

Frequently Asked Questions About the Comps, IRB Approval, and the Dissertation Proposal Defense

1. When are the comps taken?

The comps are taken after a student sets up the dissertation committee; has the electronic portfolio approved by the chairperson of the dissertation committee; and has successfully completed 42 credits.

2. Where can information about the comps be found?

Information about the comps can be found in the 2011-2012 student handbook and bulletin as well as on the website. In addition, it is also on Blackboard in EDD 1008.

3. Who grades the comps?

The written comps are graded by the dissertation chair and one other member of the student's dissertation committee. In the event of a tie judgment, the third member of the student's dissertation committee will resolve the assessment. The student must pass all three components of the written exam and also the oral exam component in order to satisfy the comprehensive examination requirement. All three committee members must sign off on the oral exam. Joan McCarthy has the rating forms.

4. When does the doctoral student apply for IRB approval and how long does it take to get IRB approval?

The student should not apply for IRB approval until successfully passing the dissertation proposal defense. The time it takes for IRB approval depends upon the number of requests that they have and the schedule of IRB committee meetings.

The student may however, consult with staff in the Office of Sponsored Research prior to the proposal defense in developing a draft application.

5. What is the process for IRB approval?

Students must take an online federal training program before submitting their request to the IRB. Once the training module has been completed, students will be prompted to print out a certificate of completion. A copy of this certificate must be submitted with the IRB application (The training and certification are normally taught as a component of EDD 1005).

Please go to www.liu.edu and click on Academic Affairs at the top of the page. Then click on Office of Sponsored Research on the left hand side of the page. Then click on Human Subjects Research and/or Forms.

For more information, please contact Michele Morales, Associate Director and IRB Secretary at 516-299-3591 or e-mail her at michele.morales@liu.edu

6. Why does the student's dissertation chair need to co-sign the IRB application?

The student's dissertation chair needs to sign off under faculty supervisor. This certifies that the project is under your direct supervision and that you are responsible for ensuring that the investigator (student) complies with all provisions of approval.

7. Who decides when the student is ready to defend the dissertation proposal?

When the student believes that the dissertation proposal is ready for defense, the student requests that a defense be scheduled by the chairperson and the dissertation committee. The decision will be made by the dissertation committee.

8. When does the student defend the dissertation proposal?

Before a student defends the dissertation proposal, the student must have successfully completed 42 credits; had the e-portfolio approved; successfully passed all components of both the written and oral portions of the student's comps, and have met the requirements of the dissertation committee.

9. Who sets up the dissertation proposal defense?

Once the student has the approval of his/her dissertation committee, the dissertation chair notifies Joan McCarthy that the student is requesting a date and a location for the defense. The dissertation chair should inform Joan about any equipment or special needs. Generally, there should be one week's notice, unless an exception is approved by the Dean.

10. Who convenes and who attends the dissertation proposal defense?

The student and the dissertation committee will be present. In addition, students and faculty are invited. In addition, family, partners, and friends may attend, but not participate in the questioning.

Upon the recommendation of the dissertation committee, the Program Director (or designee) will convene the proposal defense. The questioning portion of the defense is moderated by the dissertation chair. Normally, the student will be asked to make a brief presentation. The questioning normally proceeds with the committee members, then the chair and other faculty members who are present, followed by questions invited from the other doctoral students in the program.

11. How long does the dissertation proposal defense last?

The public portion of the questioning normally lasts one hour. At the end of the public session, the dissertation committee continues in executive session. All others except for the student are excused at this time.

12. What is the format and length of the dissertation proposal?

The format and length of the dissertation proposal will be determined by the dissertation committee based on the nature and topic of the dissertation. All dissertations must conform to the style prescribed by the current edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

13. How is the dissertation proposal graded?

There are three designations: approved, approved with changes, and not approved.