



The University of Tennessee Health Science Center College of Graduate Health Sciences College Policies

Document Name: Commencement Walk-Through
Effective Date: January 1, 2019
Document Status: Approved

Purpose

This policy describes the requirements for “walking” in commencement exercises before completion of degree requirements.

Policy Details

Students who are close to finishing their ETD or project may be granted permission to ‘walk’ in commencement ceremonies.

For May commencement, students must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have successfully orally defended their dissertation, thesis, or project before their faculty committee before April 15;
2. The student’s advisor must submit written assurance that the student will be able to complete an ETD or project that adheres to all format guidelines or program requirements by the end of the Spring term.

For December commencement, they must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have successfully orally defended their dissertation, thesis, or project before their faculty committee no later than November 1;
2. The student’s advisor must submit written assurance that the student will be able to complete an ETD or project that adheres to all format guidelines or program requirements by the end of the Fall term.

A student who has met the requirements for walking in the commencement ceremony, and who is granted the privilege of walking in the commencement ceremony without fully completing the degree requirements, will not be granted degree conferral until all of the degree requirements are met. The degree conferral date will be no earlier than the date that all of the degree requirements are met.

Failure to complete all of the degree requirements by the end of the term in which the student participates in the commencement ceremony will require that



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the student register as a full-time student in the next term, at the student's expense, requiring payment of full tuition and fees unless the student has not previously been granted the one (1) credit hour full-time enrollment waiver.

Policy Scope

Applies to all students

Related Policies

Attendance at Graduation
Degree Completion
Theses and Dissertations
Oral Defense

Definitions

Commencement. The scheduled, formal academic ceremony at which degrees are conferred.

Format guidelines. The published ETD formatting requirements for theses and dissertations.

Program requirements. The specific requirements of the students' degree program, especially relating to the written project option.

Procedures

1. Schedule the oral defense in advance of the specified deadline for a given term.
2. Notify the CGHS Office of the date, time, title, and location of the oral defense two weeks in advance of the oral defense.
3. Request your advisor to provide written assurance of the degree requirement completion by the end of the term.



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Document History

Approved by Graduate Studies Council September 25, 2018.

Modified by Graduate Studies Council January 28, 2025 to allow participation in commencement ceremonies for students who have completed all requirements except acceptance of the thesis or dissertation by the College.

Administratively modified March 5, 2025 to accommodate the May commencement deadline for regalia orders of April 15, thus moving the successful oral defense completion date requirement to before April 15.