This document outlines how thesis committee meetings should be organized and held.

Doctoral fellows are responsible to establish a thesis committee during the first year of the doctoral studies. The doctoral fellow, in agreement with her/his supervisor, has to choose two additional experts willing to support her/him during the thesis work. It is recommended that one expert should be external to the University of Fribourg.

On a yearly basis, the fellow has to give an oral presentation to the members of the thesis committee about the progress made and any problems encountered. The first meeting should preferentially be held at the end of the first year to allow sufficient progress of the project. One week before the meeting, the fellow should send the presentation and a summary (3-4 pages) to the committee members. The experts will provide feedback to both the thesis supervisor and the doctoral fellow concerning any scientific or personal questions related to the thesis work.

The fellow should prepare a presentation of 30 min summarizing the progress made and outlining the planned work for the next year. She/he is encouraged to specifically address experimental/scientific problems. The thesis committee members should critically evaluate the progress and especially the planned future work. Commonly, advice on focus areas and prioritizations are very helpful.

After the scientific progress and outline are discussed, any personal matters may be addressed. For this (a) the supervisor should leave the room to allow the fellow to privately speak to the thesis committee members; and (b) the fellow should leave the room to allow the supervisor to privately speak to the thesis committee members.

Finally, the progress and recommendations should be documented in the evaluation form, signed by all participants and returned to the FGLS office. Within the first week after the meeting, the fellow should send out a short text summarizing the feedback and suggestions (1-2 pages).