

Checklist for Graduate Students Completing the PhD and MS Degree Programs

All Students: Refer to the [Biology Graduate Program Handbook](#) ("Blue Book") for specific departmental requirements for your program of study (PhD or MS).

Before your final semester...

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Make sure that you have met the formal coursework requirements for your degree program, **including the requisite number of topical graduate seminars** (BIO 705 *Graduate Research Seminars* does **not** count). Thereafter, register for GRD 998 *Degree in Progress* (0 credits) **every** academic semester through graduation (and file a [Certification of Full-time Status for Matriculated Graduate Students](#) form, [if applicable](#)).

- Formal Coursework Credits: _____ (total taken to date)
- Graduate Seminars Credits: _____ (total taken to date)
- Dissertation (BIO 999)/ Thesis Credits (BIO 997): _____ (total taken to date)
- Pass Qualifying Examination (PhD students only)

PhD STUDENTS: check the [Biology Graduate Program Handbook](#) ("Blue Book") for additional requirements

During your final semester...

REGISTER:

Ensure you are considered a full-time graduate student by reviewing [these expectations](#). If you have completed all your credit degree requirements, register for GRD 998 *Degree in Progress* (0 credits). If you do not have a Teaching or Research Assistantship, file a [Certification of Full-time Status](#) form.

CAREFULLY REVIEW ALL DEFENSE AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

All of the necessary procedures and requirements are described in detail on the following two webpages:

- Biology Department website: [Do You Plan to Defend and/or Graduate This Semester?](#)
- Syracuse University Graduate School website: [What You Need to Graduate](#) (includes checklists)

COMPLETE THESE REQUIRED STEPS: on or before the published [Graduation Deadlines](#)

- File a **Request for Diploma** (electronically via [MySlice](#))
 - Form your **Defense Committee** and select your **Readers** (consult your Advisor for suggested committee members):
 - **PhD Defense Committee:** consists of 6 voting members—Oral Defense Chair + 5 Members (including your Advisor); only Syracuse University tenured or tenure-track faculty *outside* the Biology department may chair the defense; if necessary, file a Petition to accept someone who is not a Syracuse University faculty as a member of your Defense Committee, or to include more than one Defense Committee member outside the Biology Department (i.e., external member).
 - **MS Defense Committee:** consists of 4 voting members—Oral Defense Chair + 3 Members (including your Advisor)
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- **PhD Readers:** Advisor + 2 Defense Committee Members
 - **MS Readers:** Advisor + 1 Defense Committee Member

- Select a **Defense Date**

Be sure that all of your Defense Committee members are available on the selected date. In addition, it is important to select a date that will provide you with enough time to make any revisions requested by your Defense Committee prior to the "Last day to submit final documents" deadline ([Graduation Deadlines](#)) for the semester in which you wish to graduate. All PhD and MS

candidates are required to present a formal departmental seminar on their research just prior to the oral defense.

Reserve the **Seminar Room** and **Notify the Biology Department**

You are responsible for reserving the Lundgren Room (106 LSC) for your formal departmental seminar and oral examination (to reserve, complete the [Lundgren Reservation Form](#)), and for providing your defense seminar notice information (title, date, time, location, advisor) to Sarah Hartmann (sehartma@syr.edu).

[REMOTE DEFENSE FORMAT: Due to COVID-19, the Graduate School supports an online/video based defense. **Students must email their request to their advisor for approval** and their advisor will forward the approved request to degrecert@syr.edu. Please refer to the [Thesis/Dissertation Defense Checklist](#) for additional information.]

Obtain **Approval for your Defense:** submit a draft of your dissertation/ thesis to your Advisor and other Reader(s) **at least 4-5 weeks before** your anticipated defense date. All Readers must notify the Graduate Academic Support Coordinator (Sarah Hartmann, biograd@syr.edu) in writing (via e-mail) that the dissertation/ thesis is approved for defense **before** the **Request for Examination** form can be signed and submitted to the SU Graduate School.

Submit the [Request for Examination](#) form **at least 3 weeks before** your anticipated defense date.

Submit a Copy of your Dissertation/Thesis to **all** Defense Committee Members and to the Biology Department (Sarah Hartmann, sehartma@syr.edu) **at least 2 weeks before** your anticipated defense date. No further changes should be made to the dissertation/thesis prior to the defense.

Complete the [Survey of Earned Documents](#) online survey (PhD students only, completed electronically).

Hold your Defense, including the formal departmental seminar and the oral examination.

After your defense...

The members of your Defense Committee may ask that you make revisions to your dissertation/ thesis. Once any requested revisions have been completed and approved by your Defense Committee members, you may submit the final version of your dissertation and the remaining paperwork required for graduation.

IMPORTANT: Please refer to [Graduation Deadlines](#) under "Last day to submit final documents" for the deadline for the semester in which you wish to graduate. All of the items listed below must be completed and submitted prior to that date.

Final Dissertation/ Thesis:
Submit electronically via [ProQuest](#).

Signed Dissertation/ Thesis Cover Page:
Signed by your Advisor and submitted in to Kristina Ashley (degrecert@syr.edu) in the SU Graduate School (304 Lyman Hall).

Report of Exam Memo:
Written and e-mailed by your Oral Defense Chair to Kristina Ashley (degrecert@syr.edu) in the SU Graduate School (304 Lyman Hall).

Committee Approval Page:
Signed by all Defense Committee members and e-mailed by your Oral Defense Chair to Kristina Ashley (degrecert@syr.edu) in the SU Graduate School (304 Lyman Hall).

[Survey of Earned Documents](#) PhD students only: If you have not yet done so, complete this online survey.