



Advanced Webex Users: Preparing for Oral Thesis/Dissertation Defenses using Webex

The Graduate College does not anticipate any changes to thesis/dissertation office hours, which are currently held remotely on Tuesday/Thursday from 12-2 p.m. Email grad.td@unlv.edu at least 48 hours in advance to schedule a time to meet online.

Students should work with their advisory committees to determine appropriate timelines for their defenses. Given current events, all thesis/dissertation defenses should be held remotely via Webex.

For remote defenses, programs should utilize UNLV's Webex online meeting platform and share the call-in and link information to ensure there is a public component of their defense. If the student and faculty committee members have individual Zoom accounts and prefer this platform, they may use it; however, UNLV does not have a contract with Zoom so there is no support available for this platform through OIT. Either way, the Webex (or Zoom) meeting information for the defense will also need to be sent to gradrebel@unlv.edu when [announcing the date/time of the defense](#).

We encourage students to work with a member of their committee, usually the committee chair, to set up a Webex room for the remote-enabled defense. The online meeting for the defense should be run by a faculty member who is comfortable with using Webex so that they can ensure that the first part is public, and then those participants must leave the 'room' before the private part of the defense commences. If there is no faculty member to schedule the Webex defense and you need assistance, please email gradrebel@unlv.edu.

Recommendations for Meeting Format

1. Students and Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC) members should ensure that software installation is complete and audio and video is tested prior to the defense date and time. Please see Notes below.
2. GAC Chairs (or committee designee who is an experienced Webex user) should be the host of the defense and set up the Webex for the student who is defending. Defenses **must be scheduled in the session in Webex Training Center** to allow for the utilization of breakout rooms for deliberations. Chairs, see the [Host Webex Guide](#). Committee members, see [Attendee Webex Guide](#).
3. At the start of the meeting, the GAC Chair/host should remind the participants that when they are not speaking, they need to mute their mics and videos.
4. The GAC Chair/host can share the screen with the student so that a PowerPoint presentation or other documents may be projected during the defense.
5. When it is time for the student to present, Webex allows the student to easily share the slide presentation. Important: To be heard clearly, the student must present the slides while sitting in front of the computer.

6. During the private deliberations part of the defense with the GAC members only, the GAC Chair can hold private communications with the GAC members without the student and the public participants by using the [breakout room feature](#).
 - a. "[Webex Training Center Guide including Breakout Sessions](#)" by UNLV Office of Information Technology
 - b. "[Manage Breakout Sessions in Cisco Webex Training](#)" by Cisco Webex
 - c. "[How to Set Up Breakout Rooms in Cisco Webex](#)" video by Catherine Nicholson
 - d. [General Guide](#)

Notes

- Students can discuss with the GAC Chair whether the public portion of the defense may be recorded prior to the defense date. Students and GAC Chairs should discuss the expectations of the session prior to the defense.
- Students and GAC Chairs/committee members should exchange phone numbers and email addresses in case some technological issues arise. Have the list readily available during the day of the defense.
- Students should email the documents for the defense to all GAC members prior to the defense.
- Students and GACs should ensure that they have a stable high-speed internet connection.
- Students and GACs should feel comfortable with Webex and practice with others (if needed) prior to the defense.
- Students may invite colleagues, friends and family members to attend the public part of their defense by sending them a link to the meeting. This same link must match the one sent to gradrebel@unlv.edu.

Resources

NorthCentral University: <https://www.ncu.edu/student-experience/online-education-guide/dissertations/preparing-for-dissertation-defense#gref>

Texas A&M: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edQv9OKvfdU>