

## **Procedure for the organization of Ph.D. Thesis Defense by videoconference**

DECEMBER 2021

### **A. Prior to the defense**

1. Director of Ph.D. Program
  - 1.1. Will consult with the Ph.D. candidate (and, if they see it appropriate, with the thesis advisors and tutors) on the convenience of carrying out the thesis defense by videoconference; if so, a request to that effect will be submitted to the Head of the Doctoral School.
  - 1.2. Given the in-person nature of the doctoral studies at uc3m, the proposal of thesis defense with distance participation of the Ph.D. candidate will be considered as an exception and will require a justified request providing information on the training and research activities carried out in person by the Ph.D. candidate at uc3m.
  - 1.3. Will give instructions to the Administrative Officer of the Ph.D. Program, as soon as they have the approval of the aforementioned request at 1.2, to contact the members of the Defense Committee and confirm their availability for the videoconference session.
  - 1.4. Will corroborate (either directly or with the support of the Administrative Officer of the Ph.D. Program) if the members of the Defense Committee are qualified to verify the identity of the Ph.D. candidate at the session. If not, a qualified person must be appointed for this purpose in the document of authorization of the defense by videoconference.
2. Dean of the Doctoral School
  - 2.1. Can authorize the defense to be carried out by videoconference with distant participation of the Ph.D. candidate, based on the justified request and taking the development of the doctoral training into consideration.
3. Administrative Officer of the Ph.D. Program
  - 3.1. Will contact the members of the Defense Committee and communicate the conditions for the thesis defense session.
    - 3.1.1. The administrator of the defense by videoconference will check with them the technical aspects of the videoconference;
    - 3.1.2. Given the requirement for the sessions of thesis defense to be publicized, the videoconference will be accessible to the public by previous registration.
  - 3.2. Will contact the Director of the Ph.D. Program to confirm the availability of the members of the Defense Committee.
4. Administrative Officer of the Ph.D. Program
  - 4.1. Will contact the members of the Defense Committee (and the person in charge of verifying the identity of the Ph.D. candidate at the defense) to set up the connection and do some tests. Will also check that the members of the Defense Committee have access to their e-mail accounts in order to participate in the secret vote to award the Cum Laude distinction and, if applicable, the eligibility for the Outstanding Thesis Awards, to be carried out on a Google Form.
  - 4.2. Will publish the announcement with the date and time of the thesis defense on the Doctoral School's website, indicating an e-mail address to request access to the videoconference.
  - 4.3. Will request mobile phone numbers from the Ph.D. candidate and the members of the Defense Committee in the event of technical issues during the thesis defense.
  - 4.4. Will send the members of the Defense Committee:

- 4.4.1. Instructions and indications on how to operate.
- 4.4.2. Annex II (Evaluation report; Cum Laude report) with title of the thesis, name of the Ph.D. candidate, name of the Ph.D. Program and names of all members of the Defense Committee.

## **B. Ph.D. Defense**

1. Administrator of the defense by videoconference
  - 1.1. 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the thesis defense, will send the invitations to the videoconference by e-mail to the Ph.D. candidate, the members of the Defense Committee, the Director of the Ph.D. Program, the thesis advisors and tutors, and other registered participants who previously requested access to the conference.
  - 1.2. Will act as host of the videoconference.
2. Secretary of the Defense Committee
  - 2.1. Will ensure compliance with the requirements 1-5 as described in the Instruction of the Dean of the Doctoral School at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (nov 2021).
  - 2.2. Will check the verification of the Ph.D. candidate's identity and request the person in charge of this matter to sign Annex IV and submit a digital copy (by either scan or photograph with a mobile phone) to their e-mail account.
3. President of the Defense Committee
  - 3.1. Will commence the defense session (introduction by the Ph.D. candidate, questions from the Defense Committee, reply by the Ph.D. candidate, and comments from Ph.D. graduates participating in the videoconference).
  - 3.2. Will finish the thesis defense and announce the beginning of the period of deliberation by the Defense Committee.
4. Administrator of defense by videoconference
  - 4.1. Will indicate that, since the deliberation must be carried out behind closed doors, a virtual breakout room will be created to that effect. Only members of the Defense Committee will be given access to this room.
  - 4.2. Will give the Secretary the role of host of the videoconference.
  - 4.3. Will send the members of the Thesis Committee the Google Form for the Cum Laude distinction vote (Annex V) and, where applicable, the Google Form for confidential consideration for eligibility to the Outstanding Thesis Awards (Annex VI).
  - 4.4. Will check the result of the secret vote count for the Cum Laude distinction in Google Form.
  - 4.5. Will do a digital print of the result and submit it to all members of the Defense Committee.
5. Defense Committee
  - 5.1. Will deliberate and determine the grade of the thesis.
6. Secretary of the Defense Committee
  - 6.1. If the thesis is unanimously graded as Excellent (*Sobresaliente*), the Secretary will request the members of the Committee to cast their secret vote to award the thesis the Cum Laude distinction on the Google Form submitted by the Administrator of the thesis by videoconference.
  - 6.2. If applicable, will request a confidential vote for eligibility to the Outstanding Thesis Awards on the Google Form submitted by the Administrator of the thesis by videoconference.
  - 6.3. Will fill out Annex II (Evaluation Report) and Annex III (Cum Laude report), registering the grade, and sign the documents electronically.

- 6.3.1. Will submit the documents filled out and signed (Annex II and Annex III) by e-mail to the rest of members of the Defense Committee, requesting their validation by replying to the e-mail (cc Administrator of the videodefense).
  - 6.3.2. Will announce to the Administrator of the defense by videoconference that the process is finished and they can be transferred back to the main room to announce the result of the evaluation.
- 6.4. Administrator of the defense by videoconference
- 6.4.1. Will check that all members of the Defense Committee and the Ph.D. candidate are present at the main room, as well as the registered participants, and indicate to the Committee's Chair that they can proceed to announce the deliberation of the Defense Committee.
7. Chair of the Defense Committee
- 7.1. Will announce the result of the deliberation of the Committee, communicating the grade registered in Annex II and, if applicable, the Cum Laude distinction registered in Annex III.

### **C. Counting of secret votes for the Cum Laude distinction**

- 1. Administrator of the thesis by videoconference
  - 1.1. Will view the result of the vote count for the Cum Laude distinction on the Google Form.
  - 1.2. Will do a digital print of the result and submit it by e-mail to the members of the Defense Committee.
- 2. Secretary of the Defense Committee
  - 2.1. Will register the result of the secret vote in Annex III and sign it.
  - 2.2. Will share Annex III signed by all members of the Defense Committee to have their validation.
- 3. Chair of the Defense Committee
  - 3.1. Will make the public announcement of the result of the secret vote for the Cum Laude distinction at the time of announcing the overall result.
  - 3.2. Will end the thesis defense.

### **D. End of the videoconference**

- 1. Administrator of the defense by videoconference
  - 1.1. Will end the videoconference (or give the role of host to another attendee and leave the videoconference).

### **E. After the thesis defense**

- 1. Administrator of defense by videoconference
  - 1.1. If applicable, will do a digital print of the result of the secret vote for the Cum Laude distinction and submit it to the Administration of the Doctoral School.
  - 1.2. If applicable, will do a digital print of the result of the secret vote for consideration for eligibility to the Outstanding Thesis Awards and submit it to the Administration of the Doctoral School.

2. Secretary of the Thesis Committee
  - 2.1. If a verified electronic signature cannot be inserted in documents Annex II and Annex III, will submit hard copies of the original documents to the Administration of the Doctoral School.