



College of Education and Human Development Procedures and Timelines for Submitting Dissertations, ELPs, or M.S. Theses

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When developing a timeline for completion, it is important to be aware of deadlines and procedures related to final submission of the dissertation, ELP or thesis.

1. **University-level procedures:**
<https://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/grad/current-students/academic-support/steps-to-graduation/>.
Make sure to carefully review the Dissertation and Thesis Manual.
2. **Departmental procedures:**
 - **School of Education students:**
<http://www.education.udel.edu/resources/doctoral-defense-and-graduation-procedures/>
 - **HDFS students:** <http://www.hdfs.udel.edu/current-graduate-students/>

Students are responsible for accessing, reading, and using this information to guide their degree completion process.

Other notes:

- One common misunderstanding is that soon after the defense, the student graduates. However, **at least 8 weeks are needed for advance submission to the committee before the defense, committee-level revisions, and then approvals across the University, all of which need to happen before the University deadline**—which is about a month before the end of the semester. Therefore, the research, writing, and revision needs to be well in advance of the graduation semester, and the defense must happen early in the graduation semester (or even before the term starts if the student intends to graduate in winter/summer).
- To meet the University's [continuous registration requirement](#), students must be enrolled in at least one course or in sustaining status in each fall and spring semester until the degree is conferred.
- [Graduating students are required to be registered in their graduation semester or term](#). Students graduating in winter or summer should also note that they must be registered in at least one course or in sustaining status.
- [Sustaining status](#) maintains a student's matriculation when the student has completed registration in all required courses needed for the degree. Students in sustaining status are considered full-time. Students in sustaining status can receive funding as long as they are within their eligibility period or have received approval for additional years of funding.
- Not meeting the deadlines can result in a student's graduation term being delayed, which can cost more in sustaining status fees or course tuition, and it is the student's financial responsibility.
- The fee for sustaining status is \$1,303 for doctoral students and \$866 for master's students per semester (2025-26 rates).
- Expected summer graduates may participate in the May graduation ceremonies provided they have a successful defense *before* the graduation ceremonies. Summer graduates may also participate in the ceremonies the following year.
- See the University's timeline for diplomas and degrees appearing on transcripts:
<https://www.udel.edu/academics/registrar/students/degrees-graduation/>.

Please continue reading below for the timelines for each academic term.



Fall Graduation (December degree conferral)
Timeline for Ph.D. and Ed.D. Students Submitting Dissertations or ELPs
and M.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences Students Submitting Theses

Date	Item	Notes
Sep 1	Deadline to submit Application for Advanced Degree (AAD) to Courtney O'Brian for review and chair/ director signature	All graduate students completing a degree at the end of the semester must complete the AAD. The faculty advisor should sign the form first and then it should be sent to the Dean's Office. The Dean's office will coordinate the signatures of the department chair or director and upload the signed form in the student's Stellic record. The fee must be paid according to the instructions on the AAD form.
One month before the defense	Submit the title plus defense date, time, and location or Zoom link for announcement to CEHD faculty and students.	Use the form at http://www.udel.edu/0013570 . The form will ask if students want to be featured on CEHD social media, which is optional. (Note that room scheduling can be challenging so more than one month may be needed to secure a room for an in-person defense.)
Sep 15	Deadline to submit the dissertation/ELP/thesis to the committee after review and approval by the dissertation chair.	The dissertation chair should approve for circulation before it is shared with the committee. There are two weeks for the committee to read it and return feedback before the defense. The paper is expected to be free of typos, grammatical errors, and substantive issues at this point.
Oct 1	Defense should be held by this date.	Before and/or after the defense, make any corrections or revisions requested by the committee under the advice of the dissertation chair.
	Grad College (GC) requirement: As soon as you have defended, send the signed Certification of Doctoral Defense Form to GradStudentForms@udel.edu . Please also upload a copy in your CEHD shared Google folder.	
	Grad College requirement: When you have the final approved version of your thesis/dissertation by your committee, submit your thesis/dissertation to the ETD site . CEHD note: See Dept. Chair/Director submission step. If there are revisions requested by the Dept. Chair or CEHD Dean, you will need to resubmit your PDF to the ETD site.	
	Grad College requirement: When you submit to the ETD site, the dissertation or thesis also goes to the Graduate College where the Graduate College will review the PDF and will let you know if there are formatting corrections to make or not.	
	Grad College requirement: The GC's requirement says: Once you hear from the Grad College of any needed formatting corrections and you make the corrections as requested, send the following to the person in your College who is listed in Step 7 in " Steps to Graduation " so that the Dean of your College can sign your Dean's signature page. CEHD note: Instead of the GC process, please use your CEHD Google folder shared by Courtney O'Brian to upload your documents and email her that they are in there.	
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Oct 15	Deadline of final, revised draft to department chair/director	<p>Before submitting to the chair/director, make any requested corrections or revisions based on the oral defense. The revisions may need to be reviewed by the full committee or just by the dissertation chair depending upon what the committee decided at the defense. Once revisions are deemed satisfactory by the dissertation chair (and committee if needed), then submit the updated, fully formatted copy to (1) the department chair/director and (2) the ETD site if you have not already done so.</p> <p>Students should run an iThenticate report and review it with their advisor for possible edits <i>prior</i> to submitting to the chair/director. Students get an iThenticate license from the Graduate College at the beginning of the graduation semester. An iThenticate report will also be run by the department staff and provided to the chair/director.</p> <p>The department chair/director reads and approves the paper or requests further revisions prior to submitting it to the Dean. The chair/director may request additional revisions. The department staff coordinates the signature of the chair/director and sends it to the Dean for review.</p>
Oct 31	Deadline for revised draft to the CEHD Dean	<p>The Dean's office reads and approves the paper or requests further revisions prior to submitting it to the Graduate College. The Dean may request additional revisions. The department staff coordinates the signature of the chair/director and sends it to the Dean for review.</p>
Nov 15	Deadline for the final version submitted to the Graduate College .	<p>Once the CEHD Dean approves, the Dean's office will send the signature pages and final copy to the Grad College with a copy to the student and advisor. From this stage students need to continue following the procedures outlined on the Grad College website.</p> <p>After Grad College Dean approval, the committee chair should enter permanent grade(s) for 969, 882, or 869.</p>



Winter 2026 Graduation (February 2026 degree conferral)
Timeline for Ph.D. and Ed.D. Students Submitting Dissertations or ELPs
and M.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences Students Submitting Theses

Date	Item	Notes
Dec 1	Deadline to submit Application for Advanced Degree (AAD) to Courtney O'Brian for review and chair/ director signature	All graduate students completing a degree at the end of the semester must complete the AAD. The faculty advisor should sign the form first and then it should be sent to the Dean's Office. The Dean's office will coordinate the signatures of the department chair or director and upload the signed form in the student's Stellic record. The fee must be paid according to the instructions on the AAD form.
One month before the defense	Submit the title plus defense date, time, and location or Zoom link for announcement to CEHD faculty and students.	Use the form at http://www.udel.edu/0013570 . The form will ask if students want to be featured on CEHD social media, which is optional. (Note that room scheduling can be challenging so more than one month may be needed to secure a room for an in-person defense.)
Nov 10	Deadline to submit the dissertation/ELP/thesis to the committee after review and approval by the dissertation chair.	The dissertation chair should approve for circulation before it is shared with the committee. There are two weeks for the committee to read it and return feedback before the defense. The paper is expected to be free of typos, grammatical errors, and substantive issues at this point.
Dec 1	Defense should be held by this date	Before and/or after the defense, make any corrections or revisions requested by the committee under the advice of the dissertation chair.
	Grad College (GC) requirement: As soon as you have defended, send the signed Certification of Doctoral Defense Form to GradStudentForms@udel.edu . Please also upload a copy in your CEHD shared Google folder.	
	Grad College requirement: When you have the final approved version of your thesis/dissertation by your committee, submit your thesis/dissertation to the ETD site . CEHD note: See Dept. Chair/Director submission step. If there are revisions requested by the Dept. Chair or CEHD Dean, you will need to resubmit your PDF to the ETD site.	
	Grad College requirement: When you submit to the ETD site, the dissertation or thesis also goes to the Graduate College where the Graduate College will review the PDF and will let you know if there are formatting corrections to make or not.	
	Grad College requirement: The GC's requirement says: Once you hear from the Grad College of any needed formatting corrections and you make the corrections as requested, send the following to the person in your College who is listed in Step 7 in " Steps to Graduation " so that the Dean of your College can sign your Dean's signature page. CEHD note: Instead of the GC process, please use your CEHD Google folder shared by Courtney O'Brian to upload your documents and email her that they are in there.	
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Dec 15	Deadline of final, revised draft to department chair/director	<p>Before submitting to the chair/director, make any requested corrections or revisions based on the oral defense. The revisions may need to be reviewed by the full committee or just by the dissertation chair depending upon what the committee decided at the defense. Once revisions are deemed satisfactory by the dissertation chair (and committee if needed), then submit the updated, fully formatted copy to (1) the department chair/director and (2) the ETD site if you have not already done so.</p> <p>Students should run an iThenticate report and review it with their advisor for possible edits <i>prior</i> to submitting to the chair/director. Students get an iThenticate license from the Graduate College at the beginning of the graduation semester. An iThenticate report will also be run by the department staff and provided to the chair/director.</p> <p>The department chair/director reads and approves the paper or requests further revisions prior to submitting it to the Dean. The chair/director may request additional revisions. The department staff coordinates the signature of the chair/director and sends it to the Dean for review.</p>
Jan 5	Deadline for revised draft to the CEHD Dean	<p>The Dean's office reads and approves the paper or requests further revisions prior to submitting it to the Graduate College. The Dean may request additional revisions. The department staff coordinates the signature of the chair/director and sends it to the Dean for review.</p>
Jan 20	Deadline for the final version submitted to the Graduate College .	<p>Once the CEHD Dean approves, the Dean's office will send the signature pages and final copy to the Grad College with a copy to the student and advisor. From this stage students need to continue following the procedures outlined on the Grad College website.</p> <p>After Grad College Dean approval, the committee chair should enter permanent grade(s) for 969, 882, or 869.</p>



Spring 2026 Graduation (May 2026 degree conferral)
Timeline for Ph.D. and Ed.D. Students Submitting Dissertations or ELPs
and M.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences Students Submitting Theses

Date	Item	Notes
Feb 1	Deadline to submit Application for Advanced Degree (AAD) to Courtney O'Brian for review and chair/ director signature	All graduate students completing a degree at the end of the semester must complete the AAD. The faculty advisor should sign the form first and then it should be sent to the Dean's Office. The Dean's office will coordinate the signatures of the department chair or director and upload the signed form in the student's Stellic record. The fee must be paid according to the instructions on the AAD form.
One month before the defense	Submit the title plus defense date, time, and location or Zoom link for announcement to CEHD faculty and students.	Use the form at http://www.udel.edu/0013570 . The form will ask if students want to be featured on CEHD social media, which is optional. (Note that room scheduling can be challenging so more than one month may be needed to secure a room for an in-person defense.)
Feb 15	Deadline to submit the dissertation/ELP/thesis to the committee after review and approval by the dissertation chair.	The dissertation chair should approve for circulation before it is shared with the committee. There are two weeks for the committee to read it and return feedback before the defense. The paper is expected to be free of typos, grammatical errors, and substantive issues at this point.
Feb 28	Defense should be held by this date	Before and/or after the defense, make any corrections or revisions requested by the committee under the advice of the dissertation chair.
	Grad College (GC) requirement: As soon as you have defended, send the signed Certification of Doctoral Defense Form to GradStudentForms@udel.edu . Please also upload a copy in your CEHD shared Google folder.	
	Grad College requirement: When you have the final approved version of your thesis/dissertation by your committee, submit your thesis/dissertation to the ETD site . CEHD note: See Dept. Chair/Director submission step. If there are revisions requested by the Dept. Chair or CEHD Dean, you will need to resubmit your PDF to the ETD site.	
	Grad College requirement: When you submit to the ETD site, the dissertation or thesis also goes to the Graduate College where the Graduate College will review the PDF and will let you know if there are formatting corrections to make or not.	
	Grad College requirement: The GC's requirement says: Once you hear from the Grad College of any needed formatting corrections and you make the corrections as requested, send the following to the person in your College who is listed in Step 7 in " Steps to Graduation " so that the Dean of your College can sign your Dean's signature page. CEHD note: Instead of the GC process, please use your CEHD Google folder shared by Courtney O'Brian to upload your documents and email her that they are in there.	
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Mar 15	Deadline of final, revised draft to department chair/director	<p>Before submitting to the chair/director, make any requested corrections or revisions based on the oral defense. The revisions may need to be reviewed by the full committee or just by the dissertation chair depending upon what the committee decided at the defense. Once revisions are deemed satisfactory by the dissertation chair (and committee if needed), then submit the updated, fully formatted copy to (1) the department chair/director and (2) the ETD site if you have not already done so.</p> <p>Students should run an iThenticate report and review it with their advisor for possible edits <i>prior</i> to submitting to the chair/director. Students get an iThenticate license from the Graduate College at the beginning of the graduation semester. An iThenticate report will also be run by the department staff and provided to the chair/director.</p> <p>The department chair/director reads and approves the paper or requests further revisions prior to submitting it to the Dean. The chair/director may request additional revisions. The department staff coordinates the signature of the chair/director and sends it to the Dean for review.</p>
Apr 1	Deadline for revised draft to the CEHD Dean	<p>The Dean's office reads and approves the paper or requests further revisions prior to submitting it to the Graduate College. The Dean may request additional revisions. The department staff coordinates the signature of the chair/director and sends it to the Dean for review.</p>
Apr 15	Deadline for the final version submitted to the Graduate College .	<p>Once the CEHD Dean approves, the Dean's office will send the signature pages and final copy to the Grad College with a copy to the student and advisor. From this stage students need to continue following the procedures outlined on the Grad College website.</p> <p>After Grad College Dean approval, the committee chair should enter permanent grade(s) for 969, 882, or 869.</p>



Summer 2026 Graduation (August 2026 degree conferral)
Timeline for Ph.D. and Ed.D. Students Submitting Dissertations or ELPs
and M.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences Students Submitting Theses

Date	Item	Notes
Feb 20 This date is earlier than other terms to prepare for Commencement and Hooding ceremonies, get on the email announcement and ticketing lists, etc.	Deadline to submit Application for Advanced Degree (AAD) to Courtney O'Brian for review and chair/ director signature	All graduate students completing a degree at the end of the semester must complete the AAD. The faculty advisor should sign the form first and then it should be sent to the Dean's Office. The Dean's office will coordinate the signatures of the department chair or director and upload the signed form in the student's Stellar record. The fee must be paid according to the instructions on the AAD form.
One month before the defense	Submit the title plus defense date, time, and location or Zoom link for announcement to CEHD faculty and students.	Use the form at http://www.udel.edu/0013570 . The form will ask if students want to be featured on CEHD social media, which is optional. (Note that room scheduling can be challenging so more than one month may be needed to secure a room for an in-person defense.)
May 1	Deadline to submit the dissertation/ELP/thesis to the committee after review and approval by the dissertation chair.	The dissertation chair should approve for circulation before it is shared with the committee. There are two weeks for the committee to read it and return feedback before the defense. The paper is expected to be free of typos, grammatical errors, and substantive issues at this point.
May 15	Defense should be held by this date	Before and/or after the defense, make any corrections or revisions requested by the committee under the advice of the dissertation chair.
	Grad College (GC) requirement: As soon as you have defended, send the signed Certification of Doctoral Defense Form to GradStudentForms@udel.edu . Please also upload a copy in your CEHD shared Google folder.	
	Grad College requirement: When you have the final approved version of your thesis/dissertation by your committee, submit your thesis/dissertation to the ETD site . CEHD note: See Dept. Chair/Director submission step. If there are revisions requested by the Dept. Chair or CEHD Dean, you will need to resubmit your PDF to the ETD site.	
	Grad College requirement: When you submit to the ETD site, the dissertation or thesis also goes to the Graduate College where the Graduate College will review the PDF and will let you know if there are formatting corrections to make or not.	
	Grad College requirement: The GC's requirement says: Once you hear from the Grad College of any needed formatting corrections and you make the corrections as requested, send the following to the person in your College who is listed in Step 7 in " Steps to Graduation " so that the Dean of your College can sign your Dean's signature page. CEHD note: Instead of the GC process, please use your CEHD Google folder shared by Courtney O'Brian to upload your documents and email her that they are in there.	
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Jun 15	Deadline of final, revised draft to department chair/director	<p>Before submitting to the chair/director, make any requested corrections or revisions based on the oral defense. The revisions may need to be reviewed by the full committee or just by the dissertation chair depending upon what the committee decided at the defense. Once revisions are deemed satisfactory by the dissertation chair (and committee if needed), then submit the updated, fully formatted copy to (1) the department chair/director and (2) the ETD site if you have not already done so.</p> <p>Students should run an iThenticate report and review it with their advisor for possible edits <i>prior</i> to submitting to the chair/director. Students get an iThenticate license from the Graduate College at the beginning of the graduation semester. An iThenticate report will also be run by the department staff and provided to the chair/director.</p> <p>The department chair/director reads and approves the paper or requests further revisions prior to submitting it to the Dean. The chair/director may request additional revisions. The department staff coordinates the signature of the chair/director and sends it to the Dean for review.</p>
Jul 1	Deadline for revised draft to the CEHD Dean	<p>The Dean's office reads and approves the paper or requests further revisions prior to submitting it to the Graduate College. The Dean may request additional revisions. The department staff coordinates the signature of the chair/director and sends it to the Dean for review.</p>
Jul 20	Deadline for the final version submitted to the Graduate College .	<p>Once the CEHD Dean approves, the Dean's office will send the signature pages and final copy to the Grad College with a copy to the student and advisor. From this stage students need to continue following the procedures outlined on the Grad College website.</p> <p>After Grad College Dean approval, the committee chair should enter permanent grade(s) for 969, 882, or 869.</p>