

Procedures for the Conferral of Doctoral Degree in the Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies

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1. Definition of a Doctoral Degree at APU

The Doctoral Degree is a research degree incorporating original research on a topic of the candidate's choice, and is conferred on those who satisfy the requirements for the completion of the Doctoral program in the Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies.

*A doctoral candidate is one who has acquired the prescribed number of credits (24 credits), submitted 2 Research Papers and passed the doctoral candidacy screening.

2. The Key Requirements for a Doctoral Degree

- 2-1. A distinct contribution to a body of knowledge through an original investigation or testing of ideas, worthy at least in part of publication.
- 2-2. Competence in research processes (techniques and reporting).
- 2-3. Mastery of a body of knowledge, including previous works, and keen understanding of their relationship to wider fields.

3. The Dissertation Committee

- 3-1. The Dissertation Committee within GSA administers the procedures for doctoral dissertations including approval of the theme, examination, and evaluation.
- 3-2. The Dissertation Committee consults of a chair person and two members appointed by the GSA Faculty Council on the recommendations of the Dean. The term of appointment is one (1) year and members can be reappointed.

4. Supervision

- 4-1. Students should clarify their topic for research and receive supervision from a faculty member from the same field. A research plan must be provided upon enrollment in the doctoral program. Based on this plan, a potential supervisor is assigned by the Dean after discussion with the concerned faculty members who have the appropriate expertise. The supervisor is officially assigned upon successful enrollment. If a student wishes to be supervised by someone other than the supervisor assigned by the Dean, he/she must apply for a change of supervisor to the Dissertation Committee no later than the end of the semester of enrollment. The change may be approved by the Dissertation Committee upon consultation with concerned parties and formal endorsement by the Dean.
- 4-2. Once the principal supervisor is officially designated, the student shall begin research leading to the doctoral degree under his/her supervision.

5. Registration for the Award of a Doctoral Degree (Doctoral Candidacy)

Upon satisfactory completion of an agreed research program (including the submission of two research papers, one of which may consist of a revised research plan for the degree with appropriate methodology), a student shall apply to the Dissertation Committee to be registered

as a candidate for the award of a Ph.D. degree. Students shall, in principle, apply to the Dissertation Committee to be registered as a candidate for the award of a Ph.D. degree, up to 3 months before the deadline for the submission of a dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the award of a Ph.D. (a total of 9 months before scheduled program completion).

6. Writing the Doctoral Dissertation

- 6-1. There is no prescribed length for a dissertation, as this will vary with the research topic and the form of presentation. However, it is generally recognized that such a dissertation is a major piece of original work and its length will normally be between 60,000 and 80,000 words in English or between 120,000 and 160,000 characters in Japanese, excluding tables, charts, bibliographies, and appendices.
- 6-2. As a rule, the dissertation should be presented in English and should include a summary in English.
- 6-3. Under certain circumstances, a candidate may be allowed to present their dissertation in Japanese. This may be allowed if the primary data and the existing literature are mainly in Japanese, and if these are accepted and approved by the Dean and the Dissertation Committee. In such cases, a detailed summary (about ten percent the length of the Japanese manuscript) must be provided in English.
- 6-4. The format of the dissertation should follow the guidelines noted separately from this document.

7. Application for Conferral of the Doctoral Degree

- 7-1 All candidates must apply for the conferral of the Doctoral degree using the appropriate application form, accompanied by the appropriate screening fee. Three copies of the doctoral dissertation must be submitted within three months after application. In addition to that, electronic copies may be required to facilitate the screening and assessment of the candidate's doctoral dissertation.
- 7-2. In principle, the doctoral dissertation shall be submitted 6 months before the scheduled program completion date. The degree may be formally conferred during either of the two graduation ceremonies (Spring or Fall) every year.
- 7.3. The Dissertation Committee will screen the format, etc. of the doctoral dissertation and decide whether to endorse it screening. Candidates will be informed of the decision of the Dissertation Committee.

8. Evaluation of the Dissertation

(Examination Structure)

- 8-1. Doctoral dissertation screening and examination must be completed within 1 year of the date the application for the Conferral of Doctoral Degree was accepted for screening. However, under certain circumstances, screening may be extended upon approval of the Dissertation Committee and GSA Faculty Council.
- 8-2. Upon endorsement of the application, a Screening Committee shall be formed. In principle, the Screening Committee shall consist of the principal supervisor, one internal and one external examiner.
 - 8-2-1. As a rule, those appointed as an internal examiner (other than the main supervisor) should hold doctoral-level supervising qualification status (D+). However, if deemed necessary based on the content of the dissertation, faculty who do not fit this profile (faculty with only assistant-supervisor (D) status, Associate Professors, etc.) may be appointed. In this case, the Dissertation Committee shall review the proposed faculty's CV and research accomplishments, and decide on the appropriateness of the selection accordingly.
 - 8-2-2. If it is deemed necessary by the Dissertation Committee the number of examiners may be increased.
 - 8-2-3. The examiners will be appointed by the Dissertation Committee.

(Examination Criteria)

- 8-3. Doctoral dissertation should achieve or exceed the quality of doctoral research of peers working in the same field at the doctoral level. The research project is assessed based on the following criteria, among others.
 - 8-3-1. Originality:

The dissertation provides original and important knowledge for academics, practitioners, or society.
 - 8-3-2. Research Question/Topic:

The research question/topic is appropriate and is defined within the current paradigm and context of disciplinary academic literature.
 - 8-3-3. Literature Review:

The literature referenced in the dissertation is both extensive and deep encompassing a broad range of sources and context to fully cover the necessary academic and other material to define and defend the research project's originality and significance.
 - 8-3-4. Methodology:

The dissertation is grounded in appropriate theory and uses appropriate methodologies to determine results.
 - 8-3-5. Structure:

The structure of the dissertation allows for clear and logical communication of information to the audience.

8-3-6. Analysis:

The dissertation provides sufficient data and reasons that lead to the findings and conclusions.

8-3-7. Implication:

The thesis has implications for academics, practitioners or society.

8-3-8. Writing:

The text is clear and concise without unnecessary repetition and is written in the format of an argument with substantial evidence and claims. The writing adheres to standard research practices of citations and works cited without instance of plagiarism.

8-3-9. Publication:

At least one part of the thesis has the potential to be published in a reputable academic journal in the relevant field.

(Examination Process)

8-4. Each examiner shall make a separate report to the Dissertation Committee with one of the following recommendations:

- a) **Pass** (The dissertation is accepted as satisfactory);
- b) **Minor Rewrite** (Subject to specified minor revisions and corrections, the dissertation is accepted as satisfactory);
- c) **Major Rewrite** (One or more sections of the dissertation is to be rewritten prior to the re-submission of the dissertation for re-examination);
- d) **Fail** (The dissertation is rejected).

8-5. The candidate shall receive copies of examiners' reports.

8-6. In the event that the screening result is "Pass" or "Minor Rewrite", an oral examination on the student's knowledge of the contents of the doctoral dissertation and the connected field shall be held.

8-7. In case of conflicting examiners' evaluation, that is, if contradictory revisions are recommended, the Dissertation Committee will resolve the conflict. The Dissertation Committee's comments will be forwarded to the examiners.

8-8. When a candidate is required by the Dissertation Committee to revise a dissertation, the supervisor will coordinate the process, unless the Dean and/or the Chair of the Dissertation Committee requires another person(s) to assist in the coordination of the revision.

8-9. If a candidate is required to undertake a Major rewrite, the examiners will be invited to re-examine the dissertation upon re submission by the candidate. In case of a Minor

rewrite, the Dissertation Committee will examine if the recommended changes have been made.

8-10. If an examiner chooses not to re-examine, the decision of the remaining examiners will hold. If all examiners refuse to re-examine, a new set of examiners shall be appointed by the Dissertation Committee.

8-11. The Dissertation Committee shall make a final decision on the revised dissertation on the basis of the recommendations from the re-examination of the dissertation after minor or major revisions.

8-12. The administration fail results shall be the responsibility of the Dissertation Committee and the Dean.

8-13. Appeal Procedure:

8-13-1. If the final decision of the Dissertation Committee is “Fail”, but one of the three examiners judged it “Pass”, an appeal may be allowed by the Dissertation Committee.

8-13-2. If a candidate wishes to appeal a decision, notice of an intention to appeal shall be forwarded in writing to the Dissertation Committee within one month of the date of the written notification of the result. If a written defense is pursued, a detailed written case must be provided to the Dissertation Committee within three months of the date of written notification of the result. If an oral defense is pursued, the details of the case must be provided verbally to the Dissertation Committee within 4 weeks of the submission of the notice of intention to appeal.

8-13-3. In the event of an appeal, an Appeals Committee consisting of the Dean, one member of the Dissertation Committee and another faculty member who has expertise in the area of the candidate’s dissertation, but who has neither examined, nor supervised the dissertation, shall be established to decide on the merits of the case.

8-14. The final result by the Dissertation Committee shall be approved by the GSA Faculty Council. Furthermore, the approved result shall be deliberated by the Higher Degrees Committee and finally decided by the President.

9. Cancellation/Disqualification from the Conferral of Degree

9-1. If the candidate is found to have gained the degree through improper means or to have done anything to damage the University's reputation, the President may, after thorough screening by the GSA Faculty Council and the Higher Degrees Committee, rescind that Degree.

9-2. At the APU Graduate School, doctoral students are required to observe the highest standard of integrity in research. Copying, translating, or close paraphrasing of another person’s work constitutes plagiarism and is deemed a serious offense, equated with cheating in examinations. The fabrication or falsification of data and use of another

person's ideas without proper acknowledgement are examples of other forms of unethical research conduct.

- 9-3. A dissertation involving plagiarism, fabrication or falsification of data will be failed outright.

10. Archiving Dissertations and Making Dissertations Publicly Available Online

- 10-1. Candidates to who conferral of a doctoral degree is confirmed are required to submit a soft copy of the doctoral dissertation upon which the degree is being conferred and an abstract of said dissertation by the date of completion of the Doctoral Program. The abstract outlining the content of the dissertation and a summary of the doctoral dissertation screening results shall be made publicly available online within three months of the conferral of the Doctoral degree.
- 10-2. The doctoral dissertation in its entirety will be permanently bound and archived at the APU Library. A soft copy of the doctoral dissertation shall be uploaded to the university online repository within one year of conferral of the doctoral degree and made publicly available for viewing online via the National Diet Library.
- 10-3. In the case that any of the reasons stipulated below disallow the doctoral dissertation from being made publicly available online for more than a year from the date of the conferral of the Doctoral degree, it will be possible to submit a concise summary of the content in place of the entire dissertation upon the approval of the Dissertation Committee and GSA Faculty Council. However, in the case that the reasons stipulated below cease to apply, the entire dissertation shall be made publicly available online.
- a) The doctoral dissertation cannot be made publicly available online for more than a year from the date of degree conferral due to copyright or the protection of personal information.
 - b) The doctoral dissertation cannot be made publicly available for more than a year from the date of degree conferral because it would clearly be disadvantageous to the graduate as he/she is planning to publish his/her dissertation or part of which, and making it publicly available online may infringe Academic Journal publication rules against multiple publications, or due to applications for patents pending approval. If the application is approved the graduate may be granted an exemption from their dissertation being made publicly available online for a period of up to 5 years from the date of degree deferral. After which time, if there are no other circumstances impeding the dissertation being made publicly available online then the dissertation will be automatically made publicly available online.
 - c) Making the doctoral dissertation publicly available online for more than a year from the date of degree conferral would clearly be disadvantageous to graduates who have published his/her dissertation or part of which, and making it publicly available online

infringes Academic Journal publication rules against multiple publications or due to patents.

d) The doctoral dissertation cannot be made publicly available online because it includes material that is in a three-dimensional format.

10-4. In line with the regulations stipulated in articles 10-2 and 10-3, candidates must confirm (using the prescribed form) to the Dissertation Committee upon application for conferral of the doctoral degree that there are no problems with regards to copyright, patents, confidential information or personal information which impedes making the dissertation public. Supervisors (or other faculty involved in the degree applicant's instruction) shall coordinate and assist during the process of confirmation.

10-5. The examiners will confirm in writing whether it is appropriate for the entire dissertation to be made publicly available online. The Dissertation Committee and GSA Faculty Council will deliberate on the documents submitted by the candidate and examiners regarding the doctoral dissertation being made publicly available online and determine the process to be followed for each dissertation.