

GUIDELINES FOR SERVICE ON ADVANCED DEGREE COMMITTEES

All committees appointed to conduct the master's comprehensive or doctoral qualifying examination and to pass upon the merits of the master's thesis, master's project, and doctoral dissertation are, in principle, ad hoc committees acting on behalf of, and reporting to, the Administrative Committee of the Graduate Council. In practice, the Administrative Committee delegates the authority to appoint such committees to the Chair of Graduate Council, who is in turn asked to ensure that such committees are constituted in accordance with Graduate Council policy. Notwithstanding the delegation of authority in committee appointments, the basic principle remains that the decisions made by these committees are decisions made on behalf of the Council, not the instructional unit in which the student is enrolled. Nevertheless, the criteria upon which the student's work is judged are established by the academic program.

Committee Membership

The Graduate Adviser, normally in consultation with the student, the major professor and program faculty, recommends appointment of faculty members to serve on examination committees and to review and pass upon the merits of each doctoral dissertation and master's thesis. Final approval of the membership on these committees rests with the Chair of Graduate Council.

Persons with the following qualifications are eligible to serve as members of advanced degree committees:

1. All voting members of the Academic Senate of the University of California (includes Professors, Lecturers with Security of Employment, Professors in Residence and Professors of Clinical “__”) Adjunct Professors and other members of the graduate program faculty recommended by the Graduate Adviser of that program.
2. Upon special written request of the Graduate Adviser and with the approval of the Chair of Graduate Council, lecturers and academic staff engaged in continuing teaching and research activity. In addition to the justification letter from the Adviser, a curriculum vitae and a letter from the proposed appointee indicating a willingness to serve are required. At the time of the request, the adviser can indicate this is a blanket request for this individual to serve on specific types of committees (e.g. Master's vs. Ph.D.). If approved, this blanket request would be for a period coterminous with the individual's appointment and would be subject to review and renewal after a five-year period.
3. An individual from outside the University of California, or employees of the University of California who serve in categories not mentioned above with special expertise and qualifications. In this case, the Graduate Adviser should submit a brief statement indicating the appointee's affiliation and title, what degree he/she holds, and how the prospective appointee has special expertise or qualifications that are not represented on the campus. In addition to the justification letter from the Graduate Adviser, a curriculum vitae and a letter from the proposed appointee indicating a willingness to serve must be submitted to the Chair of Graduate Council for review and approval. All appointees must be advised by the graduate program that no stipend will be paid for such committee service.

Normally the majority of the committee members are from the student's home program, and only one member from categories 2 and 3 is appointed to serve on a single committee. In general a member of an advanced graduate degree committee should hold a degree at least equal to, or equivalent to, the degree objective of the student. The Chair of each committee normally will be a

member of the Davis Division of the Academic Senate. Appointment of a non-member of the Academic Senate as the chairperson of a doctoral dissertation committee is approved only under unusual circumstances. Requests for exception must be submitted in writing by the Graduate Adviser to the Chair of Graduate Council as outlined under item 2 and 3 above.

Examination Committees

If a Master's comprehensive examination or a Ph.D. Qualifying Examination is given in oral format, it is the responsibility of all members of the committee to be in attendance for the entire examination. Unanticipated or unavoidable absence will be explained in detail by the Chair in the report on the outcome of the examination and a specific plan for completion of the examination within 72 hours by all members of the committee will be detailed. In the event that the Chair is absent, the remaining members of the committee shall suspend the examination after waiting a reasonable time and after attempting to contact the Chair. In this case, the Chair shall report the result as "No Examination" and explain the circumstances in detail. The examination shall then be rescheduled and conducted in the same manner and format as intended for the original examination.

Reading Committees

In 1974, the Graduate Council adopted a policy stating that reading committee members are expected to read and comment on a thesis or dissertation within four weeks. Upon failure of a committee member to comply with the 4 week deadline, the Graduate Adviser may reconstitute the committee which will then be conveyed to the Chair of Graduate Council for approval. However, this policy does not apply to summer periods for faculty holding 9 month appointments. It is expected that the graduate students, with cooperation of the faculty, will coordinate the time lines for presentation of the dissertation to the reading committee in a manner such that all members of the reading committee can fulfill their responsibilities within the prescribed 4 week limit. In the case of a student who returns to campus following a lapse in registration or extended period on filing fee status and wishes to complete a thesis or dissertation, the reading committee should meet with the student to review the status of the work and determine an appropriate time line for completion.

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