

The Dissertation

Upon formal approval of the prospectus, the student commences the writing of the dissertation. Following the approval of the prospectus, one chapter per year of the dissertation must be submitted to the advisor. The length of dissertations is limited to a maximum of approximately 75,000 words or 300 pages, exclusive of bibliography. Permission to exceed this length may be granted by the Doctoral Subcommittee or the Chairman at the request of the dissertation advisor.

When the student is close to being ready to defend, the advisor writes a letter to the Chair of the Standing Committee proposing the dissertation examining committee. The examining committee will include at least three faculty readers, two of whom must be members of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. [Note: A Divinity School faculty member on the Standing Committee on the Study of Religion is considered *de facto* a member of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences for the duration of his or her tenure on the Committee.] The membership of the examining committee must be approved by the Standing Committee.

Once the examiners have been approved and the student has completed the dissertation, a two-hour oral defense will be arranged. The student should consult with the advisor and other readers about how much time they need to read the dissertation in advance of the defense. It is the student's responsibility to provide copies of the dissertation to all the examiners.

The Program Administrator prepares the necessary paperwork for the defense, and coordinates the processing of the paperwork afterwards. The student should consult the Information Sheet for GSAS Degree Applicants and be sure to meet the deadlines for submitting a Degree Application and all the necessary dissertation materials.