

DEPARTMENT OF GENETICS AND GENOME SCIENCES

PhD Program

Steps to Graduation

1. Decide if you are close to completion of your PhD studies.
 - A. Coursework. Go to SIS to check if you have completed all of the required coursework (GENE 701 credits should be the only course you have not completed, Note 2).
 - B. Research. Discuss with your advisor and your committee members if you are ready to graduate. In general, at this point, you should have at least one first-author original research paper published or on its way to publication and have completed a large body of impactful work towards the second project.
2. At your next committee meeting, ask your committee for permission to write the dissertation. If the permission is granted, at this same meeting, you will work with your committee to decide on a date and time for your private dissertation defense. On average, it takes a student 1-2 month to write the dissertation, although it may take longer if they still work at the bench while writing or shorter if the content in most of the chapters are published (so only reformatting is needed for those chapters). This is a good time to apply for graduation in SIS. The application is online in SIS - check deadline for filling it out (see Note 1).
3. Private dissertation defense.

Write your dissertation following the PhD Dissertation Guidelines on the departmental website. Submit copies of your dissertation to the members of your defense committee at least two weeks prior to your defense date. At your defense, your committee will first discuss your written dissertation in your absence commenting on how the dissertation can be improved. Next, you will give a presentation of your dissertation work. You will answer questions during and/or after the presentation. Afterwards, the committee will discuss the performance of your defense in your absence and vote to pass or not pass, and then inform you of the decision with a discussion on the proposed revision of your dissertation.
4. Public seminar.

After you pass the private defense, you will schedule your public seminar and submit the form Notification for Scheduling the Final Oral Exam for the PhD to the School of Graduate Studies for approval (the form can be downloaded from <https://case.edu/gradstudies/current-students/forms>). In practice, the public seminar can be scheduled at your last committee meeting when you schedule the private defense. However, the form should be submitted after you pass the private defense. As Graduate Studies requires that this form be submitted three weeks prior to the final seminar, your private defense and the public seminar should be at least three weeks apart. It is a good idea to use the time between the private defense and the public seminar to revise your dissertation following your committee's advice so it is ready to be submitted after your public seminar.
5. Submit Final Materials to the School of Graduate Studies by the posted deadline.

The list of Final Materials can be found on:
<https://case.edu/gradstudies/current-students/graduation/doctoral-graduation>.
The posted deadline can be found on:
<https://case.edu/gradstudies/current-students/dates-deadlines>

Notes:

1. Official final defense date.

The PhD graduation procedure described by the School of Graduate Studies is written using an example of a PhD program that combines the public seminar and private defense in one day (seminar followed by oral exam). In Genetics and Genome Sciences, like many other PhD programs in the School of Medicine, the private defense occurs before the public seminar. This difference may cause

confusion. For example, the public seminar date in our program is considered by Graduate Studies as the Final Oral Exam date, or final defense date, although our private defense is the actual exam and defense. Thus, it is the public seminar date that you should use on the first page of your dissertation. This date is also important in determining which semester you graduate officially.

There are three graduation semesters, spring (May graduate), summer (August graduate) and fall (January graduate). To graduate in a semester, you should pay attention to two deadlines, one for graduation application and the other for submission of final materials (dissertation and forms). These deadlines are in general as follows (to learn the exact dates, which change from year to year, check on the posted deadlines website):

<u>Graduation Semester</u>	<u>Application for Graduation</u>	<u>Submission of Final Materials</u>
Spring	Early February	Early April
Summer	Early June	Early July
Fall	Early October	Early December

2. GENE 701 credit management.

A minimum of 18 credits of GENE 701 is required for graduation. Your goal is to take exactly 18 credits of 701 (to avoid additional tuition payment). These credits can be spread out in several semesters (1-9 credits per semester, at least 1 but no more than 9). For example, if it takes you six semesters to graduate after you advance to PhD candidacy, you can take 3 credits of 701 each semester. You will adjust the number of 701 credits when it is closer to graduation based on the remaining semesters before graduation. One important rule to remember is that in your official graduation semester, you are required to register for at least 1 credit of 701 (more is okay). This is the same for the summer semester when you usually do not need to register. The only exception to this rule is that if you can submit final materials before the Drop/Add day of a semester (usually a few days after classes start), you can apply for a tuition waiver for that semester even though you graduate in that semester officially. For example, if you apply for the fall graduation but missed the final materials submission deadline in early December, the following spring semester will be your official graduation semester. However, you can apply for a tuition waiver for the spring semester if you submit the final materials by the January Drop/Add deadline.