

SCHOOL OF REHABILITATION THERAPY

Rehabilitation Science Program

Policy on Conduct of Open Defenses

APPROVED at RHBS Program Committee: November 23, 2017

PREAMBLE & SCOPE:

Under the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) regulation about thesis: **Oral thesis examinations are normally open, meaning that all members of the Queen's community may attend.** The regulation specifies that "Queen's community" includes all faculty, staff, and students of the University. This policy is intended to assist the RHBS program to meet its obligations under this regulation.

POLICY:

1. Normally, thesis/dissertation examinations ("defenses") will be scheduled in LDA008 or some equally large room.
2. If a defense must be scheduled in a smaller room than LDA008 – for reasons such as room availability or need for technology to accommodate an examiner attending via Skype or other virtual attendance – every effort will be made to find a room that would permit the inclusion of observers.
3. If a candidate or his/her supervisor(s) wish to request that the candidate's defense be **closed** to visitors, they should refer to the SGS regulation about thesis to understand what are considered justifiable reasons for holding a closed defense, and the process of requesting that a defense be closed.
4. After a defense is scheduled, and if it is **not closed**, the RHBS Graduate Assistant will notify the School's faculty and RHBS graduate students in similar communication mechanisms to those used to announce public seminars.
5. In defenses held in rooms with limited observer capacity, faculty members who are not on the examining committee are encouraged to allow RHBS graduate students to have priority on the available observer opportunities.

OTHER KEY ELEMENTS from the SGS regulation

- A "visitor" is treated differently from a member of the Queen's community in the conduct of thesis defenses, although may be permitted to attend under certain circumstances.
- Only members of the Examining Committee may ask questions of the candidate.
- The Chair of the Examining Committee has final authority over who may be in attendance, and has the discretion to exclude attendees whose conduct disturbs the process.

Candidates and their supervisors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the full contents of the SGS regulation on thesis.