



Guidelines for the public defense of Doctoral dissertations at the PhD Program in Aerospace Science and Technology - DAST

The main supervisor suggests opponents, members of the examination committee and the Chairperson of the defense.

Description of the defense

Present at the thesis defense is the opponent, the doctoral student (candidate), the examination committee members, the Chairperson and, as a rule, the main supervisor. The defense is open to the interested public. The main actors at the defense are the opponent and the respondent, but all the examination committee members shall actively participate in the discussion of the dissertation. The Chairperson at the public defense is responsible for that the defense is being conducted as intended.

1. The Chairperson greets those present and introduces the respondent and the opponent. The chairperson describes where the research has been conducted, and introduces the supervisor(s). The chairperson concludes the introduction by informing that the committee members will be given the opportunity to ask questions after the opponent's review.
2. Next, the candidate gives a short summary of the thesis. The work should be presented in such a way that it allows a scientist not specialized in the work of the candidate (but working in the same main area) to appreciate the work and the contribution made by the candidate. The problems treated and the results achieved should be stated with their relation to other relevant work in the same field. The summary should focus on the thesis and should not be a lecture on current research problems in general.
3. The opponent discusses the dissertation with the candidate by asking questions, giving the candidate ample opportunity to demonstrate that he/she masters the topic and is able to counter criticism. The questions should mainly deal with the work reported in the dissertation and not be a general examination. The opponent explains that her/his assessment is completed and congratulates if he/she so wishes, the candidate. This phase should last about 30 minutes.
4. After the opponent's assessment is concluded, the Chairperson invites the examination committee members to discuss the issues that they consider need to be further elucidated by the candidate. The Chairperson should give the word to each one of the committee.
5. The Chairperson then thanks the opponent and respondent, on the University's behalf and announces that the committee will now meet followed by an announcement of their decision.
6. After the public defense the evaluation committee meets to decide whether the candidate should pass the examination and, if so, assigns a grade.
7. The outcome of the evaluation is communicated to the candidate and the interested public.