University of Pittsburgh | David C. Frederick Honors College

Bachelor of Philosophy Thesis Defense Checklist and Suggested Timeline: Summer 2027 Graduation

This information is offered to guide Frederick Honors College (FHC) BPhil degree candidates as they plan for their thesis defense by providing deadlines, a suggested timeline, and a checklist of items related to the defense and thesis submission.

Read the specific details about the BPhil defense process.

Final Deadline

The entire BPhil process must be completed by **12:00 pm on FRIDAY, AUGUST 6, 2027**, which is noon on the last day of classes of the semester.

Specifically, this means that you must have successfully defended your thesis before your committee; incorporated and received approval for any revisions required by your committee; and submitted the final version of the thesis in proper Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) format to the D-Scholarship repository by the deadline.

If you are unable to meet the requirements by the deadline, you will need to defer your graduation or forego receiving the BPhil degree.

NO EXCEPTIONS will be made to this deadline, so effective planning is important to successfully complete the BPhil degree.

Suggested Timeline

These suggestions are considered the minimum amount of time required for successful completion of the BPhil defense process. You are strongly encouraged to add additional time throughout these components to avoid having to make formatting changes to your thesis during finals week. In other words, you should try to complete the process several weeks prior to the final deadline listed. Consult your thesis advisor to determine an appropriate timeline for your specific situation.

Week of June 21, 2027

Send final draft of your thesis to your committee (you must give your committee members at least two weeks to review your final draft before your defense; ideally, please give them more than two weeks to do this).

Weeks of July 5-July 12, 2027

Hold your thesis defense.

Weeks of July 19-August 2, 2027

Revise thesis based on comments from your committee at the defense; configure thesis document into proper ETD format; upload the final version of the ETD to D-Scholarship; return completed ETD Approval Form to David Hornyak in FHC.

Noon on Friday, August 6, 2027

Deadline to have ETD Approval Form submitted to David Hornyak in FHC and final version of your ETD uploaded to D-Scholarship.

Checklist for BPhil Defense

Prior to the Defense

_____ Ensure that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Status Form has been completed and returned to David Hornyak in FHC (NOTE: This form should have been submitted prior to beginning your BPhil research to ensure that any IRB protocols required are met).

_____ Consult with your thesis advisor to form your defense committee (your thesis advisor must approve all committee members).

_____ Contact all committee members and coordinate a date and time for the defense.

_____ Complete the BPhil Thesis Defense Information Form and return it to David Hornyak in FHC.

_____ Provide copies of the final draft of your thesis to committee members (drafts must be received by your committee members at least two weeks before the date of your defense, but ideally, you should try to give them more time to review).

On the Day of the Defense

_____ Bring a copy of the ETD Approval Form to your defense. The student completes the first section (the student information section). The committee members will sign the "Review and Acceptance" section; committee members may need to email the form between each other to virtually sign. Because FHC does not reimburse the external examiner for travel, they will most likely need to sign the form electronically. In many cases, even when the Pitt committee members are present, all committee members will electronically sign the form. **IMPORTANT:** Do not use a macOS (Apple) device to sign the form with Adobe; if using a macOS device, you must use DocuSign to sign the form.

After the Defense

_____ Make any revisions to the content of your thesis required by your committee and have them approved through the process discussed at your defense. Ensure that your final thesis document (the ETD) adheres to proper ETD formatting and upload the ETD to D-Scholarship using these step-by-step instructions.

_____ Email completed ETD Approval Form to David Hornyak in FHC (ensure that all appropriate sections on Page 1 and Page 2 are completed and signed by you and your thesis advisor). Paper copies of the ETD Approval Form are not accepted; only electronic copies (emailed) are accepted.

_____ If applicable, when returning completed ETD Approval Form, also email permission letters allowing you to include any copyrighted material (e.g., images copied from books, journals, other sources, audio or image files, etc.) in your thesis (see ETD website for information).

NOTE: Do NOT provide copies of your title page or initialed abstracts, as noted on the last page (checklist) of the ETD Approval Form; those are legacy requirements from when paper copies of theses were needed.

Students are responsible for adhering to all BPhil procedures and deadlines. Failure to do so will jeopardize your graduation.

If you have any questions or require any assistance as you progress, please contact David Hornyak at hornyak@pitt.edu in the Frederick Honors College.