



**LOYOLA  
UNIVERSITY  
CHICAGO**

**The Graduate Program in English**

**Final Public Presentation and Defense**

The Graduate Faculty of the Department voted in 2002 to change the model of the dissertation defense from a *Final Public Examination* to a *Final Public Presentation*. (N.B.: the Graduate School imposed the official name “Final Public Presentation and Defense.”)

The old form of the defense maintained the fiction that the committee was “examining” the candidate. After a ten-minute opening comment by the candidate, the readers would take turns questioning the candidate about the dissertation. Committee members felt obligated to fill their time with a series of questions, as they do on a PhD oral exam.

The new model is closer to a conference presentation or a job talk. The candidate is asked to speak about the dissertation project for approximately 30 minutes. The committee then engages the candidate in a more natural, free-form “Q-and-A” discussion (not a turn-by-turn-by-turn cross-examination). As in the old format, the audience may join the discussion toward the end; however, the committee takes the lead.

When the reader’s copy is submitted to the committee, the candidate should discuss a date for the defense with her/his readers. After all three readers have signed the ballots for the reader’s copy and submitted them to the GPD, the candidate should schedule a date, time and room with the graduate secretary.

The candidate should bring a copy of the Graduate School’s “Ballot for the Approval of the Text and Oral Defense of a Thesis/Dissertation” to the defense for the committee to sign after its deliberations. Again, although the form does not say this, it should then be given to the GPD for a signature before being submitted to the Graduate School. Graduate School forms can be found on their web page at [http://www.luc.edu/gradschool/servicesandresources\\_forms.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/gradschool/servicesandresources_forms.shtml).