

School of Computing Dissertation Process

- Take CIS 518: Research Methodologies (**if a related or equivalent research course was not taken previously**)
 - Begin identifying a topic for your research
 - Begin identifying a research professor who could be your research chair
 - Must be a full member of the USA Graduate Faculty
<https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/graduateschool/faculty.html>
 - Should have similar research interests
- Register for credit hours of either CIS 799: Dissertation (Dissertation Students) or CIS 694: Directed Study (if you have not completed your PhD Qualifying Exam which is taken at the completion of the 6 core PhD courses, a maximum of 12 credit hours of CIS 694 is allowed) each semester
 - This requires completion of a Special Course form which must be signed by your research chair and Dr. Chapman
<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/eforms/colleges/soc/>
These are found under “PhD Student Links”
 - CIS 694 – Directed Study Course Request Form – CIS 594 / CIS 694
 - CIS 799 – PhD Dissertation Hours Request Form
 - You need 30 credit hours of dissertation work to complete the program requirements. Work with your research chair to determine how many research hours you should take each semester
 - PhD students must maintain continual enrollment during their program
 - You must be enrolled in a minimum of 1 hour of CIS 799 in the semester in which you defend your dissertation
 - Work on your research
- Select your Research Committee. This must be done prior to the oral defense of your prospectus
 - Identify your research chair (this must be mutually agreed upon – you must ask them to be your research chair, and they must agree to it)
 - Identify additional 3 committee members (also mutually agreed upon)
 - Must be full or associate members of the USA Graduate Faculty (exceptions can be requested for faculty outside of USA or other highly qualified professionals)
 - One member must come from outside of the School of Computing.
 - Submit your Committee Form to the SoC Director of Graduate Studies (Dr. Chapman) for submission to the USA Graduate School

- Standard Committee Form
<https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/graduateschool/resources/thesisdissertationcompcommitteeappt111523.pdf>
 - Form to Appointment Non-Members of the USA Graduate Faculty
<https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/graduateschool/resources/thesisdissertationcompcommitteeappt111523.pdf>
- Complete Prospectus (Introduction, Literature Review and Methodology) for your dissertation
 - You should not conduct the actual research until you have successfully defended your prospectus
 - Review the following resources for the style and formatting requirements of your written document:
 - Guide for Preparing Theses and Dissertations
<https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/graduateschool/resources/thesisdissertationguide.pdf>
 - Thesis/Dissertation Template
<https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/graduateschool/thesis.html>
 - Subdivision Formatting Guide
https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/graduateschool/resources/subdivision_guide.pdf
 - Thesis and Dissertation Formatting Video
<https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/soc/essentialstudentlinks.html>
(found under the “Graduate Student Specific Links”)
- Complete and Pass Oral Defense of Research Prospectus (this will take place when your research chair determines that you are ready)
 - When approved by your research chair, schedule the oral prospectus defense meeting
 - Query your committee members to identify an agreeable date and time. Allow for 2 hours for this meeting (1 hour to present and answer questions, 1 hour for committee discussion and voting)
 - Meet with Mrs. Hall or Mrs. Tait (SoC Dean’s Suite) to reserve the Executive Conference room or the SoC Conference room (if possible) for this meeting
 - Send a google calendar invitation to all committee members and the Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Chapman, with date, time, and location of the meeting
 - Work with your research chair on preparation for this oral defense
 - Present your prospective at the meeting

- Complete your research and written dissertation document (following the styling and formatting requirements identified above)
 - Regularly communicate with your research chair and committee members on the progress of your work
- Complete and Pass Oral Defense of your Dissertation
 - Check the USA Academic Calendar for Dissertation **FIRST** Submission deadlines to meet the graduation requirements for each semester, these are typically around the middle of the semester
 - The oral defense meeting should be scheduled **no less than 2 weeks prior** to this deadline to allow for necessary corrections/updates/formatting
 - When approved by your entire research committee, schedule the oral defense meeting
 - Query your committee members to identify an agreeable date and time. Allow for 2 hours for this meeting (1 hour to present and answer questions, 1 hour for committee discussion and voting)
 - Meet with Mrs. Hall or Mrs. Tait (SoC Dean's Suite) to reserve the Executive Conference room (preferable) or the SoC Conference room for this meeting
 - Email Dr. Chapman with the details of the meeting including your dissertation title and abstract for invitation to the USA academic community. This must be done no less than 2 weeks prior to the defense meeting
 - Send a google calendar invitation to all committee members and Dr. Chapman, with date, time, and location of the meeting.
 - Work with your research chair on preparation for this oral defense
 - Send Dr. Chapman a final draft of your dissertation to begin review of the document for style/formatting requirements
 - Present your research at the meeting
- **Complete and Submit your Dissertation Document** (following successful completion of the oral defense)
 - Update dissertation document with all changes, corrections, and updates identified by your committee and/or at the dissertation defense meeting
 - Submit a final draft of your dissertation to Dr. Chapman for review of the style/formatting requirements
 - The dissertation will not be submitted to the USA Graduate School until it meets these requirements, even if this extends beyond the deadlines

- Make sure you have allowed adequate time for these updates prior to the **first** dissertation submission deadline
 - Complete any updates/changes identified by Dr. Chapman
 - Submit a completed submission form, signed by your research chair, to Dr. Chapman
<https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/graduateschool/resources/thesisdissertationsubmissionform22824.pdf>
 - Submit a completed and signed signature page from your dissertation, signed by all members of your dissertation committee and department chair to Dr. Chapman
 - Dr. Chapman will submit your final copy, signature page and submission form to the USA Graduate School
 - Receive final approval from the USA Graduate School
 - Complete all identified changes, corrections, and updates identified by the USA Graduate School
 - Resubmit your finalized document to the USA Graduate School prior to the **final** dissertation submission deadline
 - Upload your dissertation document to ProQuest when and as instructed by the USA Graduate School
 - Send Dr. Chapman the finalized approved copy of your dissertation for inclusion in the SoC dissertation library
- CONGRATULATIONS you have successfully completed your dissertation!