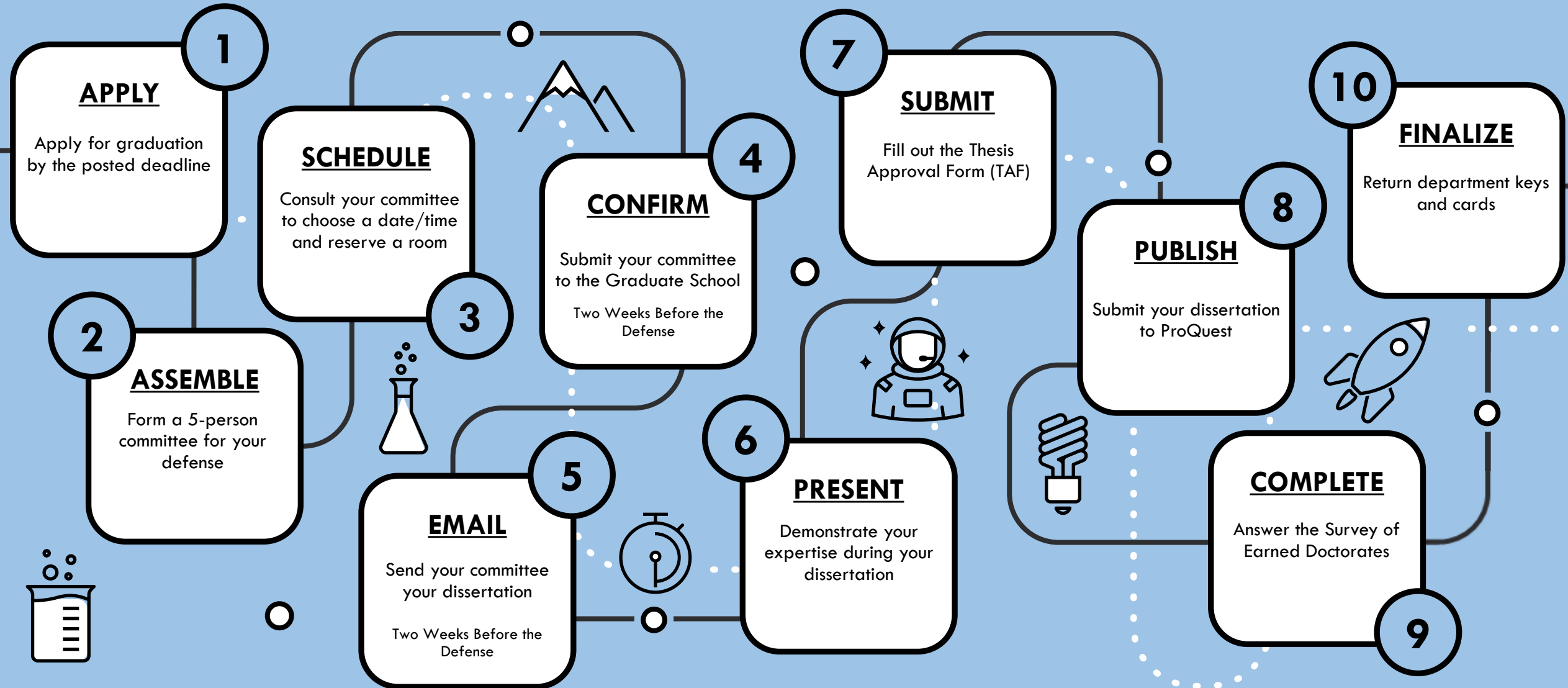


# DISSERTATION DEFENSE TIMELINE



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Dissertation Defense Timeline</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Dissertation Defense Overview</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Dissertation Defense Steps</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Forms</u>	<u>13</u>

# OVERVIEW

The ten total steps for your dissertation defense can be broken down into three main phases.

A

## Early In Your Last Semester

1. Apply for graduation by the deadline
2. Assemble a 5-person committee
3. Schedule a date/time for your defense

B

## Before/During Your Defense

1. Confirm your committee
2. Email your committee your dissertation
3. Present your research and expertise

C

## After Your Defense

1. Submit your Thesis Approval Form (TAF)
2. Publish your dissertation online
3. Complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates

# 1. APPLY

Use [this form](#) to apply for graduation through the Office of the Registrar by the posted deadline.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Students should discuss their graduation timeline with their advisor before filling out this form

## 2. ASSEMBLE (PART 1)

Form a 5-person committee that meets Graduate School and departmental requirements:

1. **Research Advisor (PI)** – Chair of the committee
2. **CU Faculty Member** – from Chemistry or another department
3. **CU Faculty Member** – from Chemistry or another department
4. **CU Faculty Member** – from Chemistry or another department
5. **Outside Member** – external to the Chem Department or university

If the outside member is not a CU faculty member, students must provide the member's current CV to [chemgrad@colorado.edu](mailto:chemgrad@colorado.edu) well in advance of the defense date.

## 2. ASSEMBLE (PART 2)

One committee member must agree to serve as your **Second Reader**.

Your Second Reader, in addition to your PI will:

1. Provide substantive feedback on your dissertation draft and
2. Approve the final version of your dissertation

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Ask the advice of your PI during the entire process of writing and defending your dissertation

# 3. SCHEDULE

In consultation with your committee, choose a date and time for your oral exam. When you've decided on a time, email the Graduate Program Manager ([chemgrad@colorado.edu](mailto:chemgrad@colorado.edu)) to request a room.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Use [www.when2meet.com](http://www.when2meet.com) or a similar scheduling tool
- Start by offering days of the week and then specific times
- Plan to schedule a 2-hour block of time

# 4. CONFIRM

Use [this form](#) to submit your committee for approval to the Graduate School **two weeks before your defense date.**

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Your committee chair will be your advisor/PI

# 5. EMAIL

Two weeks before your defense, send your committee your dissertation to allow them to prepare.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- If you wish your defense advertised to the department, should also send your title and abstract to the Graduate Program Manager

# 6. PRESENT

The dissertation defense is the culmination of your PhD research. You will first present your research and then answer a few questions from the committee.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- **Know Your Dissertation Inside Out:** Be ready to discuss every detail, including methodology, assumptions, limitations, and alternative approaches.
- **Anticipate Questions:** Think critically about weaknesses in your dissertation and how you would address them.
- **Demonstrate Breadth and Depth:** Show you can connect your specific research to broader concepts in your field.

# 7. SUBMIT

Fill out the [Thesis Approval Form \(TAF\)](#) to send the final copy of their dissertation to the Graduate School.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Make sure to do this **multiple days** before the deadline
- You will need the approved TAF on the next step

# 8. PUBLISH

Submit the final copy of your dissertation and your approved TAF to ProQuest using [this link](#).

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- **Do not** wait until the deadline to submit this task
- Previous CU Boulder students' dissertations can be found [here](#)

# 9. COMPLETE

To graduate, you must answer the [Survey of Earned Doctorates \(SED\)](#).

Since 1957, the SED is an annual survey sponsored by several federal agencies. The survey is governed by strict confidentiality rules, so individual responses never published; only aggregated statistics are released. Many universities, including CU Boulder, make completion of the SED a requirement of degree conferral.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Your degree will not process until you complete this survey

# 10. FINALIZE

Before graduation, students should return any departmental keys or procurement/travel cards to the Graduate Program Manager.

## **TIPS FOR SUCCESS**

- Make sure to wrap up any unfinished business before graduation!

# FORMS

1. **Apply** for Graduation: <https://www.colorado.edu/registrar/students/graduation>
4. **Confirm** your Committee:  
<https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/academics/forms/doctoral-final-examination-form>
7. **Submit** the Thesis Approval Form:  
<https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/academics/forms-current-students/thesis-approval-form>
8. **Publish** Your Dissertation: <https://www.etsadmin.com/?siteId=70>
9. **Complete** the Survey of Earned Doctorates: <https://sed-nces.org/>



# QUESTIONS?

Please contact the Graduate Program Manager  
([chemgrad@colorado.edu](mailto:chemgrad@colorado.edu))

