

## Doctoral Committee

As a student approaches advancement to candidacy, the student establishes a doctoral committee to supervise dissertation research. This is a five-person committee, including three faculty from within the department and two from other departments within the university, one of which is tenured. The committee should include the faculty members whose fields of expertise make them the most appropriate for supervising the students' research. The student approaches the faculty member he or she would like to include, but the committee **must** be approved by the director of Graduate Studies and the department chair. Note that a faculty member with a regular appointment in one department, and an adjunct appointment in another department, may be an inside or outside member of the committee for either department. Only one such member is accepted per committee. If the student elects to have a six member committee, the sixth member has all of the same obligations as the other committee members. Students must constitute their dissertation committee **one month** before the proposed date of the exam by notifying the Graduate Coordinator of the names. Once the committee is constituted it can be changed only if a faculty member becomes unavailable.

By the end of the spring quarter of the fourth year in the department the student must have a dissertation proposal approved by his or her doctoral committee (Note: international students must advance at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in order to maintain funding). The dissertation proposal is a document that presents the research topic of the dissertation, places it in the context of the relevant literature, discusses its significance, specifies and justifies the methods the student intends to use, and establishes the anticipated steps leading to completion.

Following submission of the dissertation proposal, the student must defend it at an oral exam before the doctoral committee. The purpose of the exam is to certify the proposal is significant and feasible, that the student is prepared to carry it out successfully. Based on the written proposal and the oral exam the committee may choose to approve the proposal or to ask for revisions and resubmission. The oral exam serves as a qualifying examination and approval signifies advancement to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree.

To make the advancement official, the Graduate Coordinator will provide the student with the required form, which the student brings to the oral exam. After all members sign (original signatures—no photocopies or faxes), the student then takes the form to the Cashier and pays a \$65 fee. Walking the form to OGSR for final approval before the first day of instruction completes the process.

To review OGSR doctoral committee policies directly, please see [http://ogsr.ucsd.edu/academicpolicy/advisers/manual.htm#committee\\_appointment](http://ogsr.ucsd.edu/academicpolicy/advisers/manual.htm#committee_appointment)