



Email: [TheGraduateSchool@shsu.edu](mailto:TheGraduateSchool@shsu.edu)

Phone: (936) 294-2408

Main Campus: Templeton Building

The Graduate School  
Sam Houston State University

*A Member of the Texas State University System*

**SHSU Graduate School Oral Defense Announcement Form**

*As stated in the Graduate Catalog and Academic Calendar, a public defense, that is open to the University community, is required by all thesis/dissertation track graduate students. The Graduate School supports and encourages the work that graduate students put into their research. The purpose of the public defense announcement is to promote and inform the SHSU community of graduate research and the successful completion of theses/dissertations. This form is to get information on graduate students' research, career aspirations and any other informations that students would like to share in conjunction with the announcement form below. The information provided on the first page will be posted on the Graduate School's web page and is optional. Please fill out the formal announcement in its entirety on the second page. Complete this form at least two weeks prior to your defense and, if applicable, add your internal college/department defense announcement for verification purposes.*

**Please describe your experience completing your degree program?**

**What are your career aspirations and plans after graduation.**

**\*\*If you would like to add a photograph of yourself, please attach it to the email with this form.**



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**SHSU Graduate School Public Defense Announcement**

***Breelin Shafer***

Thesis Defense

College of Humanities and Social Sciences, History

Masters of Art, History

***The Lively Experiment: Roger Williams, Rhode Island, and Religious Freedom***

In 1636, Roger Williams founded the New England colony of Rhode Island with the goal of creating a haven for those who were being religiously persecuted. It was his mission to construct a civil society in which people could live out their faith without the fear of government intervention or oppression. In order to fully realize this goal, Williams called for a strict separation of church and state. This was a radical notion that was met with much contempt, distrust, and resistance. Despite being confronted with great personal sacrifice and hardship, Williams boldly pursued the idea of a religious refuge. The outcome of Williams' perseverance was the fruitful creation of the freest society in the world. Rhode Island would serve as a blistered example to America, and the rest of the world, that religious freedom was possible, prudent, and the way forward.

**Event Information**

02/26/2021

1:00

Remote, via Zoom

**Committee:**

Thomas H. Cox, PhD  
Benjamin E. Park, PhD  
Jeffery L. Littlejohn, PhD