

ATTACHMENT D – CHECKLIST FOR DEFENSE

Use this checklist as you count down towards your defense.¹

One month prior to defense...

- Have you clearly stated and defined your central question, hypothesis, or creative challenge, in terms that can be answered or addressed with your available data, analytical/creative methods, and time?
- Have you explained why your question/hypothesis/challenge is important to you, personally?
- Have you explained why your question/hypothesis/challenge is important to the world?
- Have you identified your audience?
- Have you cited the existing literature and/or practice to summarize what the world already knows about your question/hypothesis/challenge?
- Have you included your bibliography (list of cited references), and are all references in the bibliography cited in the body of the thesis, or in the sources of figures?
- Have you identified what information is needed to answer/(dis)prove/address your question/hypothesis/challenge in your particular case?
- Have you gathered/generated and analyzed that information?
- Have you included your conclusions, and distinguished between “implications”, “lessons learned” and/or “recommendations”?
- Does your analysis and presentation of information support your conclusions?
- Have you presented your information and analysis in a logical sequence?
- Have you made optimal use of graphics and tables to present your information and analysis?
- Are graphics (including text and labeling) all at a readable size and printable resolution?

One week prior to defense...

- Does the thesis title match the substance/message of the thesis?
- Are all sentences complete, and checked for spelling and grammar?
- Is the thesis formatted according to Graduate School guidelines (title page, abstract, etc.)?
- Is a bibliography or list of references included?
- Are all footnotes, endnotes and bibliographic references complete and properly and consistently formatted?
- Do all references to internet sources include your access date and a permanent URL (e.g. by using <http://www.webcitation.org>, or other permanent internet referencing tool, if necessary)? Research which tool/service seems most stable and use that. Ask the UW library for advice.
- Do all figures and tables have numbered captions with complete sources, and are they cited in the text? (Tables and Figures have separate numbering sequences; table captions are above the table; figure captions are below the figure.)
- Is the table of contents, list of figures, and list of tables all included?
- Are all figures and tables properly located on the page, and near the relevant text?
- Are font color, size, style and numbering consistent for each type of text (e.g. headings, subheadings, main text, captions, etc.)?
- Are page breaks in appropriate places in the text, e.g. no orphaned or widowed headings and leading/ending lines of paragraphs?
- Have you scanned the whole text for spelling and grammatical errors?
- Have you eliminated passive voice, repetitive statements, vague language and jargon? (E.g. write “use” instead of “utilize” except when you mean “to make useful”; instead of writing “impact” as a verb, write “affect,” “influence,” “degrade,” “reduce,” or whatever more precise word is appropriate; etc.)

¹ This list is not exhaustive; it is merely a partial compilation of considerations commonly needing attention.