

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.

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.

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.

To add an external member (not full or affiliate graduate faculty) to a graduate committee, the Plan of Study or Supervisory Committee change form (if the Plan of Study is already filed) must include a letter of support from the department chair and a copy of the external member's curriculum vitae (CV). The chair's letter should indicate the chair and department's support for this person to be on the committee and list the expertise this person brings to the committee. There is a paperclip icon on both forms that allows the student, advisor and graduate program coordinator to add the letter and CV.

- The letter must come from the department chair only, not the advisor. An advisor may add a letter of support, though this letter alone is not sufficient.
- The external member cannot be an affiliate graduate faculty member of the advisor's home department/program.
- For doctoral students, the external member (Graduate School Representative) must be a full member of the graduate faculty. An affiliate graduate faculty or non-tenured or tenure-track faculty member cannot serve in this role. If a previously approved GSR has left NDSU, a new GSR must be found and a supervisory committee change form be filed with the Graduate School

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, affiliate member of the graduate faculty, or a qualified off-campus expert in the field.
- The Graduate School Representative (GSR), 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 catalog page.

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.