

# Canceling or Recessing the Doctoral Preliminary and/or Master's or Doctoral Final Oral Examination

## Related Policy:

- *Doctoral Degree: Completion*
- *Doctoral Degree: Performance Standards and Progress*
- [Master's Degree: Completion](#)
- [Master's Degree: Performance Standards and Progress](#)

## Administrative Procedure

### Cancellation of a Doctoral Preliminary or Final Oral Examination

If the [doctoral](#) preliminary or final oral examination cannot be held on the scheduled date, Graduate Student Services and Progress ([GSSP](#)) must be notified by email ~~to~~ [gssp@umn.edu](mailto:gssp@umn.edu) of the cancellation. [If a Preliminary or Final Oral Examination Report form has been initiated by the student, Graduate Student Services and Progress \(GSSP\) will cancel the existing form. The Preliminary or Final Oral Examination Report Form must be returned to Graduate Student Services and Progress \(GSSP\).](#) The student must reschedule the examination online with GSSP at least one week in advance of the rescheduled exam date. A new Preliminary or Final Oral Examination Report Form will be issued.

# Recess of a Doctoral Preliminary or Final Oral Examination

On rare occasions, the examining committee may conclude that the preliminary or final oral examination should be recessed and reconvened at a later date. Guidelines for such circumstances are sent to the [committee chair](#) ~~of each examining committee along~~ with the Preliminary or Final Oral Examination Report Form, ~~and are~~. ~~They are also~~ available as an appendix to the related policies listed above.

~~In the case of a preliminary oral examination, if the committee recesses without having determined whether a student has passed the examination, the chair of the committee must send a letter to the vice provost and dean of graduate education explaining the reasons for the recess and must indicate when they expect to reconvene and resume the examination. If the recess will be longer than one week, the Preliminary Oral Examination Report Form must be returned to GSSP. The student must reschedule the examination online with GSSP at least one week in advance of the rescheduled exam date. The reconvened committee must be composed of the same members as the original preliminary oral examining committee.~~

[Recessing a \*\*doctoral\*\* preliminary oral examination:](#)

[If the committee recesses without having determined whether to pass the student, the committee and the student select a date and time to reconvene the examination. The committee chair contacts GSSP to request that the Preliminary Oral Exam Form workflow initiated by the student be canceled. The committee must comprise the same members as the original preliminary oral examining committee. The student reinitiates the workflow process for the date of the reconvened examination.](#)

[If the recess will be longer than one week, the Preliminary Oral Examination Report Form must be returned to GSSP. The student must reschedule the examination online with GSSP at least one week in advance of the date of the reconvened exam. The student reinitiates the workflow process for the date of the reconvened examination. The committee must comprise the same members as the original preliminary oral examining committee.](#)

~~In the case of a final oral examination, GSSP need not be notified until after the fact of informal recesses of up to a week. In the case of a longer recess, the committee must inform the student in writing of the reasons for recessing the examination, including any~~

~~deficiencies noted in the student's dissertation or defense, and must indicate when they expect to reconvene and resume the examination. A copy of this letter must be sent to GSSP along with the unsigned Final Oral Examination Report Form.~~

~~When the student and the committee are ready to reconvene the examination, it should be scheduled with GSSP. The reconvened committee must be composed of the same members as the original preliminary or final oral examining committee.~~

Recessing a doctoral final oral examination:

Because the designated thesis reviewers must determine prior to the examination that the dissertation is ready for defense – without revision or with only minor revisions – recessing the final oral examination for more than one week should be necessary only in exceptional circumstances. In that instance, the committee chair emails the student with the reasons for the recess and when the committee expects to reconvene to resume the examination. The chair also contacts GSSP to request that the Final Exam Form workflow initiated by the student be canceled. The student must reschedule the examination and reinitiate the Final Exam Form workflow for the new examination date. The committee must comprise the same members as the original final oral examining committee.

## **Recess of a Master's Final Oral Examination**

On rare occasions, the examining committee may conclude that the master's final oral examination should be recessed, to be reconvened at a later date. Guidelines and procedures for recessing the master's final oral examination are determined by the program. The reconvened committee must comprise the same members as the original final oral examining committee.

Plan A final oral examinations: Because the designated thesis reviewers must determine prior to the examination that the thesis is ready for defense – without revision or with only minor revisions – recessing the final oral examination for more than one week should be necessary only in exceptional circumstances. In that instance, the committee chair emails the student with the reasons for the recess and when the committee expects to reconvene to resume the examination. The chair also contacts GSSP to request that the Final Exam Form workflow initiated by the student be canceled. The student must reinitiate the Final Exam Form workflow for the new examination date. The reconvened committee must comprise the same members as the original final oral examining committee.

Plan B final oral examinations: For recesses longer than one week, the committee chair emails the student with the reasons for recessing the examination and when the committee expects to reconvene to resume the examination. The committee chair is responsible for sending this email to the student within one week of the recessed examination. The chair also emails GSSP (gssp@umn.edu) and requests that the Final Oral Examination workflow be canceled. The student must reinitiate the Final Oral Examination workflow for the new examination date. The reconvened committee must comprise the same members as the original final oral examining committee.