

## Culminating Experience Checklist

- Choose the Type of Culminating Experience.** Talk with faculty members in your area of study about the type of project or work you would like to undertake. Make sure that the faculty members have a knowledge base in your area of interest and that they will have the time to work with you.
- Choose your Culminating Experience Committee.** This is a very important step as you prepare for your Culminating Experience.
  - You must select two tenured/tenure track faculty members from your department as your first two faculty advisors.
  - You may select a lecturer or outside faculty as a third member, provided their *curriculum vitae* is on file with the Graduate Studies office.
  - In unusual cases, the Dean of Graduate Studies may approve a faculty member outside of your major department to serve as one of the two primary committee members.
  - Check to make sure faculty will be available during the time period you plan to work on your culminating experience. If the faculty member leaves, goes on sabbatical or retires, you may need to reconstitute your committee, and new faculty members often have different expectations.
  - Be mindful of your committee members' schedules. Few faculty members are available for support during the summer session. If you plan to defend your thesis or submit your culminating experience during the winter or spring breaks or during the summer, you must obtain the faculty member's agreement to work with you in WRITING to assure completion.
- Determine if Human or Animal Research Approval is required.** Review the criteria at <http://research.sfsu.edu/protocol/>. If human/animal research approval is required, read all the requirements for submission of your research protocol.
- Complete the Culminating Experience Proposal Form.** Go to <http://grad.sfsu.edu/content/culminating-experience> to select and complete the required form.
  - You must complete the form online. No handwritten forms are accepted.
  - Include the name, department and academic rank of your committee members (professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or lecturer). Also include the committee chair's email address.
  - Complete the "Description" section carefully so that your intentions are clear, especially if human or animal research is involved.
  - Do not attach a copy of the research or project proposal that you may have completed for a research class.
- Obtain all required signatures.** All members of the committee, as well as the department chair or graduate coordinator, must sign.
- Attach any required documents.**
  - If human or animal research approval is required, attach your protocol or indicate that it was previously submitted to ORSP – Human and Animal Protections.
  - If you are participating in a joint project (no more than 3 students), you must submit your proposals together, including an attachment detailing the individual research elements and written components for which student will be responsible. All proposals must be signed by each student and committee chair.
  - If a lecturer or off-campus faculty is serving on your committee, attach a current *curriculum vitae*.
- Receive Culminating Experience Approval.** You must receive approval from Graduate Studies to begin your Culminating Experience class. Check the status of your proposal on *MyGateway*.
  - If you will be using human participants or animal subject for your Culminating Experience, you MAY NOT begin the research or project until you have received full written approval from ORSP – Human and Animal Protections.
  - The Registrar will block admission to a Culminating Experience class until approval is received. Therefore, it is very important for you to submit your proposal early in the semester before you plan to take this course, especially if you plan to use human volunteers or animal subjects.
- Submit proof of completion.** When your project is finished, communicate with your advisor to submit a Report of Completion (for 896EXM, 890, 892, 894, 895) to Graduate Studies and/or submit your thesis, dissertation or written creative work (for 893, 898, 998 and Music Composition 894) to your Graduate Studies Specialist for format review. When approved submit your thesis, dissertation or written creative work to the Library. Refer to the Thesis and Dissertation guidelines on the Graduate Studies website at <https://grad.sfsu.edu/content/thesis-dissertation-guidelines>
  - If you take more than one semester to complete your project, be sure that your committee chair submits a grade change to CR for the semester you finish your work.