**Defense Meeting Guidelines for Graduate Students in BME**

**University of Utah, Fall 2020**

The Department of Biomedical Engineering strongly recommends that graduate student committee meetings be held virtually for the foreseeable future, most commonly via Zoom. The Information Security Office warns that members of our community are targets for malicious gate-crashers through online collaboration and video conferencing tools. On Zoom, in particular, these uninvited guests take advantage of lax or default settings to share their screens, often disrupting the session with unwanted images, videos, chat messages, and posts — a practice known as “Zoom-bombing.” Graduate students are expected to schedule and instantiate their own committee meetings, and appropriate configurations to minimize the threat of Zoom-bombing is a top priority.

Most committee meetings should be private affairs that include the graduate student and committee members only. Private meetings should be held in private Zoom meetings, and not announced publicly. With no public announcement that a meeting exists, the threat of Zoom-bombing is minimal.

However, some committee meetings must be public affairs, in particular defenses of an MS Thesis, PhD Proposal, or PhD Dissertation should be announced and are open to observation — and at least nominally participation — by the public. For these public meetings, graduate students should consider the following.

1. Public Defense Scheduling. Student should schedule a public Zoom meeting and send the invitation to the Graduate Coordinator (Laura Olsen) and Academic Program Coordinator (Alexis Ulrich). When scheduling the meeting within Zoom, adhere to these guidelines:
   1. Set up a Zoom meeting through the U of U licensing, not the free version
   2. Set up with a unique meeting number, not someone's Personal Meeting ID
   3. Set up with the Waiting Room feature to control initial access to the meeting
   4. Record the public defense, for posterity and for the student to keep a copy.
2. Meeting Hosts. Student should designate one or more co-hosts to monitor the participants. Before the meeting officially begins, the student should transfer host authority to one of the cohosts. Host and co-hosts should assume these responsibilities during the defense:
   1. Granting access from the Waiting Room. This may be managed by granting access to all known individuals (e.g., students and faculty), and from a list provided by the graduate student of the personal observers likely to attend. The host should communicate with unknown individuals before granting access, at least to have them identify themselves and to ensure they are willing to feign productive engagement.
   2. Managing screen sharing — in general, by the speaker only — and disabling annotation
   3. Managing audio — in general, by the speaker only, until question and answer periods
   4. Managing video —observers' video may be active, but should be disabled if disruptive
   5. Supervising chat — in general, anyone may post appropriate questions and comments, but if that process becomes disruptive, the chat feature should be disabled.
   6. If the chat feature is disabled, observers wishing to question or comment should be instructed to use the Raise Hand feature. The host should communicate with the observer, to determine whether or the question or comment is appropriate in subject matter and timeliness.
   7. During a question and answer period at the end of the formal presentation, the host should use their best judgement as to how to ask questions (e.g., Raise Hand feature), and whether the Chat feature or granting individual users Audio rights, is more appropriate.
   8. Finally, the host will be responsible for permanently removing inappropriate observers.
3. Closed Session Exam. Set-up a separate Zoom meeting for the committee closed examination session immediately following the student's presentation. For technical reasons, this should probably be scheduled by the student’s PI. The PI may then instantiate that Zoom meeting at the end of the public defense. Do not record this closed session.