

# DOCTORAL COMMITTEES

---

The minimum number of faculty required for all doctoral committees is three, with the majority from the program. The chair must be from the department and a member of the graduate faculty; adjunct members may serve but may not chair. Individual programs handle committee assignments in the manner that best suits progress to degree completion for that discipline. It is not unusual for a student to have an **academic advisory committee** who guides the student in the pre-candidacy phase and a final **dissertation committee** with the expertise to guide and mentor the specific topic of dissertation research.

Faculty serving on committees are expected to approve the Plan of Study; evaluate any diagnostic or qualifying exams; rule on special programmatic decisions and policy applications; prepare, approve, and evaluate the comprehensive (written and oral) examination; guide the dissertation; and, serve as the examining board for the oral defense. Depending on department culture, these responsibilities may be extended beyond the student's committee. However, only the approved Dissertation Committee has the authority to determine if the proposal has been accepted and the dissertation defense has passed.