

Reminder: Campus and CEE Policy on Doctoral Committees and Final Examinations

This is a reminder to all faculty and graduate students about campus policies on Preliminary and Final Examination Committees. The following language in quotes is taken from the Graduate College website: <http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chapterVI/section04.asp>

"The preliminary examination committee is appointed by the dean of the Graduate College, upon recommendation of the unit executive officer. It must include at least four voting members, three of whom must be members of the Graduate Faculty and two of whom must be tenured." **In CEE we have a requirement that the committee includes at least one member who is outside the area of specialization of the student.** If a student's major research advisor is in another department or is a non-tenure track CEE faculty, a regular tenured or tenure-track CEE faculty must serve as the Chair of the Preliminary and Final Examination.

"In units whose preliminary examination includes the presentation of a proposal for the doctoral research, a unit may decide to have the dissertation committee be substantially the same as the preliminary examination committee. Normally, the dissertation committee also serves as the final examination committee. The final examination committee is appointed by the dean of the Graduate College, upon recommendation of the unit executive officer."

"Committee members should be chosen for their expertise in the student's research area, but may also be chosen to give diversity in viewpoint, methodology, or academic discipline. Such diversity may be achieved by including members from more than one sub-discipline within the unit, from other units, or from other campuses. "

"**Final examinations are oral and public.** The committee chair is responsible for convening the committee, conducting the examination, and submitting the Certificate of Result to the unit in which the student is enrolled and to the Graduate College. All voting members of the committee must be present in person or via appropriate electronic communication media at the preliminary and final examinations."

Our policy in CEE is that all final examinations begin with a one-hour public seminar. The seminar title, abstract and location must be sent to the Associate Head for Graduate Studies at least two weeks prior to the exam date, normally at the same time that the candidate submits the thesis draft to the committee. The seminar will be publicized on the front lobby bulletin board and monitor, and in the faculty and grad blogs. During the seminar, the public is invited to attend a 50 minutes presentation, followed by 10 minutes of discussion. Following the open seminar is a closed examination with only the candidate and committee members being present.

"The committee chair and the defending student must be physically present at the final examination (e.g. presence by teleconference is not acceptable). Ideally, all voting members of the committee must be present at and participate in final examinations. In exceptional circumstances, the Graduate College will allow up to two voting members to participate via electronic communication media such as speaker-phone or video-conference link. Students wishing to take advantage of this option should seek approval from the department. Non-voting members do not need to be present at the final examination."