

## Graduate Student Committee Procedures<sup>1</sup> and Master's Committee Appointment Signature Form

(For a complete list of master's committee policies, please refer to the Graduate Bulletin or on-line at [www.gradsch.psu.edu/bulletins/whitebook/](http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/bulletins/whitebook/))

### I. Justification:

A graduate student's committee is responsible for approving a student's program and promoting communication among the graduate student, the committee chair (or adviser), and the members of the committee, and, more generally, for helping to ensure the successful completion of a student's program. The committee should be appointed as soon as possible in the student's master's program. The following **Master's Student Committee Policies and Procedures** are designed to achieve these goals, minimize misunderstandings, and help foster a collegial relationship among the graduate student, the committee chair, and the members of the committee throughout the graduate student's program. **Each master's student, chair and committee member should receive a copy of these policies and procedures.**

### II. Policies and Procedures for Master's Students and Committees:

1. The **master's committee** should meet with the student **at least once per year** to (1) provide guidance, (2) finalize and approve the research proposal of the student so that there is a clear understanding of the research goals and objectives, (3) assess the quality and progress of the research, and (4) discuss programmatic issues (e.g., course requirements).
2. Both the **chair** and the **student** are responsible for providing a copy of the final draft of the dissertation/paper to the committee **at least 2 weeks** prior to the scheduled date of the final oral examination. The chair should schedule a date for the examination **at least two weeks** prior to the examination.
3. Both the **chair** and the **student** are responsible for ensuring the completion of a draft of the dissertation/paper and **for adequate consultation** with members of the **master's** committee well in advance of the final oral examination. Major revisions of the dissertation/paper should be completed before this examination. The dissertation/paper should be in its "final" draft, with correct and polished content and style, appropriate notes, bibliography, tables, etc., at the time it is distributed to the committee members. **If committee members find that the draft submitted to them is not in this form, the chair is notified and postponement of the examination is considered.**
4. **If a committee member finds that the "final" draft is not correct and polished with respect to content and style, it is his/her responsibility to notify the committee chair (or adviser) at least one week in advance of the final oral examination date.** The **committee member** should indicate his/her concerns regarding the draft and recommend consideration of postponement of the examination to the committee chair (or adviser). The **committee chair** (or adviser), in consultation with committee members, is responsible for notifying the student and assessing whether the student can make the necessary revisions to the "final" draft before the examination date. If it is determined that revisions cannot be made in time, the examination should be postponed. If differences exist among committee members, the **department head** or **program chair** should be consulted to hear the expressed concerns and determine whether the examination should be postponed.
5. **If the dissertation/paper is deemed unsatisfactory at the time of the examination by at least two-thirds of the committee, the student will fail the examination.** If a candidate fails, it is the responsibility of the committee to determine whether another examination may be taken by the student.
6. The primary responsibilities of The Outside Member are to (1) maintain the academic standards of the Graduate School and (2) assure that all procedures are carried out fairly. The Outside Member represents the Graduate School and, as such, The Outside Member shall be a member of the Graduate Faculty but need not have direct expertise in the research area of the candidate. The Outside Member may contribute technical expertise, but this role is subordinate to the aforementioned primary responsibilities. The Outside Member shall not hold an appointment having a budgetary connection to or other conflict of interest in the department or academic unit to which the doctoral program belongs, or to the department or academic unit of the chair or dissertation advisor, and cannot serve as either chair or co-chair of the committee.

PENNSSTATE



<sup>1</sup> Although master's programs vary widely across the University and differ from doctoral programs, departments and programs are urged to follow the spirit of the Procedures for Doctoral Students (points 1-6 above), when appropriate, for graduate committees of master's students. These Procedures (points 1-6) should be added to graduate program handbooks and/or web sites of departments or programs.

## Master's Committee Appointment Signature Form

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 Student Name (Print or Type)

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 Student Number

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 Degree Sought (Ph.D./D.Ed.)

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 Graduate Program

- III. **Master's Committee Appointment Signature Page:** A minimum of three members of the Graduate Faculty is required. At least one committee member must be from a graduate program area outside of the Department. The majority of the committee should be faculty in the Department. Please refer to the Department Graduate Student Handbook for your specific degree "Advisor and Committees" section for detailed guidelines.

As the student/chair/committee member, I have carefully read and agree to the policies and procedures outlined on page 1, and, if a committee member, agree to serve as a chair/committee member for the student specified.

**\*Student:**

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 Signature

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 Date

**\*Chair of the Committee:**

(Must be a member of the major field)

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 Printed Name

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 Signature

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 Date

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 List all departments/programs with which you have a budgetary connection

**Co-Chair (if applicable):**

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 Printed Name

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 Signature

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 Date

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 List all departments/programs with which you have a budgetary connection or adjunct appointment

**\*Thesis or Paper Advisor**

(Identify and sign even if chair or co-chair)

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 Printed Name

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 Signature

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 Date

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 List all departments/programs with which you have a budgetary connection or adjunct appointment

**\*Major Field Member(s):**

(In addition to the chair or co-chair)

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 Printed Name

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 Signature

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 Date

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 Printed Name

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 Signature

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 Date

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 Printed Name

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 Signature

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 Date

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 Printed Name

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 Signature

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 Date

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 Printed Name

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 Signature

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 Date

**\*The Outside Member:**  
(Cannot chair or co-chair;  
**Must sign form last in order to assess potential conflicts)**

**As The Outside Member of this committee, I affirm that I do not have a budgetary connection or adjunct appointment or other conflict of interest with the department or academic unit to which the master's program belongs, or to the department or academic unit of the chair or dissertation advisor, and cannot serve as either chair or co-chair of the committee.**

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 Printed Name

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 Signature

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 Date

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 List all departments/programs with which you have a budgetary connection or adjunct appointment

\*Required Fields



**Additional members of the committee from outside the department or program, if applicable:**

_____	_____	_____
Printed Name	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Printed Name	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Printed Name	Signature	Date

**Minor Field Member(s), if applicable:**

_____	_____	_____
Printed Name	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Printed Name	Signature	Date

**Gen. Studies Member(s): (For D.Ed. Students)**

_____	_____	_____
Printed Name	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Printed Name	Signature	Date

**Special Member(s), if applicable:**  
(Attach memo of request and vitae)

_____	_____	_____
Printed Name	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Printed Name	Signature	Date

**Graduate Program Head/Chair or Graduate Officer:**

_____	_____	_____
Printed Name	Signature	Date

**Please note:**

**(1) If the composition of the master's committee changes, a new committee appointment signature page must be resubmitted to the Graduate staff assistant to be signed by the Graduate Program Officer, but only the new committee member needs to sign it.**

