

# Formation of a Dissertation Committee

The **Dissertation Committee** advises the student on the research and writing of the dissertation, conducts the final oral examination, and approves the dissertation. The membership of the Dissertation Committee, proposed by the student with the consultation and approval of the graduate adviser, is submitted to the Graduate School for approval by the graduate dean. It is the responsibility of the student to secure a faculty supervisor and committee that meets the requirements of the Graduate School.

**The committee consists of at least four members.** At least three of the committee members, including the student's supervisor or co-supervisor, must be [Graduate Studies Committee \(GSC\) members](#) in the student's major program, and at least one committee member must be from outside the student's GSC. The purpose of the outside committee member is to provide an independent assessment of the student's mastery of their subject. The dissertation supervisor or co-supervisor serves as the committee chair. [Changes to the Dissertation Committee](#) after admission to candidacy require the approval of the student, current and new committee members, and the Graduate Adviser, with final approval by the Graduate Dean. Exceptions to this process may be granted by petition to the Graduate Dean.

**Retired faculty** who have been nominated or granted emeritus status and who were members of the GSC upon retirement, may request continued membership on the GSC with approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies. Such requests should be accompanied by the recommendation of the appropriate GSC, and be submitted to the graduate school by the GSC chair. If approved, the continued membership will be reviewed annually. Such faculty may serve on student committees as a GSC member or as a co-supervisor, but may not serve as a sole supervisor.

In the event that a GSC member of a dissertation committee terminates employment with the university, except as discussed above, an additional [current GSC member](#) must be added to the committee. A former faculty member may remain on the dissertation committee, but will assume status as an outside committee member.

**Outside committee members:** Students are responsible for providing a curriculum vita for any committee member who is not a member of the Graduate Studies Committee. The CV should be delivered to the doctoral degree evaluators in the Graduate School, [gradstudentsvcs@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:gradstudentsvcs@austin.utexas.edu). To expedite processing, include your UT EID with all submissions. Committee members will not receive remuneration for their service on a student's committee.