

PhD Defense at the Section of Animal Physiology and Immunology (OFIŽ)

1) Invitation of the reviewers

The student's supervisor will contact potential reviewers and will ask them if they are willing to accept the role of the PhD thesis reviewer.

At least one PhD thesis reviewer must be from abroad.

2) Thesis review procedure

When the reviewer accepts his/her role, he/she is then contacted by:

i) An administrator from the Dean's office who will provide the reviewer with the online form of the PhD thesis and the form for the reviewer's report. Later, the administrator sends also printed PhD thesis to the reviewer by post.

The reviewer sends the scanned report by email to the administrator by approx. a week before the defense and sends the signed original report by post according to the administrator's instructions.

ii) An administrator from the OFIŽ who will inform the reviewer about the remuneration for her/his report on the PhD thesis and will ask the reviewer to fill in the needed documents (contract and tax questionnaire).

The reviewer sends the scanned documents by email to the administrator. In case of the reviewers from the Czech Republic, it is required to send the original documents by post.

Format of the review:

There is no strict format for the opponent's review. However, typically it is 2-3 pages long text composed of (i) the general summary of the thesis, (ii) questions of the reviewer that relate to the thesis text and individual manuscripts included in the thesis and (iii) summarizing statement that supports/does not support obtaining of the PhD degree.

3) PhD defense

Usually, the PhD defense takes place in the in-person format but also hybrid or online formats are acceptable under some circumstances. The student's supervisor gives the specification about the format of the defense to the reviewer well in advance together with other details.

Format of the defense

Typical PhD defense has the following parts:

a. Welcome by the head of the committee who introduces the student, supervisor(s), opponents and committee members.

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- b. Introduction of the student and global assessment of her/his performance during PhD studies by the main supervisor.
- c. The PhD thesis presentation by the student with the suggested duration of 25 minutes
- d. Questioning of the student by opponents. The student will usually prepare responses to the comments and answers in the opponent's review. While the opponent reads his/her report, the student interactively responds. Additional and broadening questions from the opponent are welcome. Typically, this section lasts no more than 30-45 minutes, as more in-depth questioning aimed at the student's broader knowledge has already been done on previous state exams.
- e. Questions from the PhD Committee and general public.
- f. Closing part with student and public excluded when the PhD Committee and opponents discuss the student's performance and agrees on final mark (passed / did not pass).
- g. Everybody is invited back to the room, followed by the result announcement, champagne, congrats etc.

The total estimated duration of a PhD defense is approx. 90-120 minutes.

From the technical point of view, the PhD defense can take place as (i) standard, (ii) hybrid or (iii) online.

A) Personal format of defense

The student, supervisor, reviewers, members of the PhD committee, and other visitors are present in a lecture room at the University Campus Bohunice, Brno.

B) Hybrid/online format of defense

For the hybrid or online form of the PhD defense, we use MS Teams software. For the communication, the reviewer needs a microphone and a camera. The connection with the PhD student, his/her supervisor, and other members of the PhD committee is provided by a wide-angle camera and a 360-degree coverage microphone in the lecture room so that clear communication is ensured. In case of a completely online form of defense, all participants use their own computers and communication devices.

All participants will receive a link to join the online PhD defense in MS Teams a few days before the defense. A 'training call' may be organized a day before to try out the online connection via MS Teams.