

## Dissertation Defense Checklist for PhD Students (ENGL & CMPL)

\*Check the graduate school calendar for the latest date you can file your dissertation and graduation paperwork; we advise that you try to schedule your defense at least 3 weeks and no fewer than 2 weeks prior to this deadline. Please also be aware that if you are defending your dissertation during the summer, you will need to enroll in 3 units of 994 with your dissertation director and you will need to pay for these 3 units yourself since your tuition is not covered by the department during either Summer Session I or Summer Session II. If you plan to defend and file your dissertation during the summer, please speak with the DGS.

\*Find a date for your dissertation defense. An online doodle poll often works best. You will need to find a 2 hour block of time that works for all your committee members. We recommend starting as early as 8am and as late as 6pm and to give your committee members 3-4 weeks worth of dates

\*File a request for your dissertation defense. The form is available on the department website under “Dissertation Defense Scheduling”: <http://englishcomplit.unc.edu/english/graduate/forms> You are also responsible for scheduling a room for your defense – see the form above.

\*Notify the Graduate Student Services Specialist of your dissertation defense date so that our office will have ample time to prepare your paperwork and to place your paperwork in the mailbox of your chair (not your advisor—the chair literally chairs your defense and handles all paperwork). We ask that you give the Graduate Student Service Specialist at least 2 weeks notice in order to prepare your paperwork for your dissertation defense.

\*Fill out the graduation checklist – one can be found in the last appendix of the English Department “Guide to Graduate Studies” (find the appropriate guide on the department website). For CMPL students, please refer to the CMPL handbook for your graduation requirements.

\*Official Graduate School Paperwork/Form: Make sure that the chair of your committee has your committee members sign BOTH sections III (oral defense of the dissertation) and IV (written defense). Often committee members sign section III but forget to sign section IV—you should gently remind your chair and advisor of the need to have both sections signed by all members of your committee before you can file your graduation paperwork.

If you have a member of your committee who will phone or skype in for the dissertation defense, you can have the DGS sign on his/her behalf; however, the faculty member not physically present at the time of the defense should email the DGS to grant signing permission (for legal reasons, it’s always preferable to get permission if someone is signing on another faculty member’s behalf).

\*Submit a copy of your dissertation abstract to the Graduate Studies office

\*Read the section on “Graduation” in the Graduate School website -- <http://handbook.unc.edu/graduation.html> -- to ensure that you have fulfilled all graduation criteria per the Graduate School (there is a check list that you access through Connect Carolina)

\*Make sure that your dissertation director turns in a grade for 994 the semester that you defend and file your dissertation; you must be enrolled the semester you defend and file (and the graduate school expects that you will file shortly after you defend). The only person who can submit a grade for you is your dissertation director; neither the DGS, the chair of the department, or a dean in the graduate school can submit a grade; only the instructor can submit a grade.