

School of Industrial Engineering and Management

Dissertation Defense Format

- **First 30 mins— Pre-defense, closed-door committee meeting:**
 - This is a meeting of the committee members *only*; the student is excused. This meeting should be held in a room different from where the public defense is held. This allows the meeting to run over the 30 min anticipated duration if the discussion warrants it, without disrupting the audience who are gathering for the public portion of the defense.
 - The purpose of this meeting is for the committee chair to solicit initial impressions from the committee based on their reading of the dissertation document. If there is an objection from any committee member to proceed with the public defense presentation due to serious flaws they have uncovered, or any suspicion of academic integrity violation, this would be the setting to raise it. The Chair must then decide whether to allow the public defense presentation to proceed and address the concerns during the subsequent closed-door Q&A session, or to cancel the public defense presentation and proceed straight to the closed-door Q&A session, depending on the circumstances. Barring this rare and drastic decision by the committee, the members then discuss the content of the work, identify potential changes that may be necessary, aspects of the work that each committee member intends to focus on, etc.
- **Next 1 hour— the public defense presentation:**
 - This is a public defense of the dissertation research that is open to all OSU faculty and students. Family and friends of the candidate are also welcome to attend. The duration is meant to include a presentation, typically 40-45 mins long, of the major accomplishments, and allow 15-20 mins for Q&A with the audience. The committee typically reserves their questions for the final closed-door Q&A session with the student, allowing other audience members a chance to question or comment.
- **Final 1-2 hours— the closed-door Q&A session:**
 - This is a meeting of the committee members and the student *only*; the other audience members from the public defense must be excused. The committee reconvenes after a short break and commences questioning of the student's dissertation.
 - At the end of this meeting, the committee members **must sign** the oral defense results form documenting the outcome of this meeting.
 - If this meeting lasts longer than 2 hours, there must be a break for the student and the committee members.