Doctoral Dissertation Committee Policy

The dissertation committee shall consist of at least four tenured or tenure-track instructional faculty members, three from the department awarding the degree and one from outside of the department.

**COMMITTEE CHAIR**

- One tenured or tenure-track instructional faculty member with a regular academic appointment (assistant professor or higher) from the department awarding the degree.
- Holds a Ph.D. or its equivalent doctoral degree.

The Chair’s purpose is to:

- Guide the candidate at all stages of the project including formulating the proposal, carrying out the research, and writing the dissertation.
- Monitor the student’s progress, and ensure that all committee members have reviewed the dissertation and that substantive objections are resolved prior to the defense.

**DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES (Inside)**

- Two tenured or tenure-track instructional faculty members with regular academic appointments (assistant professor or higher) from the department awarding the degree;
- Holds a Ph.D. or its equivalent doctoral degree.

Also considered eligible for membership as one of the two inside department representatives:

- **Participating Appointment**: Faculty member with a Participating appointment provided the person is currently employed as a tenured or tenure-track instructional faculty member in a UO doctoral degree granting department; not eligible if this is the only institutional appointment. Must hold Ph.D. or its equivalent doctoral degree.

Their purpose is to assure the quality of the research and to:

- Provide special expertise in areas needed to give a comprehensive appraisal of the project.
- Provide broader representation from the faculty of the candidate’s major.
- Provide critical reading of the drafts of the proposal and dissertation.

**OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVE**

- One tenured or tenure-track instructional faculty member with a regular academic appointment (assistant professor or higher) in a UO doctoral degree granting department other than the one awarding the degree.
- Holds a Ph.D. or its equivalent doctoral degree.

His/Her purpose is to represent the Graduate School in order to:

- Protect the interest of the university faculty and the student by ensuring that the dissertation meets the highest academic standards.
- Play a “disciplinary” role in terms of maintenance of uniformity in standards of quality across departments.
- Provide assurance that political or other extraneous factors do not enter into the process and that appropriate procedures are followed.
- Provide the “outside” point of view, sharing expertise with a new perspective or theoretical vantage that might not otherwise be available.
OTHER FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE ELIGIBILITY

INCLUSION CLAUSE: Those faculty members already approved in the past who may not meet the current criteria will continue to be eligible to serve on doctoral committees.

The following are considered to be eligible for membership as an INSIDE or OUTSIDE* representative under the conditions described:

- **Emeriti/Emerita:** With the approval of the department in which the person holds emeritus status. Must have previously held a tenured instructional faculty appointment (assistant professor or higher) in a doctoral degree granting department. Must hold a Ph.D. or its equivalent doctoral degree.

- **Senior Research Associate II:** Eligible to serve as an INSIDE departmental representative at the written request of the department awarding the degree and with Graduate School approval. Must hold a Ph.D. or its equivalent doctoral degree.  
  
  *To become eligible for membership as an OUTSIDE representative, the person must have served on three doctoral dissertation committees as an inside departmental representative.

- **Faculty members in departments without doctoral programs:** Tenured or tenure-track instructional faculty members with a regular academic appointment (assistant professor or higher) in a department or program that does not offer a doctoral degree are eligible to serve as an INSIDE departmental representative at the written request of the department awarding the degree and with Graduate School approval. Must hold a Ph.D. or its equivalent doctoral degree.

  *To become eligible for membership as an OUTSIDE representative, the person must have served on three doctoral dissertation committees as an inside departmental representative.

The following may be considered for membership as an INSIDE departmental representative at the submission of a written appeal as described below in Exception Clause A:

- **Visiting Assistant Professor or higher.** Must hold a Ph.D. or its equivalent doctoral degree.
- **Lecturer.** Must hold a Ph.D. or its equivalent doctoral degree.
- **Research Associate, Senior Research Associate I:** Must hold a Ph.D. or its equivalent doctoral degree.

**Exception Clause A:** A written appeal for an exception shall be submitted to the Graduate School by the degree-awarding department. The appeal shall include the following:

1. Description of the proposed member’s active involvement in scholarly research.
2. Description of the availability of the proposed committee member to provide for adequate input, guidance, and evaluation time to the doctoral candidate.
3. Endorsement by the head of the department or dean, if appropriate.

The following may be considered for membership as a fifth additional member only at the submission of a written request as described below in Exception Clause B:

- **Non-UO Faculty.** Must hold a Ph.D. or its equivalent doctoral degree.

**Exception Clause B:** A request for non-UO faculty to serve on a doctoral committee as a fifth additional member shall consist of the following paperwork, to be submitted as one packet to the Graduate School:

1. **Request to Add a Non-UO Faculty to a Doctoral Committee** form.
2. A short statement from the student describing in non-technical terms, what the study is about.
3. A statement of support from the student’s current committee chairperson. The statement must also include a description of what special expertise the non-UO faculty will bring to the doctoral student’s studies that would not otherwise be available from any UO faculty eligible to serve on a doctoral committee.
4. A copy of the non-UO faculty’s vita.

Approved by Graduate Council 5/21/2008