

Attendance of Visitors at Dissertation Defense

(CEHS POLICY)

The purpose of a dissertation defense is to provide opportunity for a graduate student to demonstrate professional competence to produce, present, and interpret significant research. The defense is a culminating activity in which a candidate demonstrates knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes generally considered the hallmark of the professional person. The supervisory committee, through the person designated as examination chairperson by the School of Graduate Studies, is responsible for conducting the examination and will make all judgments pertaining to it.

While the dissertation defense meets specific program needs of the candidate and is a facet of the quality control function of the University, it may also be of interest and value to other graduate students, faculty and professionals both within and outside the University. Therefore, the dissertation defense for the Doctorate of Education will be open to observers.

In order to facilitate a formal open dissertation defense which protects the interest of the candidate and to provide opportunity for the candidate to share the research, the dissertation defense may be attended by graduate students, faculty, and other professionals under the following conditions:

1. Persons desiring to attend a dissertation defense should notify the candidate's Supervisory Committee Chairperson at least three working days prior to the defense so appropriate seating and other arrangements can be made.
2. Visitors will not be in attendance while the supervisory committee establishes procedures for conducting the meeting nor while adequacy of the defense is discussed and announced.
3. Visitors will be invited in and excused from the room by the examination chairperson at the appropriate times.
4. Visitors will participate only as observers and are not to question the candidate or participate in discussions until after the entire examination has been completed.
5. Visitors will not be given copies of the dissertation. Copies of the abstract may be provided upon approval of the candidate and Supervisory Committee.
6. Family members of the candidate will not be admitted as observers to the dissertation defense.