



**Doctoral Dissertation and Committee # 380.030**

INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE:	LAST REVISION DATE:	RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DIVISION/DEPARTMENT
June 2012	April 4, 2023	The University Graduate School

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Dissertation Committee

Committee formation is initiated by mutual agreement between the student and the dissertation advisor. The committee appointments are made by the Dean of the University Graduate School on the recommendation of the department chair or program director and the Dean of the appropriate School or College. The Dean of the University Graduate School shall have the authority to appoint an additional Graduate Faculty member to any dissertation committee.

Dissertation committees

The committee is comprised of at least four members of the Graduate Faculty.

At least two of the four must be from the academic department offering the degree.

At least one must be from another academic department at FIU.

The fourth member may be:

- 1) from the academic department offering the degree,
- 2) from another academic department at FIU,
- 3) from outside the institution who has been reviewed and approved by the academic department and the University Graduate School.

The committee must be selected so that the relevant emphases of the dissertation are fully represented. A program may have different requirements for committee chair, provided they are approved by the University Graduate School, incorporated and published in the program policies and provided to all students.

The composition of the dissertation committee may be changed if a committee member is no longer available to participate or if the student or chair of the committee believes there are valid reasons to add or replace a committee member. The committee change must be justified and all outgoing and incoming members must agree to be removed or added. Committee

changes must be recommended by the committee chair, the program director and the Dean of the appropriate School or College. Committee changes must be approved by the Dean of the University Graduate School.

#### Dissertation Proposal

A dissertation is a formal and systematic discourse or treatise advancing an original point of view as a result of research. Each doctoral degree student must submit a proposal to his/her dissertation committee. The dissertation proposal must be formal statement of the research plan and shall be appropriately referenced and conform to academic standards of writing in that discipline.

Before approval of the dissertation proposal, all students must have a Responsible Conduct of Research Certification on file at the University Graduate School. Those students participating in projects that involve human or animal research must participate in required training and obtain relevant committee approvals, i.e., approval from the Institutional Review Board for the use of human subjects, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee for animals, or the Institutional Biosafety Committee for the use of recombinant DNA.

Following approval of the dissertation proposal by the committee chair and committee members, the proposal must be submitted for approval by the graduate program director or department chairperson and the Dean of the appropriate School or College.

#### Dissertation and Dissertation Defense

Dissertations must conform to the standards of presentation as described in *University Graduate School Manual for Electronic Theses and Dissertations*.

Upon completion of a dissertation, the degree candidate will submit to the Dean of the University Graduate School a request for dissertation defense. This request must be approved by the committee chairperson, all other members of the committee and the Dean of the appropriate School or College.

This defense announcement is an invitation to members of the University community to observe and participate in the defense, thus the defense must be held on a business day during the regular term. The defense must occur at the time, date and place of the announcement. The defense announcement must be posted at least a week prior to the defense and will include at least the following information:

- a concise one page description of the dissertation;
- dissertation title;
- student's name;
- dissertation committee chairperson's name;
- School or College, and department; and
- date, time, and place of the defense.



Synchronous participation of all committee members and the student are required. Although physical presence is strongly encouraged for all committee members, synchronous participation by telephone/video conference is allowed for all members, except the committee chair and the student, who must both be physically present for the entire duration of the defense at an FIU location. Under special circumstances, the chair may participate via telephone/video conference upon approval by the Dean of the University Graduate School. For instances in which any committee member participates via telephone/video conference, there should be consideration regarding the video conferencing platform and capabilities of the defense location.

Following the successful defense, as determined by a majority vote of the student's dissertation committee, the dissertation is forwarded to the dean of the appropriate School or College and to the Dean of the University Graduate School for their approval.

All dissertations submitted in fulfillment of requirements of doctoral degrees must conform to University guidelines.

#### SCOPE

University Community (faculty, graduate students and University Graduate School administration)

#### REASON FOR POLICY

To establish guidelines for doctoral dissertation committees, proposals and defense.

#### DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITIONS
Graduate Faculty (GF)	Faculty member that demonstrates scholarly productivity and has the expertise to serve as the major professor and committee member of Doctoral and Masters students.

#### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Graduate Students will choose committee members and the major professor according to the policy. Major Professors and committee members will oversee the defense of proposals, theses and dissertations. Program, College and University Graduate School administrators



will ensure the quality and defense process of proposals, theses and dissertations.

#### RELATED RESOURCES

University Graduate School Manual for Electronic Theses and Dissertations.

<http://gradschool.fiu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/2020-2021-ETD-Student-Manual-reduced-file-size.pdf>

#### CONTACTS

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#### HISTORY

**Initial Effective Date:** Originally 5.3.2 RESEARCH COMMITTEE (effective 3/28/89); 5.3.3 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS (effective 3/28/89)

**Review Dates** (*review performed, no updates*): January 31, 2024

**Revision Dates** (*updates made to document*): 5.3.4 CHANGE OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS (effective 3/28/89); 7.1 DEFINITION (effective 3/28/89); 7.2 PROPOSAL (effective 3/28/89); 7.4 ENROLLMENT AND CREDIT HOURS: THESIS (effective 3/28/89); 7.4 APPLICATION FOR DEFENSE OF DISSERTATION OR THESIS (effective 3/28/89); 7.5 DISSERTATION AND THESIS APPROVAL PROCESS (effective 3/28/89); 7.6 STYLE (effective 2/28/89); 7.7.2 LIBRARY COPIES (effective 3/28/89) from *Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual*. Revision of 380.030 (June 2012) from University policy library; April 6, 2021; December 21, 2021; September 30, 2022; April 4, 2023.