Virtual HST PhD Thesis Defenses
HST PhD defenses should be conducted online until further notice.

Identify a Host: The host could be someone on the committee, or someone who will be present throughout the entire defense, but NOT the defending student. If you would like a staff member from the Academic Office to serve as host, please contact Traci Anderson (tanderso@mit.edu)

Space on Campus: If you are interested in reserving a tech-enabled room on campus to host your remote defense (*one person in room only*), please contact Building Access Traci Anderson (tanderso@mit.edu) in the HST Academic Office.

Scheduling/Setting up the Meeting (Host or Student)
- Sign in on mit.zoom.us using your MIT Kerberos username and password.
- Select "Schedule A Meeting"
- Enter in the meeting name in the "Topic" field, as well as the date, time and estimated duration of the defense.
- Meeting ID: select "Generate Automatically" – do not use your personal Meeting ID
- Security: Check "Passcode"
- "Meeting Options":
  a. Uncheck "Enable join before host" (if checked people can join this meeting at any point including days before)
  b. Select "Mute participants upon entry"
  c. Uncheck "Only Authenticated users can join"*
  d. Select Breakout Room pre-assign. Create a breakout room (**Committee Discussion**) pre-assigning the student and committee members.

  *NOTE: Since this is a public event with attendees and often committee members from outside the MIT touchstone network, you do **NOT** want to select "**only authenticated users only**" – there are some other ways to increase security see below under Starting the Meeting.

- Alternate hosts: assign one or more alternative hosts to be able to start the meeting as a back-up who can start the meeting
- Click "Save" on the bottom of the screen to schedule your meeting.
- To view or edit this event, select "Meetings" from the left side bar menu and select the defense meeting you wish to view. This page will also show the Meeting ID and URL to share with the attendees.

Publicize the Defense (student)
The IMES/HST Academic Office invites the community to attend the defense via email, and a notice on the HST website. This requires that the student email a thesis abstract and supplemental information to Joseph Stein (jrstein@mit.edu) two weeks prior to the thesis defense. The following information should be included: Date and time, ZOOM Invitation, Thesis Title, Names of committee members, with academic and professional titles and institutional affiliations. The abstract is limited to 250 words for the poster, but students may optionally submit a second, longer abstract for the email announcement.

Starting the Meeting

Host starts meeting and implements the following security measures
- Select **Security** from bottom of screen and uncheck "allow participants to share screen"
- Under **Participants** – select mute all and uncheck "allow participants to unmute themselves".
- Under **Participants** – assign student as a "co-host" so they can share screen (you may also want to assign the committee members as co-hosts, so they can unmute themselves and others.)

Disable Annotation for Others
Student shares screen, selects "... MORE" and selects Disable Annotation for Others. If this is not disabled, guests will be able to write over the shared screen presentation.
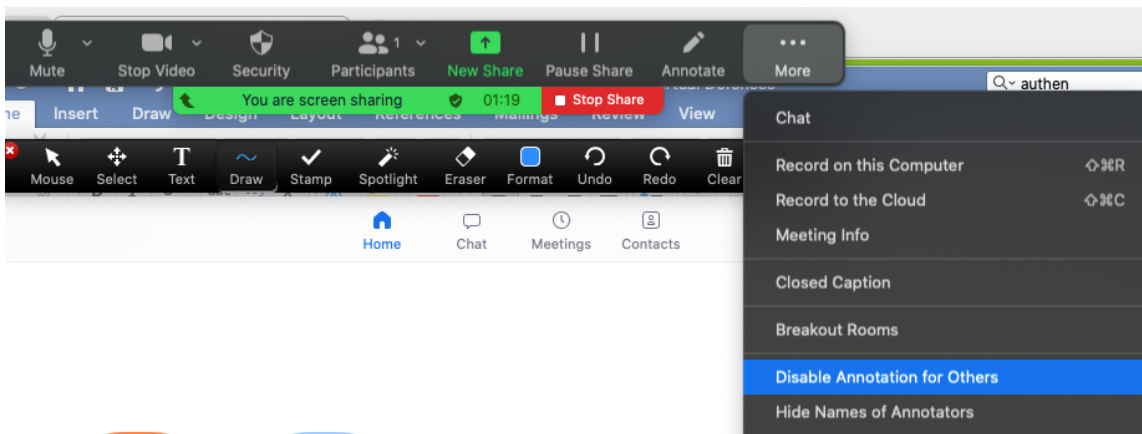
Public Presentation: This will take part in the MAIN room. Exact format up to committee but in general the defense may be structured as follows:.

> *Welcome/Introduction:* By chair and/or thesis supervisor
> *Presentation:* The student should prepare a presentation of 45-60 minutes in length.
> *Public Q&A:* public question and answer period of 15–30 minutes at discretion of the chair. Chair may call on people and unmute them to ask questions (make sure the chair is assigned as a co-host)
> *Deliberation:* Committee and student moves to breakout room; host UNMUTES main room participants

Committee Discussion: This will take part in the Breakout Room.
Immediately following the public thesis presentation, the student meets privately with the thesis committee and any other faculty members present to explore additional questions at the discretion of the faculty.

Host moves committee to breakout room:

- Select **Breakout Rooms** from the bottom menu. There should be one breakout room with the committee and will already include the members of the committee and the defending student. If other faculty members would like to be included in the next two sessions the host can assign them to Breakout Room.
- Public may stay in the MAIN room (host unmutes the group).
- Once the Thesis committee/faculty and student Q&A has ended, student will Leave breakout room and return to main room.

Creating a Breakout Room in the Meeting.
If a breakout room was not already created, a host can create one during the meeting:
- Select Breakout Rooms
- Create 1 room manually, and then once created, assign committee to room:
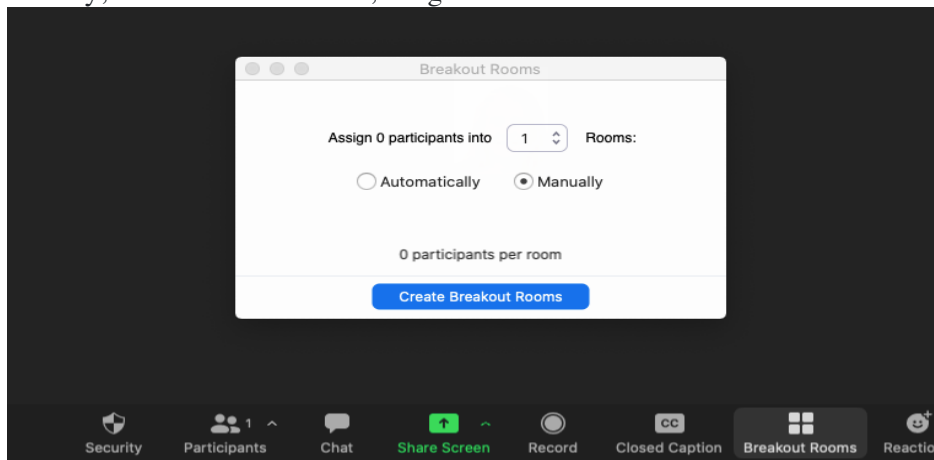
Executive Session:
The thesis committee meets in executive session without the student and determines whether the thesis defense was satisfactory. The committee may suggest additions or editorial changes to the thesis document at this point.
- Chair leaves breakout room to invite student back into the breakout room for the decision.

Public Announcement
- When the deliberation session has ended, the host will close the breakout room. To do so, open up the "Breakout Rooms" menu from the bottom bar, and select "Close All Rooms". Confirm you would like to return to the main session.
- Committee will announce to decision.
- Clapping and congratulations!