



**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY** | Cumming School of Medicine

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# NEUTRAL CHAIR GUIDELINES

Prepared for:

**Graduate Science Education**

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## Purpose

This document provides guidelines for the neutral chair during graduate science examinations. These guidelines will help to ensure consistency in the examination process across all programs. Providing a uniform approach to the tasks of a neutral chair allows for ease of transition between programs where a faculty member may be asked to be a neutral chair and to ensure that the student knows what to expect in an examination from the neutral chair.

## Neutral Chair Responsibilities

A neutral chair will be the chair for all official examinations of graduate students. Official examinations include the Candidacy Field of Study and Final Thesis Oral Defense Examinations. The tasks of a neutral chair include, ensuring fairness during the examination, managing the time for exams, reporting results, recording minutes of the exam, managing distant examiner official documents, recording the final result of the exam and ensuring that the exams adhere to the rules and regulations of both the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) and Graduate Science Education (GSE).

## Guidelines for Exams

The following guidelines outline the procedure for the different types of examinations that require a neutral chair. They are intended to provide a quick reference to what is required at both the FGS and GSE levels. The guidelines are broken down into the Field of Study (FOS) and Thesis oral examination guidelines.

### PhD Field of Study Exam – Neutral Chair Instructions

PhD field of study examination duration is a maximum of 2 hours for questioning plus ½ hour for examiner discussion. Figure 1 is a brief visual overview of the entire process.

#### Role of the Neutral Chair

1. Time keeper for the exam
  - a. allow for 2 hours for questions + ½ hour for deliberations
2. Report results to student and to Graduate Program Administrator (GPA) for forwarding to the Dean of Graduate Studies
3. Does not question student or offer opinions that would sway the examining committee
4. Records minutes of the exam

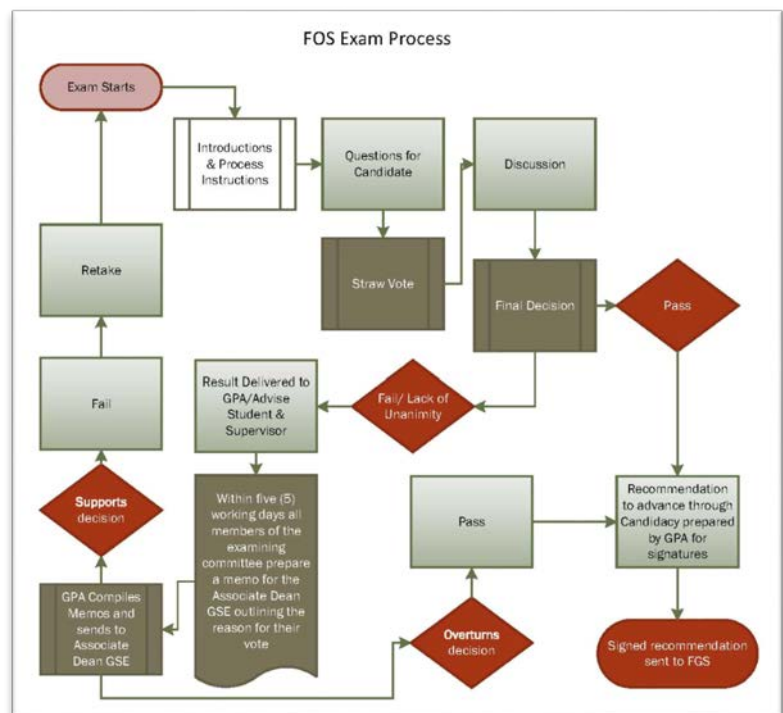


Figure 1. Flow of FOS Exam

- a. Purpose of the minutes is to provide:
    - i. a summary of the process for the Associate Dean, Graduate Science Education if needed
    - ii. a guide for an oral summary of the results to the student and supervisor
  - b. Content/Format of the minutes:
    - i. Will include a brief summary of questioning of the student and any anomalies or challenges that occurred. (Detailed listing of the questions and responses is not necessary.)
    - ii. can be handwritten or typed
    - iii. include date and time of exam start, names of examiners. and start/end time of each examiner's questions,
    - iv. time the exam concluded; time deliberation concluded (deliberations are not recorded. A summary of the result is all that is necessary).
5. If an examiner is participating via distance, receive his/her approval via email to record a proxy vote provided verbally at the conclusion of the exam. **Please note that use of Skype is not recommended. GSE Boardroom is equipped with Adobe Connect.**

#### Examiner joining by **teleconference**

- 1) all info is sent to the Neutral Chair, who is responsible for calling the examiner. If the exam is in the GSE Board Room (where most of them are held) one of our GPA's sets up the speaker phone.
- 2) If the exam will be held using videoconference or other technology, you should receive all the info needed about who will set up the technology and assist if needed
- 3) You will be alerted to the fact someone is using technology on the Oral Examination Notice if you want to confirm the tech support your GPA.

If all examiners are not present 15 minutes past exam start time, notify the Associate Dean (Dr Tara Beattie) immediately for a decision on whether the examination can proceed or must be re-scheduled. (You can wait a few minutes if you know an examiner is on the way.) If the external examiner is absent, the exam may need to be re-scheduled. If it is a committee member and his/her expertise is covered by other committee members, the exam may be able to proceed.

If you cannot reach FGS please contact either Graduate Program Administrator or Graduate Program Director (See Appendix A: Contact List)

### **Process for Exam – Oral Field of Study exam**

The following occurs with the student and supervisor present

#### *A. Introduction to Examination Process*

1. Welcome exam committee members and extend thank-you's for participating; introductions if needed.
2. Remind participants to turn off cell phones, pagers, and laptops.
3. All examiners must be present for the entire exam process. If an examiner has to leave the room, the exam stops and the clock stops until he/she returns.
4. Only those listed on the **Notice of PhD FOS Examination** should be present.

5. The Dean of Graduate Studies (or representative) and Department Head (or designate) may attend without prior notice

*B. Examination Process*

1. **Supervisor and Co-supervisor are non-voting members and do not ask questions.**
2. Questions to be based around the reading list and/or predetermined topics.
3. Normally questioning will begin with the external examiners. (Confirm they are okay with this.) Depending on the program, the neutral chair will advise on the timing and duration of the rounds of questions
4. Examiner may “pass” if no further questions.
5. If there is time at the end, the neutral chair can welcome additional questions from the examination committee.
6. Once examiners are satisfied all their questions have been answered and/or the 2-hour time limit is up, the student and Supervisor are asked to leave the room.

*C. Post Examination Discussion Process*

**The following occurs with the supervisor and student absent.**

1. Conduct a straw vote, which is anonymous, to determine each committee member’s recommendation. Candidacy oral exam results are either Pass or Fail;
2. The Neutral Chair reveals results of the votes.
3. Begin discussion with external examiners.
4. Role of the Neutral Chair is to help focus and summarize the issues, but NOT to participate in the discussion or give an opinion on the recommendation. In determining the final recommendation, refer the committee back to the Faculty of Graduate Studies Outcomes, Table 1, and relate them to the major discussion points. (Table 1 provides information on the implications of a pass or fail vote and what is required to have a fail).
5. If consensus on the recommendation is not reached, the Neutral Chair may remind the committee that if the outcome includes one negative vote, the candidate will pass. If the outcome includes two or more negative votes, the committee recommendation will be Fail.
6. The **Report of FOS Oral Examination** is then circulated to the committee members to indicate their final recommendation and initial. The Neutral Chair signs acknowledging all results have been received on the form.
7. Student and Supervisor are called back in and provided results of the exam. The Neutral Chair may wish to give the results to the student and supervisor in private if the exam was not successful.
8. The Neutral Chair returns the **Report of FOS Oral Examination** to the Graduate Program Administrator immediately following the exam. Distance examiners must email the Neutral Chair prior to the examination giving him/her permission to initial the ‘Report of FOS Oral Examination’ on behalf of the distance examiner. Please include a copy of the email with the **Report of FOS Oral Examination**.
9. In the case of a Fail, all members of the examining committee including, the Neutral Chair, Supervisor and Co-Supervisor are required to complete a report addressing the result of the exam within 5 working days. These are addressed to the Associate Dean, Graduate Science

Education and copied to the Graduate Program Director. The GPA facilitates the collection of the reports and delivers them to the Associate Dean.

Table 1. PhD FOS Examination Outcomes

**PHD FOS EXAMINATION OUTCOMES**

<b>OUTCOME</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Committee/Neutral Chair Responsibilities</b>
PASS	After the final vote, each examiner must record a recommendation of pass or fail on the official <i>Report of FOS Oral Examination Form</i> . Every effort should be made to reach a unanimous recommendation. Should the outcome of the final vote include one negative vote, the candidate will pass.	<p>The Neutral Chair must inform the student of the outcome of the examination immediately following the vote of the examination committee.</p> <p>The Neutral Chair will record the final recommendation of pass or fail on the <i>Report of FOS Oral Examination</i> form which is returned to the GPA directly after the exam.</p>
FAIL	Should the outcome of the final vote include two or more negative votes, the committee’s recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies will be “fail”.	<p><b><u>Within 5 working days of the failed examination</u></b> the Neutral Chair must submit a written report of the examination procedures to the Associate Dean of Graduate Science Education and copy it to the Graduate Director.</p> <p><b><u>Within 5 working days of the examination</u></b>, each committee member must provide a confidential written report to the Associate Dean of Graduate Science Education explaining the reasons for his/her vote and copy it to the Graduate Director and Supervisor.</p> <p>After consultation with the Supervisor, the Graduate Director then summarizes the essential points to the student, copied to the Supervisor.</p>
RE-TAKE	In the event of a recommendation of “Fail”, the student will be allowed a retake of the examination.	Only <b><u>one</u></b> re-take will be permitted. The re-take must take place <b><u>no sooner 2 months and no later than 6 months</u></b> from the date of the first examination.

## Thesis Defense

### Rules: Current (Starting September 2014)

Rules around the Thesis Oral Defense changed in September 2014. The major change is in the results of the examining committee's vote and how this is recorded.

#### *Role of the Neutral Chair*

1. Chair the oral examination – allow 2 hours for the exam + ½-1 hour for discussion
2. Report results to student and to Graduate Program Administrator for forwarding to the Dean of Graduate Studies
3. Does not question the student or offer opinions that would sway the examining committee
4. Records minutes of the exam
  - a. Purpose of the minutes is to provide:
    - i. a summary of the process for the Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies if needed
    - ii. a guide for an oral summary of the results to the student and supervisor
  - b. Content/Format of the minutes:
    - i. Will include a brief summary of questioning of the student and any anomalies or challenges that occurred. (Detailed listing of the questions and responses is not necessary.)
    - ii. can be handwritten or typed
    - iii. include date and time of exam start, names of examiners. and start/end time of each examiner's questions,
    - iv. time the exam concluded; time deliberation concluded (deliberations are not recorded. A summary of the result is all that is necessary).
5. If an examiner is participating via distance, receive his/her **Examiner's Report on Thesis** prior to the exam.
6. Records the result on the **Report of Final Master's /PhD Thesis Oral Examination** before examiners leave.
7. Reminds the student to obtain all signatures on the **Thesis Approval Page**

#### Examiner joining by **teleconference**

- 1) all information is sent to the Neutral Chair, who is responsible for calling the examiner. If the exam is in the GSE Board Room (where most of them are held) one of our GPA's sets up the speaker phone and projector.
- 2) If the exam will be held using videoconference or other technology, you should receive all the info needed about who will set up the technology and who is available to assist if needed
- 3) You will be alerted to the fact someone is using technology on the Notice of Thesis Oral Examination if you want to confirm the tech support with the program GPA

If all examiners are not present 15 minutes past exam start time, notify the Associate Dean Policy (Drs. Jalel Azraiez 220-4933 or Lisa Hughes 220-4935 or FGS 220-4938) immediately for a decision on whether the examination can proceed or must be re-scheduled. (You can wait a few minutes if you know an examiner is on the way.) Decisions on if the exam can proceed will be authorized by FGS pending the circumstances.

If you cannot reach FGS please contact either the Graduate Program Administrator or Graduate Program Director. See Appendix C Contact List

### *Process for the Exam*

The following occurs with the student present

#### A. Introduction to Examination Process

1. Welcome exam committee members and extend thank-you's for participating; introductions if needed.
2. Remind participants to turn off cell phones and pagers
3. All examiners must be present for the entire exam process. If an examiner has to leave the room for 5 minutes, the exam stops and the clock stops until he/she returns. If the examiner is away for longer than 5 minutes, the exam will need to be re-scheduled.
4. All Thesis Oral Examinations are Open:
  - a. OPEN EXAM: Only those listed on the **Notice of Oral Examination** can participate in the exam process. With Open Exams other observers may be present but they may not vote or ask questions. Observers are asked to leave before the discussion begins. Observers stay for the duration of the exam including the questioning of the student.
5. Collect **Examiners' Reports on Thesis** from all examination committee members. **The examination process cannot begin until these are collected**. If a problem arises, the Neutral Chair has an additional blank copy that can be completed by the examiner before the exam begins. Before collecting the **Examiner's Reports**, remind them to check the **yes/no boxes** (lower right corner) related to whether the thesis should be nominated for an award. (However this is not mandatory.) (The **Examiner's Reports** are kept confidential and given to the Graduate Program Administrator immediately after the exam.)
6. Review the **Thesis Approval Page** produced by the student as part of the thesis. Ensure the examiners' names are listed correctly and are all on a single page.
7. The Dean of Graduate Studies (or representative) and Department Head (or designate) may attend without prior notice
8. Outline the examination process, with student present, prior to starting the examination

#### B. Examination Process

1. The student may begin with a brief 10-15 minute presentation outlining his/her thesis project and results. Please ensure that this is limited to 15 minutes and isn't included in the two-hour maximum.
2. Begin first round of questions with the External Examiner (PhD exams), then "Internal" External Examiner and committee (Confirm External Examiner is okay with this.) **Supervisor may ask questions and is a voting member** of the committee.
3. Normally the neutral chair will invite 2 rounds of questions beginning with the external examiners.
  - In the first round, examiners must ask questions that pertain directly to the thesis (intro, method, results, discussion).
  - The second round may include these types of questions as well as more general "off the thesis" questions that may include application or practice, and that are related to the thesis.
4. Examiner may "pass" if no further questions.



- If there is time at the end, the neutral chair may welcome more general questions related to the exam subject matter can be posed.
- Once examiners are satisfied all their questions have been answered and/or the 2-hour time limit is up, the student is asked to leave the room, along with any observers.

C. Post Examination Discussion Process

Outline this process to examiners after student has left the room; Supervisor present

- Conduct a straw vote to determine each committee member’s recommendation with respect to both the written thesis and the oral defense. Distance examiners vote verbally after the straw votes have been collected.
- The Neutral Chair reveals results of the votes as an indicator of where to begin discussion. (Straw votes are anonymous and individual votes are not recorded). Figure 2 shows a visual outline of voting outcomes.
- Begin discussion with External Examiner’s comments.
- Supervisor may contribute to discussion.**
- Role of the Neutral Chair is to help focus and summarize the issues, but NOT to participate in the discussion or give an opinion on the recommendation. In determining the final recommendation, refer the committee to the Faculty of Graduate Studies recommendations and relate them back to the major discussion points.
- Examiners’ editorial comments on the thesis should not be discussed at the oral examination. It is recommended that each examiner hand the student a list of any such comments for post-examination final thesis revisions.
- If consensus on the recommendation is not reached, further discussion may take place.
- The result of the discussion is recorded on the **Report of Final MSc/PhD Thesis Oral Examination**. The Neutral Chair signs after recording the result.

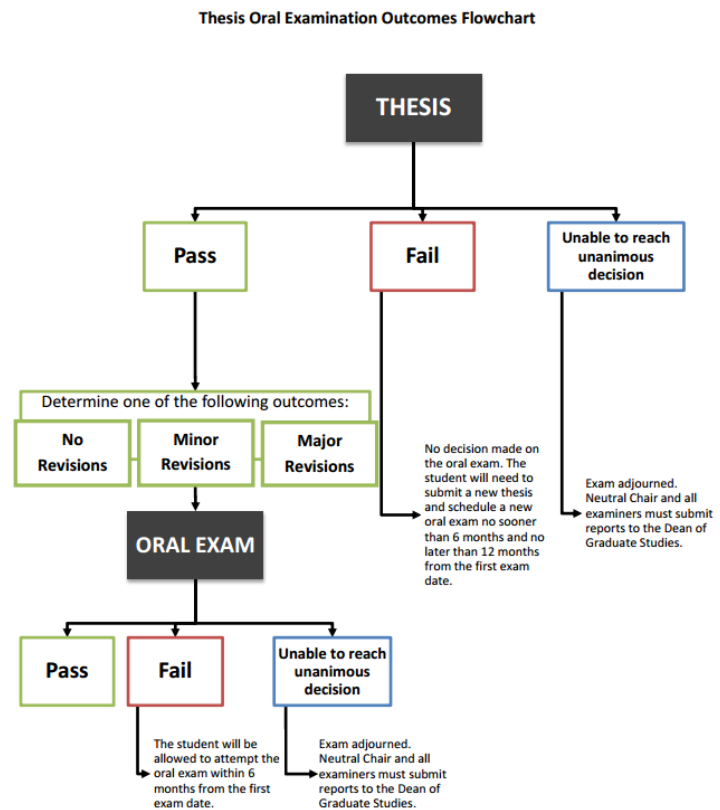


Figure 2: Thesis Oral Examination Outcomes Flowchart

*Outcomes of Pass/Fail for both the Thesis and Oral Examination*

The results of the voting on the Thesis and Oral examination are determined at the Faculty of Graduate studies and are listed in the Thesis and Thesis Examination Administrative Processes document

(<http://grad.ucalgary.ca/files/grad/thesis-and-thesis-examination-administrative-processes.pdf>) sections D and E.

#### Thesis

1. Pass – If the **unanimous decision** is that the thesis should pass, the committee must indicate whether the thesis is accepted with:
  - i. No Revisions (Thesis will need to be delivered along with all additional paperwork within 5 days of the defense.)
  - ii. Minor Revisions: stylistic changes and/or minor additions or clarifications; must be correctable within one month from the date of the examination. Only the Supervisor withholds signature from the **Thesis Approval Page** until these are complete.
  - iii. Major Revisions: typically involve clarification of textual materials, the qualification of research findings, conclusions, or limited additions to the text. Major Revisions must be completed and submitted to FGS within six months from the date of the examination. If required, students may apply for extensions to program.

The committee is responsible for determining the appropriate category of required changes. If any concerns arise over the nature of the revisions students should consult with the Graduate Program Director, and then the Associate Dean, if necessary. (Thesis and Thesis Examination Administrative Processes, Section D.1)

2. Fail: If the examining committee unanimously determines that the underlying research is not acceptable, then the examination committee recommends a Unanimous Fail on the thesis to the Dean of Graduate Studies. The final decision will be at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate studies. Should the Dean of Graduate Studies uphold the recommendation of “fail”, the candidate will have a second opportunity to present and defend an acceptable thesis. No judgment should be made on the oral defense, because the new thesis will need to be defended.
  - i. Only one re-submission will be allowed and a new defense will be required. The second oral examination will be scheduled and normally heard by the original examination committee no sooner than six months, and no later than twelve months from the date of the first examination. Any necessary revisions to the thesis must be completed by the candidate and approved by the committee before the second oral examination is scheduled. (Thesis and Thesis Examination Administrative Processes, Section D.2)
3. Failure to Reach Unanimous Decision – A memo indicating the votes of each examiner must be included in the Report to the Dean of Graduate studies. (Thesis and Thesis Examination Administrative Processes, Section D.3)

#### Oral Examination

1. Pass
2. Fail
3. Failure to Reach Unanimous Decision

Failure to reach a unanimous decision on either the thesis or oral defense

1. If the examiners are unable to achieve unanimity regarding one or both components, there must be no further discussion regarding that component of the examination and the Neutral Chair must select “Failure to Reach Unanimous Decision” on the *Final Thesis Oral Examination form* and immediately inform FGS of “lack of unanimity.” The final decision will be at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Studies, who, before rendering a decision, may consult with anyone involved in the post-examination deliberation.
2. Reports from the examination committee and the neutral chair are required, and must be submitted to [fgsad@ucalgary.ca](mailto:fgsad@ucalgary.ca) within five working days:
  - The Neutral Chair must submit a written report to the Dean of Graduate Studies, describing the examination procedures and copy it to the Graduate Program Director
  - Each Examination Committee Member must provide a confidential written report to the Dean of Graduate Studies explaining the reason for his/her recommendations and copy it to the Graduate Program Director and the Supervisor
  - The Graduate Program Director, after consultation with the Supervisor, summarizes the essential points in a written report to the student, copied to the supervisor and FGS. (Thesis and Thesis Examination Administrative Processes, Section D.3)

**Sample Guide for Thesis Oral Examination Procedure**

**DATE:**

**CANDIDATE:**

**LOCATION:**

**EXAMINING COMMITTEE:**

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6) Supervisor:

7) Neutral Chair:

It is \_\_\_AM/PM Calgary time and we will now begin the examination. Thank you to everyone for being present today for the Master's Thesis Oral Examination of \_\_\_\_\_.

*(Videoconferencing was in place to ensure the Committee situated in Calgary could interface with the distant site where Dr. \_\_\_\_ (proctor) and Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ (candidate) were present. There were no technical difficulties throughout the duration of the examination. We verified at the outset that all members could be heard clearly and loudly for all participants.)*

Thank you to all examiners for preparing and submitting your assessment to me of the thesis on the official *Examiner's Report on Thesis form*.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I will be the Neutral Chair presiding over the oral examination today.

\_\_\_\_\_ [*candidate's name*], your examining committee has now had an opportunity to evaluate the written component of your thesis, and today you will be provided the opportunity to defend what you've written, as well as respond to other questions that the committee deems relevant in further assessing you in your thesis research.

No one other than the members of your examination committee will be allowed to question you. I will do my best to ensure that all examiners are given an opportunity to question you and we will do this through rounds of questioning. We will begin with Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, then move to Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, and end with Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ should (s)he choose to question you. You each will get about 15 minutes for the first round and then about 5 min for a final round of questions.

It is common practice to ask the thesis candidate to present a brief (maximum of 15 minutes) summary of the thesis research and its significance. So I invite you to present your opening summary now.

*(Example of how to record presentation in minutes: Candidate made his slide presentation within \_\_\_\_\_ minutes to the Committee. Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ advanced the slides for the Candidate.)*

Thank you \_\_\_\_\_ for your summary of the significance of your thesis research. We will now begin with questions to the candidate. Please remember that your questions should be relevant to the subject matter of the thesis and should be clearly and succinctly phrased in order to minimize doubt in the candidate's mind as to what (s)he is being asked.

The examination will not last longer than 2 hours. At about \_\_\_\_\_AM/PM I will ask you to withdraw from the room. Before any discussion of your performance, I will ask that each examiner identify, through secret ballot, which recommendation (pass or fail) he or she favors. I will then chair a post-examination discussion of your performance. After the final vote, each examiner must record their recommendation on the official Faculty of Graduate Studies *Report of Final Master's Thesis Oral Examination* form, which I will then submit to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

I will then invite you back into the room and will share the outcome of the examination and the vote of the examination committee with you.

Please remember that your examiners will do their best to present their questions in a clear and succinct form. They will give you reasonable time to answer, and if you have not understood the question, then don't hesitate to ask your examiner to rephrase the question.

Do you have any questions about the examination procedure?

Great. Let's begin.

*(At about the end of the first round of questions – Record Time):*We have now completed the first round of questions. \_\_\_\_\_ (*Candidate*) are you doing ok or do you need a break? Some water? Everyone else ok to go on? Good. Thank you. Now in this final round of questions, I ask that you keep your questions to within 5 minutes.

*(At about the end of the next round of questions – Record Time):* To all of you, thank you for your questions, and to you \_\_\_\_\_ (*the candidate*), thank you for your responses. I will now ask you to leave the room until the examination committee has reached a final decision. Please don't go too far.

Before any discussion of Candidate's performance, I ask that you each identify, by secret ballot on the **straw vote form**, whether you favor recommending a pass or fail on each of the thesis and the oral defence.

Just as a point of reference, let me remind you of the Master's Thesis Oral Examination Recommendations. Thesis examinations must be judged to be either acceptable or unacceptable with respect to the thesis itself and, with respect to the oral defence, if the thesis is judged acceptable.

The result of today's exam must be a Committee Recommendation on Thesis and Oral Defense as follows:

Thesis:

- Pass with no revisions. Candidate is required to submit thesis to FGS within 5 days
- Pass with minor revisions. Candidate is required to submit thesis to FGS within 1 month
- Pass with major revisions. Candidate is required to submit thesis to FGS within 6 months
- Fail of thesis. No further voting or discussion
- Failure to reach unanimous decision. No further voting or discussion

Oral Defense

- Pass
- Fail
- Failure to reach unanimous decision

I ask that you work very hard to reach a unanimous recommendation. According to the current Handbook, unanimous decisions are required for BOTH the thesis and the oral defence. If you are unable to achieve unanimity regarding one or both components, there must be no further discussion regarding that component of the examination and I must immediately inform the Dean of "lack of unanimity". The final decision will then be at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

If the unanimous final decision is that the thesis conforms to the requirements for a Master's thesis, then the entire examination committee will sign the signature page, except the Supervisor, who will sign after reviewing and approving any necessary minor corrections on behalf of the committee.

In the event of a failed examination, an examination resulting in a lack of unanimity (hung jury), or an examination in which there were procedural irregularities, I will submit a report within 24 hours.

Okay, so now I will ask you to identify, by secret ballot, which of the 2 general recommendations (**PASS or FAIL**) you favor for both the thesis and oral part of the examination.

Now I invite you to a full discussion of the student's performance.

Thank you for your discussion. I will now re-read the potential recommendations aloud. *[Read from the Handbook.]*

**If consensus is not reached ...the Neutral Chair may say:**

It is clear to me that consensus has not or cannot be reached. You have all had an opportunity to discuss and share your assessments. In the event of an examination resulting in a lack of unanimity, no further discussion will be had. As neutral chair I will immediately inform the Dean of "lack of unanimity" and the final decision will be at the Dean of Graduate Studies' discretion. We will all be asked to submit a written report. I will go directly to the Graduate Program Administrator to notify her following the examination.

Your decision as an examination committee is a **Hung Jury**. Your final recommendations will be recorded on the official Final Thesis Oral Examination form for the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

I will now invite the candidate back in the room so I can explain the decision to him/her.

**If consensus is not reached ...the Neutral Chair may say:**

\_\_\_\_\_ [Candidate's name], your thesis oral examination committee has made its decision. They were unable to reach unanimity and thus the recommendation I will be presenting is that of a **Hung Jury** to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The Dean will be informed and the Exam Committee, as well as myself, will send a report within 5 working days; the Faculty of Graduate Studies Dean will then make the final decision.

On behalf of the examining committee, thank you for your work and participation in today's examination. On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ [Candidate's name] and Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ [Supervisor's name], thank you for agreeing to serve on \_\_\_\_\_ [Candidate's name] examining committee.

The examination adjourned at \_\_\_\_\_ pm (Calgary time).

## Rules: Old (Prior to September 2014 (Handbook 2013-14))

These rules can only be chosen by students who started prior to September 2014. This will be noted on the Notice of Thesis Oral Defense form.

### *Role of the Neutral Chair*

1. Chair the oral examination – allow 2 hours for the exam + ½-1 hour for discussion
2. Report results to student and to Graduate Program Administrator for forwarding to the Dean of Graduate Studies
3. Does not question the student or offer opinions that would sway the examining committee
4. Records minutes of the exam
  - a. Purpose of the minutes is to provide:
    - i. a summary of the process for the Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies if needed
    - ii. a guide for an oral summary of the results to the student and supervisor
  - b. Content/Format of the minutes:
    - i. Will include a brief summary of questioning of the student and any anomalies or challenges that occurred. (Detailed listing of the questions and responses is not necessary.)
    - ii. can be handwritten or typed
    - iii. include date and time of exam start, names of examiners. and start/end time of each examiner's questions,
    - iv. time the exam concluded; time deliberation concluded (deliberations are not recorded. A summary of the result is all that is necessary).
5. If an examiner is participating via distance, receive his/her **Examiner's Report on Thesis** prior to the exam, and also approval via email to record a proxy vote provided verbally at the conclusion of the exam
6. Ensures that all necessary signatures and initials are obtained on the **Report of Final Thesis Oral Examination** before examiners leave.
7. Reminds the student to obtain all signatures on the **Thesis Approval Page**

### Examiner joining by **teleconference**

- 1) all information is sent to the Neutral Chair, who is responsible for calling the examiner. If the exam is in the GSE Board Room (where most of them are held) one of our GPA's sets up the speaker phone and projector.
- 2) If the exam will be held using videoconference or other technology, you should receive all the info needed about who will set up the technology and who is available to assist if needed
- 3) You will be alerted to the fact someone is using technology on the Notice of Thesis Oral Examination if you want to confirm the tech support with the program GPA

If all examiners are not present 15 minutes past exam start time, notify the Associate Dean Policy (Drs. Jalel Azraiez 220-4933 or Lisa Hughes 220-4935 or FGS 220-4938) immediately for a decision on whether the examination can proceed or must be re-scheduled. (You can wait a few minutes if you know an



examiner is on the way.) Decisions on if the exam can proceed will be authorized by FGS pending the circumstances.

If you cannot reach FGS please contact either the Graduate Program Administrator or Graduate Program Director. See Appendix C Contact List)

### *Process for the Exam*

#### A. Introduction to Examination Process (with student present)

1. Welcome exam committee members and extend thank-you's for participating; introductions if needed.
2. Remind participants to turn off cell phones and pagers
3. All examiners must be present for the entire exam process. If an examiner has to leave the room for 5 minutes, the exam stops and the clock stops until he/she returns. If the examiner is away for longer than 5 minutes, the exam will need to be re-scheduled.
4. All Thesis Oral Defense exams are Open:
  - a. OPEN EXAM: Only those listed on the **Notice of Oral Examination** can participate in the exam process. With Open Exams other observers may be present but they may not vote or ask questions. Observers are asked to leave prior to the discussion.
5. Collect **Examiners' Reports on Thesis** from all examination committee members. **The examination process cannot begin until these are collected.** If a problem arises, the Neutral Chair has an additional blank copy that can be completed by the examiner before the exam begins. Before collecting the **Examiner's Reports**, remind them to check the **yes/no boxes** (lower right corner) related to whether the thesis should be nominated for an award. (However this is not mandatory.) (The **Examiner's Reports** are kept confidential and given to the Graduate Program Administrator immediately after the exam.)
6. Review the **Thesis Approval Page** produced by the student as part of the thesis. Ensure the examiners' names are listed correctly and are all on a single page.
7. The Dean of Graduate Studies (or representative) and Department Head (or designate) may attend without prior notice
8. Outline the examination process, with student present, prior to starting the examination

#### B. Examination Process (outline this process prior to the exam – student present)

1. The student may begin with a brief 10-15 minute presentation outlining his/her thesis project and results. Please ensure that this is limited to 15 minutes and isn't included in the two-hour maximum.
2. Begin first round of questions with the External Examiner, then "Internal" External Examiner and committee (Confirm External Examiner is okay with this.)
3. **Supervisor may ask questions and is a voting member** of the committee.
4. Go around the table with each examiner asking 1-2 questions at a time. In the first round, examiners must ask questions that pertain directly to the thesis (intro, method, results, discussion). The second round may include these types of questions as well as more general "off the thesis" questions that may include application or practice, and that are related to the thesis. It is the Neutral Chair's responsibility to inform the examiners of this before the questioning begins, and to remind the examiners during the questioning in the event that this is not followed

5. Examiner may “pass” if no further questions.
  6. If there is time at the end, more general questions related to the exam subject matter can be posed.
  7. Once examiners are satisfied all their questions have been answered and/or the 2-hour time limit is up, the student is asked to leave the room, along with any observers.
- C. Post Examination Discussion Process (Outline this process to examiners after student has left the room; Supervisor present)
1. Conduct a straw vote to determine each committee member’s recommendation with respect to both the written thesis and the oral defense. Distance examiners vote verbally after the straw votes have been collected. (Straw vote results are confidential and no record of the individual vote should be recorded in the minutes. A summary may be included.)
  2. The Neutral Chair reveals results of the votes as an indicator of where to begin discussion
  3. Begin discussion with External Examiner’s comments.
  4. **Supervisor may contribute to discussion.**
  5. Role of the Neutral Chair is to help focus and summarize the issues, but NOT to participate in the discussion or give an opinion on the recommendation. In determining the final recommendation, refer the committee to the Faculty of Graduate Studies recommendations (Appendix B) and relate them back to the major discussion points.
  6. Examiners’ editorial comments on the thesis should not be discussed at the oral examination. It is recommended that each examiner hand the student a list of any such comments for post-examination final thesis revisions.
  7. If consensus on the recommendation is not reached, further discussion may take place.
  8. The **Report of Final MSc/PhD Thesis Oral Examination** is then circulated to the examining committee members, including the supervisor, to indicate their final recommendation and initial. The Neutral Chair signs after all initials and results are collected.
  9. Distance examiners must email the Neutral Chair prior to the examination giving him/her permission to initial the **Report of Final MSc/PhD Thesis Oral Examination** on behalf of the distance examiner. Please include a copy of the email with the **Report of Final MSc/PhD Thesis Oral Examination**.
  10. The Neutral Chair ensures the discussion includes what needs to be changed and the timeline for completion of revisions. Encourage the student’s Supervisor to verbally summarize the main changes needed and follow-up in writing with committee members (for major items). It is the Supervisor’s responsibility to ensure that required revisions are recorded.
  11. Student is called back in and provided results of the exam. The Neutral Chair may wish to give the results to the student and Supervisor in private if the exam was not successful.
  12. Immediately following the exam, the Neutral Chair returns the **Thesis Approval Page** to the student, who is responsible for obtaining all the signatures.
  13. The Neutral Chair provides the **Report of Final MSc/PhD Thesis Oral Examination**, along with the Examiners’ Reports and Neutral Chair’s minutes, to the program GPA immediately following the conclusion of the examination. If there is a teleconference Examiner, the proxy email is attached to the **Report of Final MSc/PhD Thesis Oral Examination**.

*Outcomes of Pass/Fail*

1. **Unanimous PASS:** When the **unanimous decision** for both the thesis and oral defense is **Pass:**

- a. All committee members initial the **Report of Final MSc/PhD Thesis Oral Examination**. The Neutral Chair will sign the **Report of Final MSc/PhD Thesis Oral Examination** and submit it to the GPA along with the **Examiners Reports, proxy email (as necessary)** and minutes from the exam.
  - b. All committee members except the Supervisor sign one copy of the **Thesis Approval Page**. (Copies included in the thesis are unsigned.) The Supervisor signs later, after reviewing and approving any necessary minor corrections. Other examiners may also withhold signatures until revisions are completed.
2. **Cannot Reach Unanimous Decision:** When the examining committee **cannot reach a unanimous decision** on either the thesis or oral defense:
- a. The result of each section is recorded on the **Report of Final MSc/PhD Thesis Oral Examination** which is initialed by each examiner and signed by the Neutral Chair. This along with the **Examiner Reports** and minutes are submitted to the GPA.
  - b. The Neutral Chair and each examiner must complete a report within 5 working days. These are addressed to the Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and copied to the Graduate Program Director. They are sent to the Graduate Program Administrator who collects all the reports and delivers them to the Associate Dean for processing. The final decision is at the discretion of the Dean, FGS.
3. **Fail Written Thesis:** When the examining committee determines an **unsuccessful written thesis**:
- a. The result of each section is recorded on the **Report of Final MSc/PhD Thesis Oral Examination** which is initialed by each examiner and signed by the Neutral Chair. This along with the **Examiner Reports** and minutes are submitted to the GPA.
  - b. The Neutral Chair and each examiner must complete a report within 5 working days. These are addressed to the Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and copied to the Graduate Program Director. They are sent to the Graduate Program Administrator who collects all the reports and delivers them to the Associate Dean for processing. The final decision is at the discretion of the Dean, FGS.
  - c. Only one re-submission along with a new defense is allowed. In view of the magnitude of revisions required, a second oral exam must be held no sooner than 6 months and no later than 12 months.
4. **Fail Oral:** When the examining committee determines an **unsuccessful oral defense**:
- a. The result of each section is recorded on the **Report of Final MSc/PhD Thesis Oral Examination** which is initialed by each examiner and signed by the Neutral Chair. This along with the **Examiner Reports** and minutes are submitted to the GPA.
  - b. The Neutral Chair and each examiner must complete a report within 5 working days. These are addressed to the Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and copied to the Graduate Program Director. They are sent to the Graduate Program Administrator who collects all the reports and delivers them to the Associate Dean for processing. The final decision is at the discretion of the Dean, FGS.

**Sample Guide for Thesis Oral Examination Procedure**

**DATE:**

**CANDIDATE:**

**LOCATION:**

**EXAMINING COMMITTEE:** 1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6) Supervisor:

7) Neutral Chair:

It is \_\_\_am Calgary time and we will now begin the examination. Thank you to everyone for being present today for the Master's Thesis Oral Examination of \_\_\_\_\_.

*Videoconferencing was in place to ensure the Committee situated in Calgary could interface with the distant site where Dr. \_\_\_\_ (proctor) and Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ (candidate) were present. There were no technical difficulties throughout the duration of the examination. We verified at the outset that all members could be heard clearly and loudly for all participants.*

Thank you to all examiners for preparing and submitting your assessment to me of the thesis on the official *Examiner's Report on Thesis form*.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I will be the Neutral Chair presiding over the oral examination today.

\_\_\_\_\_ [*candidate's name*], your examining committee has now had an opportunity to evaluate the written component of your thesis, and today you will be provided the opportunity to defend what you've written, as well as respond to other questions that the committee deems relevant in further assessing you in your thesis research.

No one other than the members of your examination committee will be allowed to question you. I will do my best to ensure that all examiners are given an opportunity to question you and we will do this through rounds of questioning. We will begin with Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, then move to Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, and end with Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ should (s)he choose to question you. You each will get about 15 minutes for the first round and then about 5 min for a final round of questions.

It is common practice to ask the thesis candidate to present a brief (maximum of 15 minutes) summary of the thesis research and its significance. So I invite you to present your opening summary now.

Candidate made his slide presentation within \_\_\_\_ minutes to the Committee. Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ advanced the slides for the Candidate.

Thank you \_\_\_\_\_ for your summary of the significance of your thesis research. We will now begin with questions to the candidate. Please remember that your questions should be relevant to the subject matter of the thesis and should be clearly and succinctly phrased in order to minimize doubt in the candidate's mind as to what (s)he is being asked.

The examination will not last longer than 2 hours. At about \_\_\_\_\_ am I will ask you to withdraw from the room. Before any discussion of your performance, I will ask that each examiner identify, through secret ballot, which recommendation (pass or fail) he or she favors. I will then chair a post-examination discussion of your performance. After the final vote, each examiner must record their recommendation on the official Faculty of Graduate Studies *Report of Final Master's Thesis Oral Examination* form, which I will then submit to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

I will then invite you back into the room and will share the outcome of the examination and the vote of the examination committee with you.

Please remember that your examiners will do their best to present their questions in a clear and succinct form. They will give you reasonable time to answer, and if you have not understood the question, then don't hesitate to ask your examiner to rephrase the question.

Do you have any questions about the examination procedure?

Great. Let's begin.

*Questions started.*

---

At about (*time recorded*) → We have now completed the first round of questions. \_\_\_\_\_ (*Candidate*) are you doing ok or do you need a break? Some water? Everyone else ok to go on? Good. Thank you. Now in this final round of questions, I ask that you keep your questions to within 5 minutes.

At \_\_\_\_ am (*time recorded*) → To all of you, thank you for your questions, and to you \_\_\_\_\_ (*the candidate*), thank you for your responses. I will now ask you to leave the room until the examination committee has reached a final decision. Please don't go too far.

Before any discussion of Candidate's performance, I ask that you each identify, by secret ballot on the **straw vote form**, whether you favor recommending a pass or fail on each of the thesis and the oral defence.

Just as a point of reference, let me remind you of the Master's Thesis Oral Examination Recommendations:

Thesis examinations must be judged to be either acceptable or unacceptable with respect to the thesis itself and, with respect to the oral defence, if the thesis is judged acceptable.

The result of today's exam must be either a PASS or a FAIL. I ask that you work very hard to reach a unanimous recommendation. According to the current Handbook, unanimous decisions are required for BOTH the thesis and the oral defence. If you are unable to achieve unanimity regarding one or both components, there must be no further discussion regarding that component of the examination and I must immediately inform the Dean of "lack of unanimity". The final decision will then be at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

If the unanimous final decision is that the thesis conforms to the requirements for a Master's thesis, then the entire examination committee will sign the signature page, except the Supervisor, who will sign after reviewing and approving any necessary minor corrections on behalf of the committee.

In the event of a failed examination, an examination resulting in a lack of unanimity (hung jury), or an examination in which there were procedural irregularities, I will submit a report within 24 hours.

Okay, so now I will ask you to identify, by secret ballot, which of the 2 recommendations (**PASS or FAIL**) you favor.

There are/is \_\_\_ in favor of **PASS**.

There are/is \_\_\_ in favor of **FAIL**.

Now I invite you to a full discussion of the student's performance.

(Summary of Discussion and Recommendations)

Thank you for your discussion. I will now re-read the potential recommendations aloud. *[Read from the Handbook.]*

**If consensus is not reached ...the Neutral Chair may say:**

It is clear to me that consensus has not or cannot be reached. You have all had an opportunity to discuss and share your assessments. In the event of an examination resulting in a lack of unanimity, no further discussion will be had. As neutral chair I will immediately inform the Dean of "lack of unanimity" and the final decision will be at the Dean of Graduate Studies' discretion. We will all be asked to submit a written report. I will go directly to the Graduate Program Administrator to notify her following the examination.

Your decision as an examination committee is a **Hung Jury**. Your final recommendations of **P/F** are to be recorded on the official **Report of Master's Thesis Oral Examination** form for the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

I will now invite the candidate back in the room so I can explain the decision to him/her.

**If consensus is not reached ...the Neutral Chair may say:**

\_\_\_\_\_ [Candidate's name], your Master's thesis oral examination committee has made its decision. They were unable to reach unanimity and thus the recommendation I will be presenting is that of a **Hung Jury** to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The Dean will be informed and the Exam Committee, as well as myself, will send a report within 5 working days; the Faculty of Graduate Studies Dean will then make the final decision.

On behalf of the examining committee, thank you for your work and participation in today's examination. On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ [Candidate's name] and Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ [Supervisor's name], thank you for agreeing to serve on \_\_\_\_\_ [Candidate's name] examining committee. Finally, thank you for allowing me to chair this Oral Master's Thesis Examination.

The examination adjourned at \_\_\_\_\_pm (Calgary time).

## Appendix A: Contact List

Associate Dean Dr. Tara Beattie	T: 403.210.8651 ( <a href="mailto:medgse@ucalgary.ca">medgse@ucalgary.ca</a> )	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology (BMB   MDBC) Administrator: Marion Mildenberger GPD: Dr. Sarah Childs	HSC G345B T: 403.220.8606 <a href="mailto:bmbgrad@ucalgary.ca">bmbgrad@ucalgary.ca</a>
Assistant Dean Open		Biomedical Technology (MBT   MDBT) Administrator: Sabrina Anderson GPD: Dr. Randy Johnston	HSC G341B T: 403.210.6689 <a href="mailto:mbtgrad@ucalgary.ca">mbtgrad@ucalgary.ca</a>
Assistant to the Associate Dean   Student & Scholarship Liaison Diana Law	T: 403.220.5712 <a href="mailto:medgse@ucalgary.ca">medgse@ucalgary.ca</a> HSC G341A	Cardiovascular & Respiratory Sciences (CVR   MDCV) Administrator: Sabrina Anderson GPD: Dr. Andrew Braun	HSC G341B T: 403.210.6689 <a href="mailto:cvrgrad@ucalgary.ca">cvrgrad@ucalgary.ca</a>
GSE Office Manager Christine Schill	T: 403.220.3650 <a href="mailto:cmschill@ucalgary.ca">cmschill@ucalgary.ca</a>	Community Health Sciences (CHS   MDCH) Administrator: Darlene Sibilleau GPD: Dr. Elizabeth Oddone Paolucci	HSC G347C T: 403.210.7051 <a href="mailto:chsgrad@ucalgary.ca">chsgrad@ucalgary.ca</a>
Awards & Project Appointment Administrator Emma Tonye	T: 403.210.6687 <a href="mailto:gseproj@ucalgary.ca">gseproj@ucalgary.ca</a>	Gastrointestinal Sciences (GI   MDGI) Administrator: Marion Mildenberger GPD: Dr. Donna-Marie McCafferty	HSC G345B T: 403.220.8606 <a href="mailto:gigrad@ucalgary.ca">gigrad@ucalgary.ca</a>
Professional Development Administrative Coordinator Sabrina Anderson	T: 403.210.6689 <a href="mailto:proskills@ucalgary.ca">proskills@ucalgary.ca</a>	Immunology (IM   MDIM) Administrator: Marion Mildenberger GPD: Dr. Donna-Marie McCafferty	HSC G345B T: 403.220.8606 <a href="mailto:imgrad@ucalgary.ca">imgrad@ucalgary.ca</a>
		Leaders in Medicine (LIM) Administrator: Michelle Selman Director: Dr. Paul Beck	HSC G341C T: 403.210.9572 <a href="mailto:mdgrad@ucalgary.ca">mdgrad@ucalgary.ca</a>
		Medical Science (MDSC) Administrator: Kiran Pandher GPD: Dr. Paul Mains	HSC G347A T: 403.220.6582 <a href="mailto:medgrad@ucalgary.ca">medgrad@ucalgary.ca</a>
		Microbiology & Infectious Diseases (MID   MDMI) Administrator: Marion Mildenberger GPD: Dr. Donna-Marie McCafferty	HSC G345B T: 402.220.8606 <a href="mailto:midgrad@ucalgary.ca">midgrad@ucalgary.ca</a>
		Neuroscience (MDNS) Administrator: Lesley Towill GPDs: Drs. Richard Wilson &	HSC G345A T: 403.220.2558 <a href="mailto:neurosci@ucalgary.ca">neurosci@ucalgary.ca</a>
		Pathologist's Assistant (MPath   MDPA) Administrator: Sabrina Anderson GPDs: Drs. Amy Bromley & Bill Gorday	HSC G341B T: 403.210.6689 <a href="mailto:mpath@ucalgary.ca">mpath@ucalgary.ca</a>



## Appendix B: Checklist for Chairing FOS Examination

### CHAIRING FIELD OF STUDY EXAMS

#### Before the exam

- Review CSM Candidacy Policy <https://wcm.ucalgary.ca/gse/files/gse/csm-candidacy-examination-process-effective-september-1-2015.pdf> for the exam procedures.
- 

#### What to take to the exam

- Notice of exam (list of examiners, time, room)
  - GSE contact information in case an examiner does not show up or other circumstance that *might* prevent the examination from going forward.
  - Examination Report form
  - Copy of FGS and CSM regulations related to candidacy exam
  - Slips of paper for anonymous straw votes
  - Copy of Candidacy Exam Preparation Form (list of examination topics)
  - Pens for whiteboard (backup)
  - Notepad (take minutes)
  - Watch and/ or timer
- 

#### At the exam

- Introductions if necessary
  - Arrive early for time to set up room if necessary
  - Exam normally lasts up to 2 hours
  - 2 rounds + follow up questions if time permits
  - If an examiner leaves the room, the clock stops until they return
  - Note that the supervisor (and co-supervisor) is a non-voting observer and will leave the room with the student
  - Encourage student to ask for clarification if necessary and to take their time answering
  - In case of fire alarm: use judgment to decide whether an exam should go ahead, in another building if necessary, or be re-scheduled. Any disruption should be <15 min. Room Bookings: 403-220-6839.
- 

#### Discussion

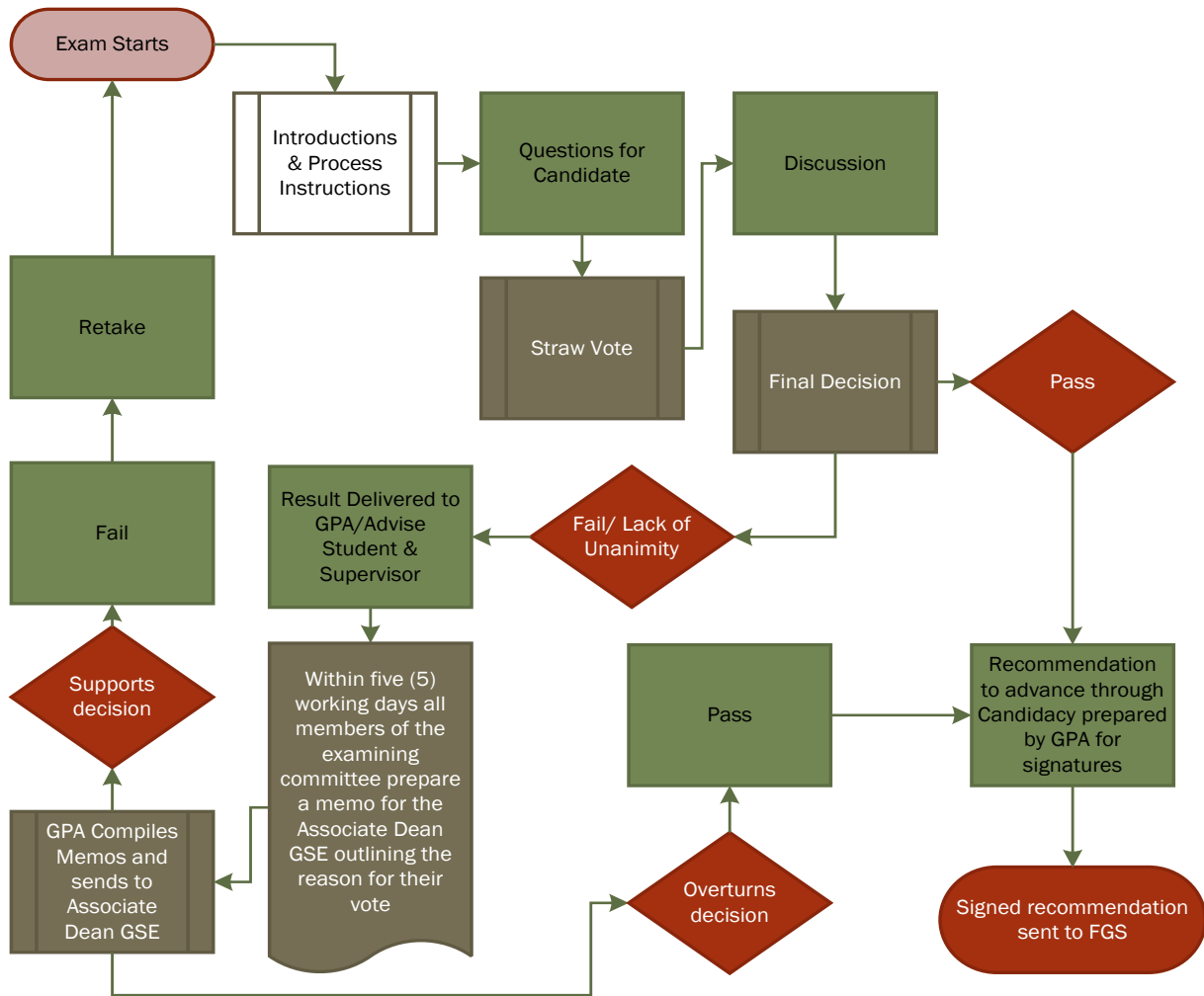
- Student and supervisor leave  
**\*\*For exams in the GSE Conference Room - There is a waiting room for the student during committee deliberations.** The room is across the hall from Marion's office (G347B). Advise both student and supervisor that **waiting in the reception area of the GSE/Family Medicine Office is not permitted** out of respect for the Family Medicine staff.
  - Explain procedures
  - Anonymous straw vote - provides frame of opinion to initiate discussion
  - Collect votes
  - Discussion – goal is to reach a consensus recommendation, however unanimous decisions are not required - **it takes at least 2 negative votes to fail**
-

- Complete the Examination Report form
  - Remind everyone about confidentiality of voting patterns and individual contributions to the discussion
  - Inform student of decision etc
  - Feedback to student
  - Deliver reports to GPA in the Graduate Science Education Office (HSC G345B) immediately after the exam.
- 

**In the event of a Fail,** refer to guidelines in GSE Policy. In brief:

- Retake within 2-6 months
- The chair and all exam committee members must send reports within 5 days

## Appendix C: FOS Quick Reference Flow Chart



## Appendix D: FOS Outcomes Table

### PHD FOS EXAMINATION OUTCOMES

OUTCOME	Implications	Committee/Neutral Chair Responsibilities
PASS	<p>After the final vote, each examiner must record a recommendation of pass or fail on the official <i>Report of FOS Oral Examination Form</i>. Every effort should be made to reach a unanimous recommendation. Should the outcome of the final vote include one negative vote, the candidate will pass.</p>	<p>The Neutral Chair must inform the student of the outcome of the examination immediately following the vote of the examination committee.</p> <p>The Neutral Chair will record the final recommendation of pass or fail on the <i>Report of FOS Oral Examination form</i> which is returned to the GPA directly after the exam.</p>
FAIL	<p>Should the outcome of the final vote include two or more negative votes, the committee’s recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies will be “fail”.</p>	<p><b><u>Within 5 working days of the failed examination</u></b> the Neutral Chair must submit a written report of the examination procedures to the Associate Dean of Graduate Science Education and copy it to the Graduate Director.</p> <p><b><u>Within 5 working days of the examination</u></b>, each committee member must provide a confidential written report to the Associate Dean of Graduate Science Education explaining the reasons for his/her vote and copy it to the Graduate Director and Supervisor.</p> <p>After consultation with the Supervisor, the Graduate Director then summarizes the essential points to the student, copied to the Supervisor.</p>
RE-TAKE	<p>In the event of a recommendation of “Fail”, the student will be allowed a retake of the examination.</p>	<p>Only <b><u>one</u></b> re-take will be permitted. The re-take must take place <b><u>no sooner 2 months and no later than 6 months</u></b> from the date of the first examination.</p>

## Appendix E: Sample Notice of FOS Examination



### Notice of **Field of Study Oral Examination**

*This form must be used when a Candidacy component requires an examination committee.*

*Please note that the form is to be kept at the program and forwarded to the Faculty of Graduate Studies only if there is an appeal of a failed examination.*

#### Student and Examination Information

Name of Student:  Click or tap here to enter text. UCID:  Click or tap here to enter text.

Department/Program:  Click or tap here to enter text.

Degree:  Click or tap here to enter text. Specialization:

Date and Time of Examination:  Click or tap here to enter text.

Place of Examination:  Click or tap here to enter text.

Examining Committee:  Click or tap here to enter text., Neutral Chair

Click or tap here to enter text., Supervisor

Click or tap here to enter text., Co-Supervisor

Click or tap here to enter text., Supervisory Committee

Click or tap here to enter text., Supervisory Committee

Click or tap here to enter text., Examiner, Department

Click or tap here to enter text., Examiner, Department

#### Acknowledgment

**I am aware of, and have agreed to these arrangements.**

Date:  Student Signature:

Date:  Supervisor Signature:

Date:  Co-Supervisor Signature:

**The Graduate Program Director's signature** below approves the membership of the examination committee.

Date:  Graduate Program Director Signature:

# Appendix F: Examiners Report of Thesis Proposal Evaluation



## Evaluator's Report on Thesis Proposal

*Please print or type this form and use reverse for additional comments (if needed).*

<b>Name of Candidate</b> [Redacted]	<b>Degree</b> PhD	<b>Department</b> Select One
<b>Thesis Proposal Title</b> [Redacted]		
<b>Date and Time of Thesis Proposal Evaluation Meeting</b> [Redacted]		<b>Place</b> [Redacted]
<p>This report should be completed by each of the designated evaluators <b>before</b> the evaluation committee meeting and delivered to the student's supervisor at the <b>beginning</b> of the oral. This report is intended to serve as a record of each evaluators assessment of the thesis research proposal as presented by the candidate. It will become part of the student and supervisory records. After the evaluation, this report is available to the student for constructive feedback on the written document.</p> <p>As this report is the only record of the quality of the proposal it should attempt to be comprehensive with respect to the general presentation. Although detailed comments on specific topics are not required, the report should endeavor to cover the following: relevant background knowledge to support the rationale of the proposed research project, preliminary data to demonstrate experimental competency, clear hypothesis and specific aims, detailed experimental plan with expectations, pitfalls and alternative approaches.</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>		
<b>Evaluator's Name</b> [Redacted]	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b> [Redacted]

## Appendix F: Report of FOS Oral Examination



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
CUMMING SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

### Final Report for Field of Study Examination

<b>Candidate:</b> [Redacted]	<b>UCID:</b> [Redacted]	<b>Date:</b> [Redacted]
<b>Department/Faculty/Program:</b> Select One		
<b>Degree:</b> PhD	<b>Specialization:</b> [Redacted]	
<b>Date &amp; Time of Examination:</b> [Redacted]		

Names of Examiners (Does not include Supervisor(s))	Final Individual Recommendation on Field of Study Exam	Evaluation Committee Recommendation on Field of Study Exam	Evaluators Initials
	Pass/Fail (P/F)		
[Redacted], Department of ...			
[Redacted], Department of ...			
[Redacted], Department of ...			
[Redacted], Department of ...			
[Redacted], Department of ...			
Internal Examiner, Department of ...			
External Examiner, Department of ...			
<i>Unanimity is not required. One fail is allowed for the student to be admitted to candidacy</i>			
[Redacted] Date	Neutral Chair Signature	[Redacted] Neutral Chair Name (Print)	
[Redacted] Date	Graduate Program Director Signature	[Redacted] Graduate Program Director (Print)	

Appendix G: Field of Study Straw Vote Form

<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Field of Study Exam Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>



## Appendix H: Checklist for Chairing Thesis Exams

### Before the exam

- Check the Notice of Examination or email from GPA to see whether exam will follow old or new rules (main difference is that the new Report of Exam specifies the recommendations of type of revisions versus Pass/ Fail separate votes on oral and defense in the Old Policy)
  - Review relevant FGS regulations: <http://grad.ucalgary.ca/current/managing-my-program/examinations>
- 

### What to take to the exam

- Notice of exam (list of examiners, time, room)
  - Blank Thesis Examiner's Report form (if an examiner does not bring one, have them hand-write a brief report on the blank form and sign it. The exam should not proceed without a report from each examiner).
  - GSE and/ or FGS contact information in case an examiner does not show up or other circumstances that *might* prevent the examination from going forward.
  - Examination Report form
  - Copy of relevant FGS regulations
  - Slips of paper for anonymous straw votes
  - Pens for whiteboard (backup)
  - Notepad and pen (take minutes - it is the Chair's responsibility to convey decisions, required revisions, etc)
  - Watch and/ or timer
- 

### At the exam

- Arrive 5 min early, set up room if necessary
- Introductions if necessary
- Let external examiner know that they will be asked to question the student first (they may choose not to)
- Collect thesis reports from examiners
- Note that supervisor is a full voting member of thesis examination committee. Most supervisors opt not to ask questions, but check with them. Sometimes they elect to ask a follow-up question at the end of a round.
- Exam normally lasts up to 2 h
- 2 rounds, and may be time for an additional few questions
- 1<sup>st</sup> round ~typically 15 min each, avoid general background questioning that isn't directly relevant to the thesis
- If an examiner leaves the room the exam must stop until they return.
- Offer a break after 1<sup>st</sup> round.
- In case of fire alarm: use judgment to decide whether an exam should go ahead, in another building if necessary, or be re-scheduled. Any disruption should be <15 min. Room Bookings: 403-220-6839.

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## Discussion

- Student leaves
  - \*\* Mention that there is a waiting room in the GSE Office for the student during committee deliberations. The room is across the hall from G347B. Advise both the student and the supervisor that **waiting in the reception area of the GSE/Family Medicine Office is not permitted** out of respect for the Family Medicine staff.
- Explain procedures
- Anonymous straw vote - provides frame of opinion to initiate discussion
- Supervisor(s) also votes
- Collect votes.
- Discussion – goal is to reach a consensus recommendation
- Discuss revisions
- Complete the Report of Exam form
- Inform student of decision etc
- Signature page – the student should have this ready and only 1 copy is needed. Who signs off depends on committee’s decision on revisions and who will be responsible for reading revised thesis.
- Thank everyone, especially external(s). If it seems necessary, remind examiners about voter confidentiality.
- Deliver reports the program GPA in the Graduate Sciences Education Office immediately after the exam.

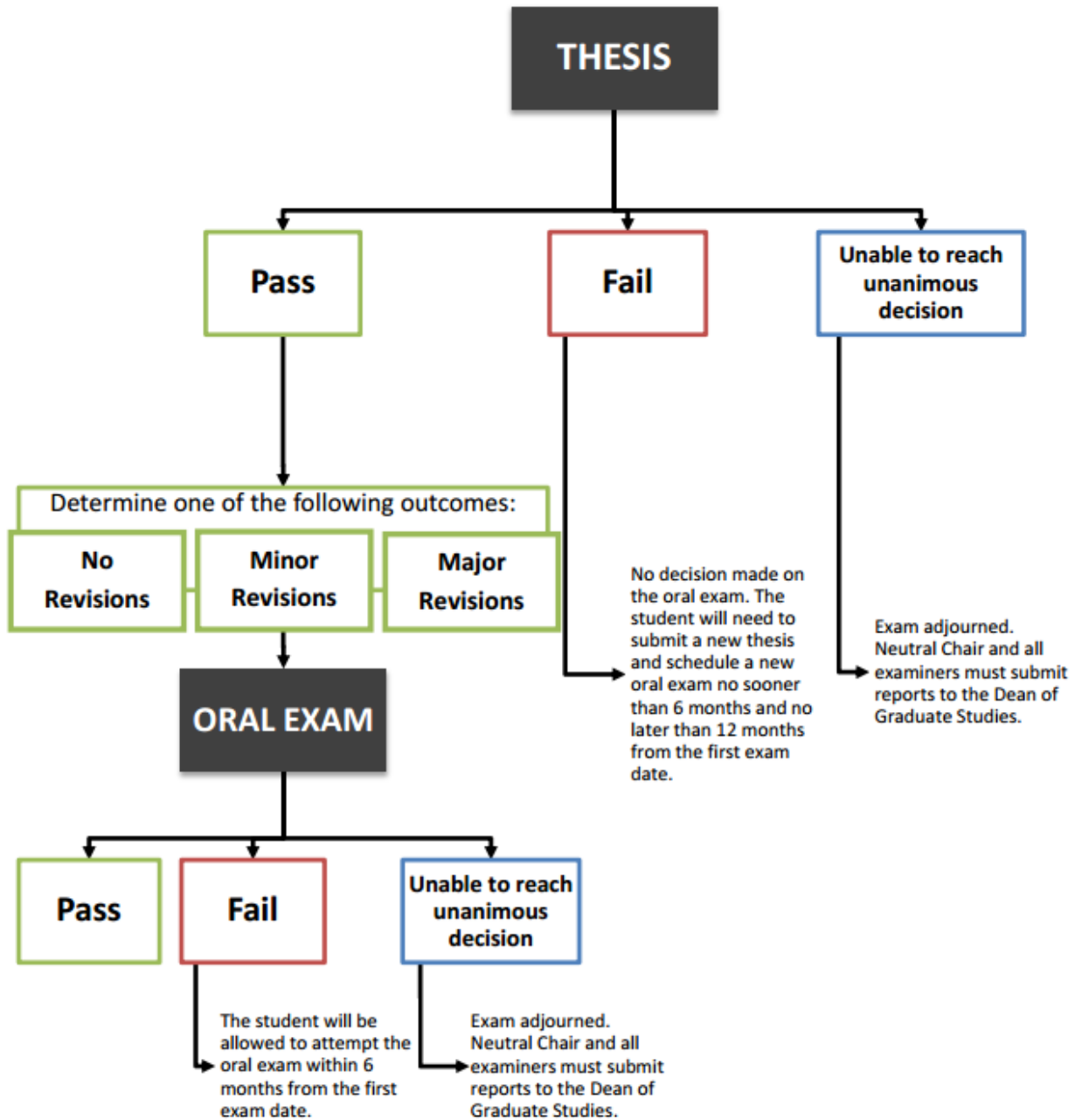
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## In the event of a Fail on either oral or thesis

- Refer to guidelines in FGS Handbook. In brief:
  - o Thesis pass, Oral fail – retake within 6 months
  - o Thesis fail (regardless of oral) – retake within 6-12 months, In the event of a hung jury – no further discussion, adjourn the exam, FGS Dean makes final decision
  - o In all cases, the chair and all exam committee members must send reports within 5 days

# Appendix I: Thesis Exam Quick Reference Flow Chart

## Thesis Oral Examination Outcomes Flowchart



Appendix J: Thesis Oral Examination Straw Vote Forms

<p><b>Recommendation on the Thesis</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation on the Oral Defense</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation on the Thesis</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation on the Oral Defense</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation on the Thesis</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation on the Oral Defense</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation on the Thesis</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation on the Oral Defense</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation on the Thesis</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation on the Oral Defense</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation on the Thesis</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation on the Oral Defense</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation on the Thesis</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation on the Oral Defense</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation on the Thesis</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation on the Oral Defense</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>
<p><b>Recommendation on the Thesis</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation on the Oral Defense</b></p> <p><b>Pass      Fail</b></p>

## Appendix K: Sample NOE



### Notice of Thesis Oral Examination

Questions about the use of this information should be directed to the FOIP Advisor, Faculty of Graduate Studies, (403) 220-4938.

Student Information		
Candidate: Liu, Yingjie	Date: 2017-02-24	UCID: [REDACTED]
Department/Program: Cardiovascular/Respiratory Sci		
Degree: Doctor of Philosophy Specialization: N/A		
Final Thesis Title: Molecular Basis and Regulation of Ca <sup>2+</sup> Release Termination and its Role in Cardiomyopathies		
Examination Information		
This exam is: Open <b>The examination will be conducted under the 2013-14 Handbook of Supervision and Examination.</b>		
Date of Examination: 2017-04-04	Time of Examination: 10:30 AM	Place of Examination: HS G748
Examination Committee	Attending remotely?	Clear of conflict of interest
Dr Suirong Wayne Chen, Supervisor, Cardiovascular/Respiratory Sciences		N/A
Dr Andrew P Braun, Supervisory Committee Member, Cardiovascular/Respiratory Sciences		N/A
Dr Robert John French, Supervisory Committee Member, Neuroscience		N/A
Dr Paul Schnetkamp, Internal / External Examiner, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology		<input type="checkbox"/>
Dr Howard S Young, External Examiner, University of Alberta		<input type="checkbox"/>
Student's Acknowledgement		
<b>The student's signature below acknowledges the examination arrangements.</b>		
Date:	Candidate Signature:	

**The Supervisor's signature below verifies that the "Internal" External Examiner meets the following criteria:<sup>†</sup>**

Has not collaborated with the supervisor in the last five years.

Is not related to the student and has not worked with the student.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Graduate Program Director's signature below verifies:**

That the "Internal" External Examiner has not been a supervisor in the student's department/program for the last three years.

<sup>†</sup>If the above criteria have not been met, please attach a memo explaining why the program still wishes to make the recommendation.

The student named above has met all program requirements to proceed to Oral Examination, completed the

required course work, maintained a grade point average of at least 3.0, and appropriate formal ethics approval has been received for the student's research.

***If approval is conditional, please describe:***

*Date:*

*Graduate Program Director Signature:*

***For Faculty of Graduate Studies use only***

**Membership of Examination Committee**  **Approved**  **Not Approved**

*Date:*

*Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies (or designate) Signature:*

# Appendix L: Sample Old Rules Final Thesis Oral Examination



## Final Thesis Oral Examination

Questions about the use of this form should be directed to the FOIP Advisor, Faculty of Graduate Studies, (403) 220-4938.

<i>This form must be submitted to FGS within 24 hours of the examination</i>			
<b>Part 1: Completed by GPA and provided to examining committee at defence</b>			
Candidate: [REDACTED]	UCID: [REDACTED]	Date: 2017-03-27	
Department/Program: Cardiovascular/Respiratory Sci			
Degree: Doctor of Philosophy		Specialization: N/A	
Final Thesis Title: Molecular Basis and Regulation of Ca <sup>2+</sup> Release Termination and its Role in Cardiomyopathies			
Date of Examination: 2017-04-04		Time of Examination: 10:30 AM	
<b>Part 2: Exam Outcomes</b>			
The examination will be conducted under the 2013-14 Handbook of Supervision and Examination			
Names of Examiners <i>(Do not include Neutral Chair)</i>	Final Individual Recommendation on Thesis	Examining Committee Recommendation on Thesis*	Examiners' Initials
	PASS/FAIL		
Dr Suirong Wayne Chen, Supervisor, Cardiovascular/Respiratory Sciences			
Dr Andrew P Braun, Supervisory Committee Member, Cardiovascular/Respiratory Sciences			
Dr Robert John French, Supervisory Committee Member, Neuroscience			
Dr Paul Schnetkamp, Internal / External Examiner, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology			
Dr Howard S Young, External Examiner, University of Alberta			
Names of Examiners <i>(Do not include Neutral Chair)</i>	Final Individual Recommendation on Oral Defence	Examining Committee Recommendation on Oral Defence*	Examiners' Initials
	PASS/FAIL		
Dr Suirong Wayne Chen, Supervisor, Cardiovascular/Respiratory Sciences			
Dr Andrew P Braun, Supervisory Committee Member, Cardiovascular/Respiratory Sciences			
Dr Robert John French, Supervisory Committee Member, Neuroscience			
Dr Paul Schnetkamp, Internal / External Examiner, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology			
Dr Howard S Young, External Examiner, University of Alberta			
<b>Part 3: *If the members of the Examining Committee do not unanimously agree on a Recommendation, the Committee Recommendation must be Lack of Unanimity.</b>			
Neutral Chair's Name (printed)	Signature	Date	
Graduate Program Director's Name (printed)	Signature	Date	
<b>Faculty of Graduate Studies Only:</b>		Date:	Initials:
<input type="checkbox"/> Update PeopleSoft			

# Appendix M: Sample New Rules Final Thesis Oral Examination



## Final Thesis Oral Examination

*This information, when published, will form part of the student's record. Questions may be directed to the FOIP Advisor, Faculty of Graduate Studies, (403) 220-4938.*

<i>This form must be submitted to FGS within <b>24 hours of the examination.</b></i>		
<b>Part 1: Completed by GPA and provided to examining committee at defence</b>		
Candidate: ██████████	UCID: ██████████	Date: 2017-05-08
Department/Program: Cardiovascular/Respiratory Sci		
Degree: Master of Science		Specialization: N/A
Final Thesis Title: Association between glycemic load and cognitive function in community-dwelling older adults: results from the Brain in Motion Study		
Date of Examination: 2017-05-18	Time of Examination: 2:00 PM	
<b>Part 2: Exam Outcomes (completed by the Neutral Chair)</b>		
<b>Committee Recommendation</b>		
<b>ON THESIS:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pass with no revisions		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pass with minor revisions <i>(Supervisor withholds signature on the Thesis Approval form; revised thesis due to FGS within a month)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pass with major revisions <i>(Supervisor withholds signature on the Thesis Approval form; committee members may withhold signatures. Revised thesis due to FGS within 6 months)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Fail <i>(no decision made on oral)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Failure to Reach Unanimous Decision <i>(must attach a memo indicating votes)</i>		
<b>ON ORAL DEFENCE:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pass		
<input type="checkbox"/> Fail		
<input type="checkbox"/> Failure to Reach Unanimous Decision		
<b>Part 3: Completed and submitted to FGS following examination</b>		
<b>As the neutral chair of the examining committee, I certify that the committee has examined this thesis and recommend the above outcomes of this examination to the Dean of Graduate Studies.</b>		
Neutral Chair's Name	Signature	Date
Dr. S.R. Wayne Chen		
Graduate Program Director or delegate's Name	Signature	Date
Dr. Andrew Braun		
<b>Faculty of Graduate Studies Only:</b>	Date:	Initials: