



**OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY, ILE-IFE
THE POSTGRADUATE COLLEGE**

**GUIDELINES ON THE CONDUCT AND ASSESSMENT OF
POSTGRADUATE SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS**

January 2026

1. PREAMBLE

Postgraduate seminar presentations represent a critical milestone in the academic journey of Master's and Doctoral students. They serve as the primary platform for peer review, quality assurance, and the intellectual development of the researcher. These guidelines are established to regulate the conduct of all Postgraduate Seminar Presentations at the Departmental and Faculty levels.

This policy applies to all categories of presentations, including but not limited to:

- **Pre-Field Presentations:** (Proposal Defence) to assess methodology and feasibility.
- **Post-Field Presentations:** (Progress Reports/Findings) to scrutinize data analysis and results.
- **Ph.D. Qualifying Examinations:** To comprehensively assess the candidate's readiness.
- **Oral Defence (Viva Voce):** The final examination of the thesis or dissertation.

This document serves as a necessary guide for lecturers, supervisors, and students to ensure that the seminar process is rigorous, dignified, and conducive to academic growth.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDELINES

The primary aim of these guidelines is to institutionalize a culture of excellence and mutual respect in postgraduate research.

The specific objectives are:

1. **Standardization:** To provide a uniform structure for presentations, ensuring that all students are assessed using consistent criteria and parameters regardless of their specific research topic.
2. **Objectivity:** To eliminate bias and subjectivity in the assessment and evaluation process, ensuring grades and comments are based solely on academic merit.
3. **Quality Assurance:** To ensure that feedback provided during seminars directly contributes to the improvement of the thesis and the development of the student as a proficient researcher and scholar.
4. **Professional Development:** To groom students in the art of academic communication, time management, and professional conduct.
5. **Timeliness:** To streamline the presentation process, ensuring students present within specified periods to facilitate the timely processing of forms and adherence to the academic calendar.

3. EXPECTED DUTY OF STUDENTS AND STANDARD OF PRESENTATION

The onus of a successful presentation lies primarily with the student. A postgraduate student is expected to demonstrate mastery of their subject matter and adherence to academic protocol. (*refer to Regulation 48b in the Regulations Governing Postgraduate Studies*)

A. Pre-Presentation Requirements

- **Supervisor Consent:** No student shall be scheduled for a seminar without the explicit consent of their Supervisor(s), ensuring the work is mature enough for public scrutiny.
- **Attendance:** Active participation is mandatory. Students are expected to attend seminars regularly, even when they are not presenting, to learn from peers and contribute to the intellectual discourse.
- **Abstract Submission:** A concise abstract and/or summary paper must be circulated to the panel/faculty at least 48 hours before the presentation, except a waiver is granted by the Faculty or Departmental Head or representing coordinators.

B. Standard of Conduct During Presentation

- **Dress Code:** Students must appear in formal attire, relative to the particular discipline. The seminar is a professional examination; neatness and proper grooming are part of the assessment of the candidate's poise.
- **PowerPoint Presentation:** Slides must be legible, concise, and professional. Students should avoid “text-heavy” or wordy slides and instead use bullet points, diagrams, and charts to aid their oral delivery.
- **Time Management:** The student must strictly adhere to the allotted time (typically 15-20 minutes for presentation, followed by Q&A). Inability to summarize work within the time limit may be penalized.

C. Criteria for Re-Presentation (“Referral”)

A student may be asked to re-present at a later date under the following conditions:

1. **Technical Incompetence:** If the student displays a fundamental lack of understanding of the research methodology or core theoretical framework.
2. **Unapproved Deviation:** If the content presented differs significantly from the topic or contents approved by the Supervisor.
3. **Plagiarism:** Any evidence of academic theft or substantial lack of originality.
4. **Substandard Materials:** If the slides or written drafts are illegible, incoherent, or riddled with grammatical errors to the point of unreadability.
5. **Absence of Supervisor:** Except a waiver is granted, presenting without the Supervisor (or an appointed representative) to guide the defense could warrant rescheduling.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF LECTURERS AND SUPERVISORS

The Supervisors and other faculty act as both examiners and mentors. Their conduct sets the tone for the academic environment.

A. Purpose of Intervention

- **Constructive Criticism:** The essence of the seminar is to *improve* the research. Faculty comments must be tailored toward strengthening the methodology, refining the analysis, or clarifying the scope.
- **Relevance:** Questions and comments must be relevant to the subject matter. Tangential arguments that do not aid the student's progress should be avoided.

B. Professional Etiquette

- **Decorum:** Faculty members are expected to maintain professional decorum. Criticism must be directed at the *work*, not the *student*.
- **Prohibition of Personal Attacks:** Under no circumstances should a lecturer attack a student's personality, personal life, appearance, or background. Such conduct is unprofessional and violates the dignity of humanity and all codes of moral conduct.
- **Confidence Building:** The goal is to produce confident scholars. While rigorous, the questioning should not be designed to humiliate, intimidate, or destroy the student's confidence.

C. The Role of the Supervisor

(refer to Regulation 48a and 49 in the Regulations Governing Postgraduate Studies)

- **Guidance:** Supervisors must ensure their students are adequately prepared before signing off on the presentation.
- **Defense:** While the student must speak for themselves, the Supervisor should be available to provide context regarding challenges faced during the research if necessary.
- **Note-taking:** Supervisors should take note of the corrections suggested by the panel to ensure the student integrates them into the proposal and/or final thesis.

5. CONCLUSION

The Postgraduate Seminar is a collaborative academic exercise intended to refine knowledge and produce high-quality research output. By adhering to these guidelines, students demonstrate their readiness for the academic world, and faculty members fulfill their obligation to mentor the next generation of scholars. Strict adherence to the duties and responsibilities outlined above will ensure a seamless, objective, and intellectually stimulating environment for all stakeholders involved in the postgraduate programme.

These guidelines take effect from this date of Board approval: 29th January, 2026, and shall be reviewed periodically by the Postgraduate College Board as necessary.