

Instructions for running virtual defenses using BlueJeans

Until further notice, all graduate defenses will be conducted remotely using the BlueJeans or Zoom videoconference platforms.

For the purpose of these instructions, the student's Supervisor is the "Moderator" of the BlueJeans session. Before the defense begins the Supervisor must ask the student for a phone number and/or email address where they can be reached once the Committee has made its decision after the questioning phase of the defense (see point 6 below).

With the exception of the student, the supervisory committee, the external examiner, and the Chair, all "audience" members (e.g., friends and family of the student) must join via audio only, and must keep their microphones muted throughout. We strongly encourage students to ask audience members that will be joining to connect to the conference via the toll-free phone number that is provided in the BlueJeans information that you will have received.

Steps for running the defense:

1. Moderator initiates the BlueJeans videoconference using the "moderator code" that was provided by their unit's grad secretary. This should be done 30 minutes before the scheduled start time to allow other participants time to join in and check their audio and video feeds.
2. Other participants should be instructed to join the conference at least 20-30 minutes in advance. By clicking the "People" button in the top right corner of the BlueJeans screen, the Moderator can see everyone who is connected.
3. To reduce echoes and feedback during the proceedings the Moderator should instruct committee members to keep their microphones off unless they are speaking.
4. Defense begins and proceeds as per usual.
5. After the defense, the Moderator instructs the student and the audience to exit from the conference. Once the Moderator can see that only the committee members remain connected, the committee then undertakes its deliberations, as per usual.
6. After deliberations have ended, the Moderator contacts the student via text, phone, or email and invites them to rejoin the conference.

7. Once the student has reconnected, the Moderator announces the result of the Committee's deliberations to the student.

Post-defense paperwork

Chair's Report: FGS will have already provided a fillable form with a signature spot for the Chair. No other signatures are needed.

Thesis/Dissertation approval forms: The student's home unit is responsible for collecting committee and external examiner signatures on these, post-defense. Note that Graduate Admissions and Records accepts either scanned/electronic signatures, or emails in lieu thereof.

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