



## University of Southeastern Philippines College of Education

### Operational Guidelines for the Graduate School, College of Education Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic, particularly on the Requests for Approval of:

- (a) Concept Paper (Dissertation/Thesis Research Title or Topic),**
- (b) Dissertation/Thesis Adviser, and**
- (c) Dissertation/Thesis Defense Panel**

Anchored on the Principles stipulated in the Memorandum Circular No. 2, s. 2020;

- a) the recognition that learning never stops and to take care of one's self at this time of the crisis also means taking care of one's opportunity to learn, which the University commits to continue to provide;*
- b) that every member of the University community, especially the faculty, shall be compassionate and will demonstrate flexibility and leniency to adapt to the necessary changes, while being sensitive to the limitations and constraints that our students are facing and not to overburden them during this challenging time;*
- c) maintain equity among students in their ability to continue their intellectual journey in their respective degree programs; and*
- d) ensure the safety of the students, faculty, and staff in the performance of their respective academic duties and responsibilities;*

The following are the Operational Guidelines within the College of Education during this time of health crisis:

#### **I. Request for Approval of Concept Paper (Dissertation/Thesis Research Title or Topic)**

1. Qualified Graduate Student who intends to seek approval for Concept Paper Title or Topic needs to email a signed copy of his/her Letter of Intent, in portable document format (PDF), attaching therein a filled-out form using Form 3.a, and the three (3) proposed Concept Papers, all in word files, to his/her Program Head.
2. The Program Head reviews the papers; if needed, the Program Head communicates with the Graduate Student via phone calls/messages or any alternatives means (email, messenger, facebook, etc.), to discuss the proposed submitted papers.
3. If the proposed Concept Paper is found to be satisfactory and acceptable, the Program Head approves the request by noting the selected Title/Topic in Form 3.a, and forwards the signed form, in portable document format (PDF), to the Dean's Office through the Graduate School Head/Associate Dean.
4. The completely signed Form 3.a will be forwarded to the Graduate School Support Staff for recording and keeping. The Staff then will notify the Graduate Student by sending the latter with a copy of the approved request.

5. However, if none of the proposed Papers is acceptable, the Program Head notifies the Graduate Student of his/her findings/recommendations. The Graduate Student then makes new Concept Papers and redo Step 1.

## **II. Request for Approval of Dissertation/Thesis Adviser**

1. The Graduate Student needs to email a signed copy of his/her Letter of Intent, in portable document format (PDF), attaching therein a filled-out form using Form 3.b (in word file), and a copy of the approved Form 3.a, to his/her Program Head.
2. The Program Head reviews the papers; if needed, the Program Head communicates with the Graduate Student via phone calls/messages or any alternatives means (email, messenger, facebook, etc.), to discuss the request for Adviser.
3. Upon agreement between the Program Head and the Graduate Student, the former recommends the request by signing in Form 3.b, and forwards the form, in portable document format (PDF), to the Dean's Office through the Graduate School Head/Associate Dean.
4. The Graduate School Head/Associate Dean confers with the requested Adviser as to (non-)assignment of the latter to the Graduate Student. The former affixes his/her signature and forwards the form to the Dean for approval. The Graduate School Head/Associate Dean communicates with the Program Head as to non-assignment of the requested Adviser based on the records of handled advisees.
5. The completely signed Form 3.b will be forwarded to the Graduate School Support Staff for recording and keeping. The Staff then will notify the Graduate Student by sending the latter with a copy of the approved request.

## **III. Request for Approval of Dissertation/Thesis Defense Panel**

1. The Graduate Student communicates to his/her approved Adviser via phone calls/messages or any alternatives means (email, messenger, facebook, etc.), to discuss the request for Defense Panel, date and time. Upon agreement, the former emails a filled-out and signed form using Form 3.c (in word file), to the latter.
2. The Adviser reviews the document; once in place, he/she forwards the signed Form 3.c, in portable document format (PDF), to the Program Head.
3. The Program Head recommends the request by signing in Form 3.c, and forwards the form, in portable document format (PDF), to the Dean's Office through the Graduate School Head/Associate Dean.
4. The Graduate School Head/Associate Dean confers with the Adviser as to the composition of the Defense Panel. The former affixes his/her signature and forwards the form to the Dean for approval.
5. The completely signed Form 3.c will be forwarded to the Graduate School Support Staff for recording and keeping. The Staff then will notify the Graduate Student by sending the latter with a copy of the approved request.

## **Conduct of Proposal/Final Defense**

Guidelines on the Conduct of Proposal/Final Defense follow the Memorandum No. 20200516-01: OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL-RELATED CONCERNS AMIDST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, issued dated 15 May 2020.

More specifically, **Operational Guidelines for Section 5.6.1. Thesis and Dissertation for Graduate Students, MC No. 02, s. 2020, USeP Academic Regulations Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic**, stipulate the following:

**On Section 5.6.1.1.** Face-to-face oral presentation is discouraged during this health crisis and alternatives need to be available. Following the provisions of Section 5.6.1. of MC No. 02, s. 2020, graduate students who intend to do a thesis/dissertation proposal or final paper presentation have the option to either (1) do a presentation through a virtual platform, or (2) submit a manuscript to the panel for review, evaluation, and rating. Below provides the guidelines for these options:

### **1. Thesis or Dissertation Defense Through Virtual Platform.**

#### **1.1.Proposal Presentation**

- 1.1.1. The adviser confers with the program head, chairperson and other members of the thesis-dissertation advisory committee (TDAC) for the use and choice of a virtual platform. If use of virtual platform is possible, a date, time, and choice of platform are agreed upon.
- 1.1.2. Student emails the manuscript to members of TDAC at least 3 working days prior to schedule of presentation. If the health crisis situation permits, members of TDAC may also require submission of the hard copy of the manuscript through couriers, especially when the manuscript is more than 150 pages.
- 1.1.3. Presentations may take 1-2 hours depending on the peculiarities of the paper and, perhaps, requirements of the college. It is suggested, however, that the presentations be no more than 30 minutes; the question and answer portion be no more than 1 hour; and, another 30 minutes is spent to discuss other comments or suggestions.
- 1.1.4. The adviser takes minutes of the meeting using Annex A-1 in MS Word format and emails the same TDAC members within 1 day after presentation. If TDAC members find these complete, each member emails back the minutes (Annex A-1), with e-signatures in portable document format (PDF), within 1 day of its receipt. The adviser, in turn, emails the signed minutes to the student and the program head.
- 1.1.5. The panel members' incentives is paid through online banking or any other money transfer scheme most convenient for the student and the TDAC members. The student remits the total fees to the adviser prior to the presentation while the adviser remits to the TDAC members their corresponding fees within 3 days after the presentation.

## 1.2. Final Paper Presentation

- 1.2.1. The adviser confers with the program head, chairperson and other members of the thesis-dissertation advisory committee (TDAC) for the use and choice of a virtual platform. If use of virtual platform is possible, a date, time, and choice of platform are agreed upon. In case a panel member cannot be contacted despite all efforts and by any means, the program head recommends a replacement to the college dean for approval.
- 1.2.2. Student emails the manuscript and actions taken report in Annex B-1 in MS Word to members of TDAC at least 5 working days. If the health crisis situation permits, members of TDAC may require submission of the hard copy of the manuscript through couriers especially when the manuscript is more than 150 pages.
- 1.2.3. Presentations may take 1-3 hours depending on the peculiarities of the paper and, perhaps, requirements of the college. It is suggested, however, that the presentations be no more than 30 minutes; the question and answer portion be no more than 1 hour; and, another 1 hour is spent to discuss other comments or suggestions.
- 1.2.4. The adviser takes minutes of the meeting using Annex A-2 in MS Word format and emails the same to TDAC members within 1 day after presentation. If TDAC members find these complete, each member emails back Annex B-1 and the minutes (Annex A-2), with their e-signatures in portable document format (PDF), within 1 day of its receipt. The adviser, in turn, emails signed Annex B-1 and minutes (Annex A-2) to the student and the program head.
- 1.2.5. Student's rating is immediately deliberated upon by TDAC members using Annex C-1. It is understood that they will do so using the virtual platform, sans the student and adviser. Each TDAC member gives their rating, affixes e-signature, and emails Annex C-1 in PDF to the TDAC chairperson within 1 day after the presentation. The chairperson computes for the average rating and its equivalent grade using Annex C-3 and relays the information to the adviser and student the soonest submissions by TDAC members are completed.
- 1.2.6. TDAC chairperson affixes e-signature and emails Annex C-3 in MS Word and the individual rating sheets (Annex C-1) to the program head within 1 day from receipt of documents from TDAC members. The program head, in turn, reviews the documents for completeness, affixes an e-signature on Annex C-3, and forwards the same to the college dean. The dean then affixes e-signature on Annex C-3 and emails back the file in PDF to the program head.
- 1.2.7. Program head compiles the documents and emails the same to the designated college staff for filing within 1 day from receipt of signed Annex C-3 from the college dean.
- 1.2.8. The panel members' incentives is paid through online banking or any other money transfer scheme most convenient for the student and the TDAC members. The student remits the total fees to the adviser prior

to the presentation while the adviser remits to TDAC members their corresponding fees within 3 days after the presentation.

## **2. Thesis or Dissertation Defense Through Submission of Manuscript.**

### **2.1. Proposal Presentation**

- 2.1.1. The adviser confers with the program head, chairperson and other members of the thesis-dissertation advisory committee (TDAC) the option taken to submit a thesis-dissertation proposal for evaluation.
- 2.1.2. Student emails the proposal to TDAC members.
- 2.1.3. The chairperson and other TDAC members individually prepare their review for comments, suggestions, and evaluation using Annex D-1. Within 5 working days of receipt of the proposal, Annex D-1 forms are emailed to the chairperson in portable document format (PDF).
- 2.1.4. The chairperson consolidates submitted review forms and assesses if student may proceed with the proposed thesis-dissertation or not by looking at the recommendations.
  - 2.1.4.1. If all TDAC members agree that the proposal is acceptable, the student proceeds to work on the thesis-dissertation. The chairperson affixes e-signature on Annex D-1 and emails a PDF file to the student, adviser, and program head.
  - 2.1.4.2. If majority of the members of TDAC agrees that the proposal is acceptable subject to some revisions, the chairperson consolidates and harmonizes the comments/suggestions; confers with panel on the final content of the consolidated Annex D-1 by any means (e.g. virtual meetings, emails). The chairperson affixes e-signature on the consolidated Annex D-1 and emails a PDF file to the student, adviser, and program head.
  - 2.1.4.3. If at least half of the number of TDAC membership finds the proposal unacceptable, the student needs to re-submit a revamped or a new thesis-dissertation proposal. The chairperson consolidates the comments/suggestions and affixes e-signature on the consolidated Annex D-1 and emails a PDF file to the student, adviser, and program head.
- 2.1.5. The panel members' incentives shall be paid through online banking or any other money transfer scheme most convenient for the student and the TDAC members. The student remits the total fees to the adviser prior to submission of the manuscript for evaluation. The adviser remits to TDAC members their corresponding individual fees within 3 days after the consolidated Annex D-1 has been emailed. Students whose earlier proposals were deemed unacceptable are required to pay fees again when they submit for another evaluation.



## 2.2. Final Paper Presentation

- 2.2.1. The adviser confers with the program head, chairperson and other members of the thesis-dissertation advisory committee (TDAC) the option taken to submit the final paper for evaluation. In case a panel member cannot be contacted despite all efforts and by any means, the program head recommends a replacement to the college dean for approval.
- 2.2.2. Student emails the final manuscript and actions taken report, Annex B-1, to TDAC members.
- 2.2.3. The chairperson and other TDAC members individually prepares their review for comments, suggestions, and evaluation using Annex D-2. Within 10 working days of receipt of manuscript, Annex B-1 and Annex D-2 are emailed to the chairperson in portable document format (PDF).
- 2.2.4. The chairperson consolidates the submitted Annex D-2 and assesses if student may be given a rating or not given the recommendations.
  - 2.2.4.1. If all TDAC members agree that the final paper is acceptable without need of any revisions, they email their ratings using Annex C-2, with e-signatures affixed, in PDF. The chairperson consolidates these ratings using Annex C-3 and affixes e-signature. He/she then emails the student, adviser, and the program head Annexes C-3 and D-2 in PDF. All Annex C-2 from TDAC members are additionally emailed to the program head.
  - 2.2.4.2. If majority of the TDAC members agrees that the final paper is acceptable subject to revisions, the chairperson consolidates and harmonizes the comments/suggestions; confers with the panel on the final content of a consolidated Annex D-2 by any means (e.g. virtual meetings, emails). The chairperson affixes e-signature on the consolidated Annex D-2. Panel members email their ratings using Annex C-2, with e-signatures affixed, in PDF. The chairperson consolidates these ratings using Annex C-3 and affixes e-signature. He/she then emails the student, adviser, and program head Annexes C-3 and D-2 in PDF. Annex C-2 is additionally emailed to the program head.
  - 2.2.4.3. If at least half of the number of TDAC membership finds the final paper not acceptable, the student needs to redo the thesis-dissertation proposal considering comments/suggestions. The chairperson consolidates the comments or suggestions and affixes e-signature on the consolidated Annex D-2 and emails a PDF file to the student, adviser, and program head.

The panel members' incentives shall be paid through online banking or any other money transfer scheme most convenient for the student and the TDAC members. The

student remits the total fees to the adviser prior to submission of the manuscript for evaluation. The adviser remits to TDAC members their corresponding individual fees within 3 days after the Annexes C-2, C-3, and D-2 have been emailed. Students whose final papers were deemed unacceptable are required to pay fees again when they re-submit for another evaluation.

### **Other Related Concerns:**

Associated limitations due to the current pandemic condition are expected. It is suggested that the following concerns are considered:

1. Technical issues pertaining to accessing, downloading, and uploading of Forms should be well documented by the Graduate Student and relayed to the Graduate School Head/Associate Dean. Appropriate actions are made and decided upon by the Program Head, Graduate School Head/Associate Dean, and the College Dean.
2. Programs Heads, Panel Chair and Members, and Advisers may further explain contents of these Operational Guidelines to concerned Graduate Students, if necessary, for simplification.
3. All other policies or practices used by the College are deemed to be followed.

*(Please see Forms 3.a, 3.b, and 3.c; and Annexes A, B, C, and D; Word file, attached)*