the defence:**
- The Candidate and their Supervisor agree a date and time to test Blue Jeans by holding a short meeting to familiarize themselves with the system.
- The Candidate and Exam Committee Members may also want to set up Zoom or share Skype users as backups to BlueJeans. Mobile phone numbers should also be shared to help resolve any technical issues that may arise during the defence.
- Two – three days before the defence, any PhD Candidates should forward the slides they will be using for their defence presentation to the Grad Sec, so they are available to the committee as a backup, if required.

**Day of before defence:**
- Grad Sec will email the Exam Committee the forms requiring signatures.
- The Grad Sec will email the BlueJeans meeting ID and information on using BlueJeans to the general audience.

**The defence:**
- As per instructions from Grad Studies, the general public is only allowed to attend the open portion of the examination via video-conference, which includes the candidate’s presentation and the round of questions from the examining committee. The audience should also be given the opportunity to ask questions, by initially submitting their name into the chat section, then waiting for the chair to call on them specifically to allow them to direct their question to the candidate.
- Once the questions have been completed, the chair must request that the candidate and the audience sign off.
- The chair checks the number of meeting participants present to ensure discussions are now private. The committee then makes the decision according to GGR 1.10.2.
- The supervisor, or chair, should email, call or text the candidate to re-join the video-conference once the decision is made.
- Exam Committee to each sign their copy of the RAD form and email it to the Grad Sec
- As per instructions from Grad Studies, only the Committee Chair is required to sign the approval page next to their name. The Chair should note how the other Committee Members attended the defence (videoconference, teleconference or written communication) on the lines adjacent to their names. The Chair then submits the Approval page to the Grad Sec.

**After the defence:**
- The Grad Sec will submit the RAD and Approval Page to Dean of Science for approval and send a copy of the signed Approval Page to the Student and Supervisor for their records.
- The student can go ahead with any required revisions and submission of their project/thesis to the library (https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/publish/thesis/submission), including submission of a signed Supervisor Revision Memo.