

Guide to Graduate Policy: Sections F4.5 (Faculty Committees for Higher Committees) through F4.9 (Exceptions to Policies on Committee Membership)

New Policy to take effect after Fall 2019

F4.5 Faculty Committees for Higher Degrees

All faculty committees for higher degrees (master's thesis, Qualifying Examination, and doctoral dissertation) are ad hoc committees acting on behalf of the Graduate Council, which delegates authority for appointing the committees to the Dean of the Graduate Division.

The role of the Head Graduate Adviser

The Head Graduate Adviser, usually with input from the research supervisor, helps students to identify appropriate faculty members for the thesis committee, Qualifying Examination committee, dissertation committee, and other graduate degree committees, and then recommends the appointment of appropriate faculty members to the Graduate Division. Each academic program is expected to develop a protocol by which the Head Graduate Adviser approves the composition of all higher degree committees on behalf of the program to ensure academic rigor, consistency within the unit, and adherence to policy.

The Head Graduate Adviser recommends five members for Plan A doctoral dissertation committees. For B dissertation committees and thesis committees, the Head Graduate Adviser recommends three members. Four or five members are recommended for the Qualifying Examination committee, depending on the program. Final approval for committee appointments rests with the Dean of the Graduate Division.

Head Graduate Advisers, prospective committee chairs, and graduate students can help avoid problems with committee appointments by:

- 1) engaging only those faculty who are members of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate and thus eligible to serve on higher degree committees, or facilitating timely approval of non-Senate members in cases where there is a compelling reason;
- 2) making sure that the faculty members are available and willing to serve on the committees; and
- 3) being aware of configuration requirements for higher degree committees and the role of the faculty member within a committee (see Sections F4.7 and F4.8).

Occasionally, committee members, particularly those from other institutions (see Section F4.9), incur travel expenses to participate in a qualifying examination. Should the student's academic unit choose to cover these expenses, consistent with the University of California travel policy, the Head Graduate Adviser would approve these expenses. The Graduate Division is unable to cover such expenses. To avoid any conflict of interest, students are never allowed to pay travel costs and expenses for their committee members.

F4.6 Academic Senate Status

Members of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate include individuals with the following titles (*preferred title for committee appointment):

Professor*

Professor of Clinical Optometry

Associate Professor*

Associate Professor of Clinical Optometry

Assistant Professor*

Assistant Professor of Clinical Optometry

Professor Emeritus

Professor in Residence

Professor of the Graduate School (POG)

Acting Professor

Acting Associate Professor

University Professor

Senior Lecturer with security of employment

Lecturer with security of employment

Non-Senate Members include these titles:

Acting Assistant Professor

Adjunct Professor

Senior Lecturer/Lecturer without security of employment

Clinical Professor

Staff Scientist

Visiting Professor

Morrey Professor

Professor from outside UC Berkeley

F4.7 Configuration Requirements for Higher Degree Committees

Head Graduate Advisers of degree granting programs are responsible for reviewing committee membership before submission to the Graduate Division. For the purposes of this policy, academic unit membership is defined as follows: 1) for departments and schools, faculty must have voting rights in the academic unit offering the degree (in the case of emeriti, they must have had voting rights before retirement), and 2) for graduate groups, faculty must be core members in that group (and on file as such in the Graduate Division).

The requirements described below for the academic program affiliation of committee members are minimum requirements. Programs may establish higher requirements but the programs must then 1) inform Graduate Division of the requirements, 2) apply those requirements to all students uniformly, and 3) publish those requirements in a student handbook and/or on a departmental website.

A single faculty member cannot serve simultaneously as the chair and Academic Senate representative. If the Head Graduate Adviser is to serve either role on any committee, the Chair or Dean of the department, graduate group, or school should approve the committee.

In all instances, committee members must be members of the Academic Senate unless an exception has been granted (see Section F4.6 for a list of titles conferring Senate membership and Section F4.9 for possible exceptions). Note that Professors Emeriti or Professors of the Graduate School are members of the Academic Senate and, as such, may serve on committees as long as they had voting rights in the department or school before retirement or are a core member of the graduate group (see beginning of Section F4.7) in their home degree granting program or joint or affiliated degree granting program, as appropriate to each status.

Master's Thesis Committee:

Chair or Co-Chairs

Additional members

Academic Senate Representative (optional)

- A Master's Thesis Committee requires a minimum of three members.
- Two Co-Chairs may replace one Chair.
- An Academic Senate Representative is optional, for a Master's Thesis Committee. This role may be replaced by another Additional Member.

Qualifying Examination Committee:

Chair

Academic Senate Representative

At least two Additional Members

- Degree granting programs can require either a four- or five-member Qualifying Examination Committee. Whichever option is chosen, it must apply to all students in the degree program, be on record in the Graduate Division, and be published in a student handbook and/or on a departmental website.
- One Additional Member beyond the number required by the degree granting program may be added.
- The Qualifying Examination Chair cannot serve as the Dissertation Chair for the same student. The Chair must be a member of the student's degree-granting program as defined above.
- There cannot be two Co-Chairs for the Qualifying Examination.
- It is the collective responsibility of the Qualifying Examination Committee to ensure that the student's mastery of the subject matter is broad and comprehensive.
- If a student is reexamined, the committee for the second examination must be the same as for the first examination.

Dissertation Committee:

Chair or Co-Chairs

Academic Senate Representative

Additional members

- A Dissertation Committee requires a minimum of three members (Plan B dissertation committee) or five members (Plan A dissertation committee).
- Two Co-Chairs may replace one chair.

- The Dissertation Chair cannot be the same person who served as the student's Qualifying Examination Chair. The Qualifying Examination Chair may serve as a student's Dissertation Co-Chair.
- The Dissertation Chair or Co-Chair must be a member of the student's degree-granting program as defined above.

Reconstitution of Committee Membership

If a committee must be changed, the Request for Change in Higher Degree Committee petition should be submitted to the Graduate Division as soon as possible. The Head Graduate Adviser should consult with all parties involved concerning the change before approving the petition and submitting it to the Graduate Division. A committee member who disagrees with being removed from the committee cannot block this action if it is approved by the Head Graduate Adviser.

Procedure

Procedure for committee constitution: Committees conforming to the normal size and composition are proposed using the applicable form available on the Graduate Division website: the *Application for Admission to the Qualifying Exam* for the Qualifying Examination committee; or the *Application for Candidacy* for the relevant degree and plan.

Two members beyond the required number for a Qualifying Examination may be requested by the Head Graduate Adviser in a memorandum addressed to the Associate Dean for Degrees, in care of the Graduate Degrees Office. A memorandum is also required to request a Doctoral Dissertation committee membership of 5 or more faculty.

Procedure to reconstitute a committee: The student submits a Request for Change in Higher Degree Committee petition signed by the Head Graduate Adviser.

Related Memos

- [March 2016: Revisions to Graduate Council Policies for Qualifying Exams and Dissertation Committees](#)

F4.8 Role of Committee Members

The Chair

The chair of any graduate degree committee must be a member of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate in the student's degree granting program (see beginning of Section F4.7). A student's Qualifying Examination chair cannot serve subsequently as the student's Dissertation Chair, but may serve as a student's Dissertation Co-Chair if the other Co-Chair is from the same degree granting program.

If an individual in another degree granting program seems more appropriate as committee Chair in a particular instance, appointment as Co-Chair can be approved. If there is a compelling academic reason why a member of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate from another degree granting program should be the sole Chair, then an exception can be requested.

Co-Chair

There cannot be two Co-Chairs for the Qualifying Exam. There may be two Co-Chairs instead of one Chair for a Master's Thesis Committee or a Dissertation Committee. One co-chair must be a member of the Berkeley Academic Senate in the student's degree granting program (see beginning of Section F4.7). The second Co-Chair may be a Berkeley Academic Senate member in the student's degree granting program, a Berkeley Academic Senate member outside the student's degree granting program, or an approved non-Academic Senate member. See Section F4.9 for further information about exceptions allowing non-Senate committee members.

The Academic Senate Representative

The Academic Senate Representative on all Qualifying Examination Committees and Dissertation Committees (and preferably on Master's Thesis Committees as well) must be a member of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate (see Section F4.6 for a list of titles). No exceptions will be made. The Academic Senate Representative's role is to ensure that the committee is conducted in a fair and professional manner that abides by graduate policy.

Additional Members

Additional members may be Berkeley Academic Senate members in the student's degree granting program or another degree granting program, or an approved non-Academic Senate member (see Section F4.9 for information about exceptions allowing non-Senate committee members).

F4.9 Exceptions to Policies on Committee Membership

Approvals for Exceptions to Policies on Committee Membership

Two kinds of approval are granted to qualified persons: 1) particular approval for a single committee, and 2) permanent or "blanket" approval for higher degree committees at a given level.

Single Committee Exceptions

Exceptions to serve on a single committee are based on the provision of special and necessary expertise that would facilitate the student's work and that cannot be duplicated among the regular faculty, for a person holding a doctorate or its equivalent in research experience. The service must be performed without stipend. To avoid any conflict of interest, students are not allowed to pay travel costs and expenses for faculty from other institutions to serve on their committees.

Categories for Single Committee Exceptions:

Non-Senate Members as Additional Members and Co-Chairs

Under certain circumstances, a non-Senate member may be appointed to a committee if the Head Graduate Adviser determines that the individual in question offers expertise not otherwise available among the regular faculty and if the Associate Dean for Degrees concurs. There may be no more than one person in this category on a

committee. A non-Senate member may be appointed to co-chair a Thesis Committee or a Dissertation Committee if this assignment is shared with an Academic Senate faculty member.

The following administrative policies apply:

1. Regular faculty members from other institutions who are teaching on this campus (i.e., those who hold titles equivalent to the titles in the Berkeley professorial series on their own campuses) may be appointed to committees upon submission of a brief statement by the Head Graduate Adviser regarding the visitor's affiliation and title and with the assurance that the visitor holds the doctorate and will be present on this campus for a period of time that makes the appointment advantageous to the student.
2. Regular faculty members from other institutions who are not currently teaching on this campus may be appointed to committees upon submission of a brief statement from the Head Graduate Adviser on the prospective appointee's affiliation and title and should also include the following: a) that he or she holds the doctorate; b) that he or she has published work in the last 3 years; c) that the prospective appointee has special and necessary expertise that cannot be duplicated on the Berkeley faculty; and d) that the appointee will serve without stipend.

Recommending Faculty Members from Other UC Campuses and Stanford

A committee for a higher degree may include one member of the regular faculty belonging to the Academic Senate of any UC campus as an additional member without special approval from the Dean of the Graduate Division.

A regular faculty member from Stanford University does not need the approval of the Dean of the Graduate Division for appointment as an Additional Member, but would need approval if serving as a co-chair.

Lecturers

Lecturers with Security of Employment are members of the Academic Senate and are thus eligible to serve on student committees in any capacity.

Lecturers without Security of Employment (Unit 18 lecturers) are not eligible for "blanket" approval for committee service, but may serve under a one-time exception on a thesis or dissertation committee if they have 1) an active appointment, 2) the endorsement of the Head Graduate Adviser, and 3) approval from the program's College or School Dean to reimburse the Lecturer in compliance with the Unit 18 contract, or agreement from the Lecturer to serve without compensation.

Adjunct Professors and Clinical Professors

Although adjunct and clinical professors are not members of the Academic Senate, they may be appointed as co-chairs and additional members, but not as sole chairs, of single dissertation committees by exception. Requests for permanent or "blanket" approval for higher degree committee service may also be made, either at the time of appointment or after.

Additional Exceptions

Persons who do not hold the doctorate, or are not members of the Berkeley Division, or are not members of faculty at another institution are occasionally permitted to be appointed to higher degrees committees on an exceptional basis after submission of appropriate documentation. Typically, such appointments are of persons who hold an "acting" professorial title, or that of Visiting Assistant Professor, or a title in the professional research series.

Procedure

Procedure to request an exception for service on a single committee: All requests for exceptions must be submitted by the Head Graduate Adviser to the Graduate Degrees Office. Requests for approval for a single committee are reviewed by the Associate Dean for Degrees after initial review by the Graduate Degrees Office. Requests must include a curriculum vitae (CV), which includes work published within the last 3 years, and a statement that the prospective appointee has a degree equivalent to that which is being examined or earned and has special and necessary expertise that cannot be duplicated among the regular faculty.

If a non-Academic Senate member has been approved for a single committee earlier but has no blanket approval, a new memorandum is required for each additional request for service on a single committee, but no CV need accompany subsequent requests if the one submitted earlier remains current.

In both cases, if the prospective appointee is not regularly affiliated with this campus, the request is to be accompanied by a statement that the service will be performed without stipend.

Procedure to request an exception for a Lecturer to serve on a single committee: The Head Graduate Adviser should submit a memo detailing why the Lecturer's expertise is relevant to the student's field of study. This must be accompanied by submission of a CV that includes a publication list that illustrates relevance to the student's thesis or dissertation. A statement that the program has received approval from the program's College or School Dean to reimburse the Lecturer in compliance with the Unit 18 contract, or that the Lecturer has agreed to serve without compensation, is also required.

Procedure to request blanket approval for committee service by an Adjunct or Clinical Professor: A Department Chair may request blanket approval for service as co-chair or additional member on higher degree committees from the Committee on Budget and Interdepartmental Relations during the regular review process for the appointment of a Clinical or Adjunct Professor. A copy of the document received by the Department indicating committee service approval by the Budget and Interdepartmental Relations Committee granted at the time of the person's employment should be sent to the Graduate Degrees Office so that the individual's committee eligibility may be appropriately noted.

After that point, a request for blanket approval for service as co-chair or additional member should be sent to the Graduate Degrees Office, addressed to the Associate Dean for Degrees. Requests are reviewed and forwarded with a recommendation to the Budget and Interdepartmental Relations Committee for final approval. The request should state what level of service the individual is to perform: master's level only or master's and doctoral level. The request must include a curriculum vitae, which includes published work within the last 3 years, and a statement that the prospective appointee has a degree equivalent to that which is being examined or earned and that his or her qualifications are at least equal to those of regular faculty at Berkeley.