

**American University-Central Asia
Psychology Department**

Senior Thesis Defense Evaluation Criteria

What is Senior Thesis Defense?

Senior Thesis Defense is the mandatory academic procedure for those seniors who are eligible for American/Kyrgyz style diploma with honors. A senior presents his/her final project to the State Committee. Senior is expected to present in intelligible manner basic ideas of the paper as well as major supportive arguments based on the principles of scientific study. The length of the presentation is 15 minutes. Senior is required to provide answers to all questions that will be addressed to him/her by State Committee members and other participants of the public discussion. After the debate State Committee evaluates Senior Thesis Defense according to grading criteria listed below.

Procedure of Senior Thesis Defense

The Chair of State Committee opens Senior Thesis Defense with an introductory speech addressed to the Committee members and the audience. The Chair of the State Committee announces about the quorum that is an obligatory procedure to make session possible and legitimate. The Chair of the State Committee informs the audience about presence of authentic manuscripts of Senior Thesis that must be available immediately before the process of defense.

The procedure of defense consists of three main parts: presentation, official discussion, and general discussion.

General requirements to presentation are listed above. Besides, Senior is expected to provide a clear presentation of main ideas of the thesis as well as to follow requirements of delivery. Detailed grading policy to this point is listed below.

Official discussion. The presentation is followed by the official discussion. The official opponent reads out a review of presenting project. In cases of absence of official opponent the Chair of the State Committee should read the review out. The senior is required to respond to the critical comments and questions that are addressed in the review. With the permission of the official opponent other Committee members are allowed to enter into the discussion. Only the State Committee members participate in the official debates.

General discussion. After the official debates the Chair of the State Committee opens public debates. Everybody present in the audience is allowed to take part in this discussion and question the Senior.

Who is a Member of the State Committee?

The Ministry of High Education of Kyrgyz Republic appoints the State Committee members via the suggestion of the Head of Psychology Department. Full-time professors of the Department are mandatory members of the Committee. At least 3 professors must be external members invited from other schools, institutions and professional organizations. The Chair of the State Committee should not be affiliated with the AUCA.

What Do Advisors Do?

An advisor is required to submit a written report that includes assessment of the Senior in accordance with the criteria of independence, creativity, motivation and academic discipline. The advisor does not review the content of the project providing some comments targeted on Senior's professional and personal qualities. The advisor or the Chair of the Committee should read out the report. The advisor can be a member of the State Committee. The advisor takes part in final grading on equal basis with other members.

What is the Function of Official Opponent?

The Head of Psychology Department appoints official opponents to Senior Thesis. The official opponent is a member of State Committee who evaluates Senior Thesis according to academic standards for BA qualification papers level. Official opponent is required to submit a written review of the project including conclusion about possible grade. The review of the project is based on the content of the final thesis. Senior is obliged to comment on all the remarks and criticism he/she would receive from the official opponent.

How It Will Be Evaluated?

The final grade of the thesis will be a summary of advisor's evaluation, official opponent's evaluation and evaluation of the State Committee members.

1. Advisor (evaluation of senior's personal characteristics) - 20 points

- independence 10 points
- creativity and motivation 5 points
- academic discipline 5 points

2. Official Opponent (evaluation of content of the final thesis)- 25 points

- research topic and questions appropriated for the undergraduate level, reasonable hypothesis, clearly stated goals of the research – 5 points
- novelty of the research topic – 5 points

- literature review and its critical analysis, integration of different sources – 5 points
- research methods and design appropriate for the topic and research question – 5 points
- clearly stated conclusions – 5 points

3. State Committee 55 points

a) Content of Presentation – 25 points

- research topic and questions appropriated for the undergraduate level, reasonable of hypothesis, clearly stated goals of research – 5 points
- novelty of research topic – 5 points
- literature review and its critical analysis, integration of materials – 5 points
- research methods and design appropriated for the topic and research question, demonstration of quantitative methodology (statistics)– 6 points
- clearly stated conclusions – 4 points

b) Delivery of Presentation – 30 points

- clear annunciation of words and appropriate volume – 3 points
- appropriate usage of psychology vocabulary and jargon – 3 points
- not reading form the script – 3 points
- good eye contact with the audience – 3 points
- visual aids appropriated for the presentation – 3 points
- handouts and other supporting materials (clarity) – 3 points
- delivery within an assigned time – 3 points
- ability to answer the questions – 9 points

Total – 100 points

A = 90-100 points

A - = 84-89 points

B += 75-83 points

B = 65-74 points

B - = 55-64 points

C+ = 45-54 points

C = 35-44 points

C - = 25-34 points

D = 20-24 points

F = below 20

100 points

Bonus (up to 10 points) will be given for outstanding presentations.

Final grade will be calculated as a simple arithmetic mean of all members' grades.