

Master's Thesis Advisor, Committee, and Defense

A master's thesis committee should be formed at the start of the second semester of thesis registration (or at the start of the first semester if a single semester completion seems certain). The committee must have at least three members. All members of the committee must hold faculty rank.

The chair of the thesis committee and at least one other member must be a tenured or tenure track faculty member in the academic department or program offering the degree. Approval of the committee is made by the program director and reported to the Graduate Studies Office on a standardized thesis committee appointment form.

The thesis must be defended in a publicly announced oral defense. Each program has its own policies on scheduling and submitting thesis drafts to members of the committee. Students are responsible for following their program's policies. Successful defense of the thesis is determined by vote of the thesis committee. The complete committee must be present to hear the defense. Every member of the thesis committee must sign and date the approval page of the final thesis document. A report on passage, conditional passage, or failure of the defense is completed by the thesis committee chair, signed by the thesis committee members, and sent to the Graduate Studies Office on a standardized form.