

# Dissertation proposal: after DQP is passed

Normally in the semester after passing your DQP, you will work with your advisor (or the one who will be your dissertation director—they don't have to be the same person) on a dissertation proposal. The guidelines for the proposal are found in the Dissertation Outline in the previous chart (note that you should not fill out the outline, the form is now a Docusign form, guidelines to be found here but you may use the outline as a template). You should coordinate the proposal closely with your director and other faculty who are likely to be on the committee. This goes especially for the level of detail of the proposal (faculty have very different stances towards this). The proposal is a document ranging typically between 10-20 pages (including bibliography).

Once the proposal is done, you should discuss possible members of the committee (minimum 3, up to 5, one external person possible and recommended). The director will contact them and ask to join the committee. Once the committee is assembled, they should receive the proposal. At that point, the director should schedule a proposal defense, which should be held before the end of a given semester. This proposal defense (unlike the dissertation defense) is not public. In it, the candidate gets to propose and defend their ideas for a thesis, and the committee members can raise some issues and make suggestions about how to write the thesis. Once the defense is passed and the form signed, this is a mutual contract between the student and the committee, protecting essentially the student: the committee may not, at a later date, make demands on adding something to the thesis, nor should the student change the thesis in significant ways. If the student does, an amendment to the dissertation proposal has to be submitted, detailing the changes made (it doesn't have to be a summary of longer than 1 p.), signed off by the committee, and submitted to the committee.