

Doctoral Degree Policies

Supervisory Committee

The supervisory committee is comprised of the student's advisor (committee chair) and supporting committee members. The goal in selecting a supervisory committee is creating a team to help the student develop a Plan of Study to align with the student's desired professional goals, provide support in the growth of the student as a professional, and oversee the student's preliminary examination and final defense and dissertation completion.

The supervisory committee members should be identified before the plan of study is formulated so that all committee members have a chance to contribute. The supervisory committee, agreed upon by the major advisor and student, is approved by the graduate program coordinator at the time the Plan of Study is submitted.

The supervisory committee will have at least four members. The members consist of:

- The major advisor, who must be a full or affiliate member of the graduate faculty Level 1, will be the committee chair. The major advisor-student relationship must be a mutually acceptable one.
- A second member, who must be a full or affiliate member of the graduate faculty. The second member may serve as co-advisor on the supervisory committee. The co-chair designation implies equally shared responsibilities in guiding the student through to degree completion.
- A third member, who could be either a full or affiliate member of the graduate faculty or a qualified off-campus expert in the field.
 - To add an external member (not full or affiliate graduate faculty) to a graduate committee, attach to the Plan of Study or supervisory committee form:
 - i. a letter of support from the department chair (program coordinator for interdisciplinary programs), including the expertise this person brings to the committee.
 - The letter must come from the department chair (program coordinator for interdisciplinary programs) only, not the advisor.
 - ii. a copy of the external member's curriculum vitae (CV)
- The Graduate School Representative (GSR), a full member of the graduate faculty chosen by the student in consultation with the committee chair, ensures
 - Graduate College policies are followed,
 - expectations for the student's performance are reasonable,
 - interactions with the supervisory committee are conducted on a professional basis.
 - the process and assessment of the student's performance is documented and, for outcomes-based doctoral programs, matches the outcomes defined

GSR Eligibility Requirements

The GSR must be a full member of the graduate faculty and

- be either a tenured faculty member outside the committee chair's/co-chairs home department(s) OR a faculty member outside the primary college of the committee chair/co-chairs
- be clear of any conflicts of interest with either the student or the committee chair/co-chairs. Examples of possible conflicts of interest may include budgetary or financial relationships, family or personal relationships, or research and/or publication relationships.
- If the student is in an interdisciplinary program, the GSR must also not be listed as a faculty member on that program's website.

Advisor or Supervisory Committee Changes

Advisor changes and changes to the supervisory committee may be made with the Supervisory Committee Change (https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/forms/#:~:text=Change%20Supervisory%20Committee) form. The student, advisor, graduate program coordinator, and the Graduate College must approve changes.

Supervisory Committee Meetings

While students will meet with their advisor often, meeting at least once a year with the supervisory committee is recommended.

Students may not bring food or beverages for the committee members to supervisory committee meetings, preliminary examinations, or final examinations. If a program wishes to provide refreshments at these meetings, it is the responsibility of the program to pay for and obtain them.