

National Central University Rules Governing the Master's and Doctoral Degree Qualifying Exam and Thesis Defense

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- Article 1 These rules are provided in accordance with the *University Act* and its enforcement rules as well as with the *Degree Conferral Law* and its enforcement rules.
- Article 2 Doctoral students are eligible for Ph.D candidacy after they have passed the qualifying exam; each student is allowed only two attempts to pass the exam; those who fail the exam twice shall be asked to withdraw from the University. Exam subjects and methods shall be determined by the respective graduate institutes and submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs for filing. Direct-entry doctoral students who fail their qualifying exam shall be asked to return to the master's program upon approval by a meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee and ratification by the president of the University.
- Article 3 Graduate theses, whether for master's or doctoral degree, shall be conducted orally except where a written exam has been requested.
- Students enrolled in master's programs in fine arts or applied technology may, in lieu of a written thesis, submit (respectively) a creative work or artistic performance in conjunction with a written report or a technical report. In either case an abstract is required.
- Such programs may be classified by their respective graduate institutes as fine arts or applied technology upon approval by a meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee.
- Article 4 All thesis defenses, whether for master's or doctoral degrees, shall be conducted by a thesis examination committee established in accordance with the following guidelines:
- I. Thesis examination committees shall consist of five to nine members, master's examination committees of three to five members; all committee members must be selected and hired by the University president. Each examination committee must select a committee chair from among its members, but the examinee's thesis director may not serve as the chair.

II. All members of the examination committee, either from within or outside the University, shall not only have an in-depth knowledge of the examinee's academic discipline or creative, performative or technical field of expertise as the case may be, but must also satisfy one of the following criteria:

For those serving on doctoral thesis examination committees:

- (1) be a current or emeritus full professor;
- (2) be a current academician or former research fellow at the Academia Sinica;
- (3) be a current or emeritus associate professor or current associate research fellow at the Academia Sinica with a distinguished record of achievement in his or her field;
- (4) hold a Ph.D degree and has a distinguished record of achievement in his or her field;
- (5) have a distinguished record of achievement in an unusual or exceptional academic discipline or profession.

For those serving on master's thesis examination committees:

- (1) be a current or emeritus full professor, associate professor or assistant professor;
- (2) be a current academician or former research fellow, associate research fellow or research assistant at the Academia Sinica;
- (3) hold a Ph.D degree and has a distinguished record of achievement in his or her field;
- (4) have a distinguished record of achievement in an unusual or exceptional academic discipline or profession.

A committee member's qualification to serve on a thesis examination committee under the criteria specified in items (3), (4) and (5) for those serving on doctoral thesis examination committees and items (3) and (4) for those serving on master's thesis examination committees shall be determined by a meeting of the examinee's respective department or graduate institute.

III. No one related to the examinee within three degrees is permitted to be a member of the examination committee.

Article 5 Graduate students who have satisfied the following requirements may apply to defend their thesis:

- I. Have completed all courses and credit hours required by their respective departments within the designated period of study; master's students are expected to earn at least 24 credit hours during their course of study; doctoral students are expected to earn at least 18 credit hours; direct-entry doctoral students are expected to earn at least 34 credit hours (of which at least 18 must be credit hours earned from doctoral courses);
- II. Have finished drafting their thesis;
- III. Have passed their qualifying exam (a qualifying exam is required of doctoral students; whether or not a qualifying exam is required of master's students shall be determined by their respective departments).

Students who satisfy all the aforementioned requirements and have obtained the approval of their thesis director and departmental head should submit the following documents to the Office of Academic Affairs within the deadline specified in the academic calendar: a copy of the student's official transcript, a copy of the completed draft of the student's thesis along with a thesis abstract, a recommendation letter from the student's thesis director, as well as a thesis defense application form. Once the application has been appraised by the Office of Academic Affairs and approved by the President of the University, the student may be permitted to defend the thesis.

Article 6 Unless otherwise specified, all doctoral and master's theses shall be written in Chinese; an electronic version of the thesis and thesis abstract shall be submitted to the relevant departments of the Ministry of Education for archival purposes.

A thesis which has previously been submitted for a degree may not be resubmitted.

All theses shall be written in accordance with the University's *Thesis Format Guidelines*.

Article 7 The grade for the thesis defense shall be the average of all the grades given by thesis examination committee members present. The highest grade possible for the degree defense is 100 points; the lowest passing grade is 70 points. However, if half the members of a master's thesis examination committee or two-thirds the members of a doctoral thesis examination committee give the examinee a grade lower than 70 points, the examinee shall be deemed as having failed the defense. No thesis examination committee can submit a grade for a thesis defense more than once. No student may defend his or her thesis more than once during a semester; those who fail to pass their thesis defense and who have not exceeded their maximum period of study shall file for a second defense in the following semester or academic year. Students who fail to pass their defense a second time shall be asked to withdraw from the University.

- Article 8 The criteria for assessing a thesis shall be determined by the examinee's graduate institute. Any student whose thesis, creative or performative work and accompanying written report or technical report is determined by the student's thesis examination committee to show evidence of plagiarism or cheating shall be deemed as having failed the thesis defense. In the event that plagiarism or cheating is discovered after the student has received his or her master's or doctoral degree, the said degree shall be revoked and the degree certificate taken back by the University.
- Article 9 All members of the thesis examination committee are expected to be present at the defense and may not authorize a proxy to represent him or her. At least two-thirds of the members of the thesis examination committee shall be present at the defense; however, a minimum of three members is required in the case of master's degrees defenses, a minimum of five members in the case of doctoral degrees.
- Article 10 Students who have already filed to defend their thesis but are unable to proceed with the defense in that semester for some unforeseen circumstances shall file for a thesis defense withdrawal before the end of the semester as specified in the academic calendar. Students who fail to file for a thesis defense withdrawal within the deadline and do not proceed with the defense shall be deemed as having failed their defense.
- Article 11 Direct-entry doctoral students who fail to pass their doctoral thesis defense shall be granted a master's degree providing that their thesis is deemed by their thesis examination committee to have met a standard appropriate for a master's degree.
- Article 12 Students who have passed their thesis defense must submit the required number of copies of their completed thesis, their grade for the thesis defense along with a degree thesis application form, file their thesis abstract online, and complete the graduation process within the deadline specified in the academic calendar in order to have their degree certificate conferred by the University.
- Article 13 These rules shall be implemented and entered into force upon approval by a meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee and appraisal and ratification by the Ministry of Education. The same procedure applies to any amendment of these rules.