

Advisors and Supervisory Committees

When a student is accepted into a graduate program, a temporary advisor is assigned by the department chair or graduate program director. Following departmental procedures and regulations, a permanent advisor who will be responsible for helping the student to identify a supervisory committee and develop a program of study is then selected. For professional programs, please see the program catalog description regarding the role of advisors and supervisory committees. The student should discuss the appointment of a supervisory committee early in the program.

All supervisory Committees shall consist of an odd number of members. These members must be members of the Graduate Faculty and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Appointments to supervisory Committees of non-faculty members or of faculty members not on the Graduate Faculty must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. A listing of Graduate Faculty is contained in this catalog.

A master's degree supervisory committee must include at least three graduate faculty members who are approved by the department director of graduate programs and the Dean of the Graduate School. At least one member must be from within and at least one must be from outside the department in which the student is enrolled; the outside member will also serve as the Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR, see below).

A doctoral degree supervisory committee must include at least five graduate faculty members who are approved by the department director of graduate studies and the Dean of the Graduate School. Three members must be from within and at least one must be from outside the department in which the student is enrolled; one of the outside members will also serve as the Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR, see below).

The Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) is typically appointed at the same time the other members of the committee are named, according to the departmental procedures and policies, and must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. The GFR must be a current member of the Graduate Faculty and be selected from outside the department in which the student is studying. The GFR represents the Graduate School on the advisory committee and is responsible for reporting the results of graduate examinations to the Dean of the Graduate School. In addition, according to departmental policies and procedures, the GFR may also serve as a regular voting member of the supervisory committee.

Scheduling of the Exam

1. The student and major advisor must work with the GFR and other committee members to schedule a convenient time for the examination. The major advisor must notify the Graduate School of the date, time, and place of the exam **at least one week prior** to the exam. To schedule an oral exam through the Graduate School, please fill out this form (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdoYc79uP2zQb5uVdNt_3F8XVuDE7ObIVCD2dLwK9A6FJtyqg/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0&gxids=7757). The request form must be submitted by the Committee Chair/Department Chair.
2. When the department schedules the exam, the Graduate School issues an invitation to the committee and the student (a "yes" response will automatically populate the exam to the individual's ISU Google Calendar). Additionally, separate email notifications are sent to:

- a. The Committee – Containing information the electronic ballot link
 - b. The GFR – Containing GFR instructions for expected conduct during the exam
 - c. The Student - Confirming date, time, and location
3. If the student or major advisor wishes to change the time of a previously scheduled exam, they must contact all members of the committee and arrange a mutually agreeable time. The Graduate School must be notified in advance.
 4. Any committee members who cannot physically be present may attend by way of distance communication software (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet, Skype).

Instructions for Graduate Faculty Representatives

Conduct of the Exam

The GFR represents the Graduate School by ensuring that the exam is conducted fairly.

1. **Under no circumstances should the GFR permit the exam to be conducted if any member of the committee is not present.**
2. During the exam, the GFR may ask questions and participate in the examination of the student if he or she wishes.
3. The responsibilities of the GFR are to:
 - a. Ensure that the exam is conducted professionally and fairly.
 - b. Tally the vote of the members of the committee (after the student has left the room and the committee has deliberated) and announce the results to the committee.
 - c. Ensure that the student is aware of the results of the vote (Pass or Fail).
 - d. Use the appropriate self-service ballot link contained in the scheduling confirmation email sent by the Graduate School.
 - e. Write an evaluation of the exam, noting any irregularities (e.g., inappropriate questions, insufficient time for adequate examination).

The Graduate Council wishes to ensure that every exam is conducted fairly and with sufficient rigor to serve as a final examination for the awarding of an advanced degree. The Graduate Council appreciates the help and the cooperation of GFR in this effort.

Conflict of Interest of Graduate Faculty

Faculty are expected to conduct themselves professionally in their evaluation of graduate students, and are expected to exclude themselves from evaluation of graduate students with whom impartiality may be jeopardized by considerations that are not academic.

Procedure for Changing a Major Advisor

When a graduate student seeks a change in his/her major advisor, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The student must submit to the academic unit head or graduate program director, as appropriate, a written request for change of major advisor. This request shall contain the rationale on which the request is based and may, if the student wishes, propose a specific replacement.
2. If the unit head/program director and the current advisor accept the rationale, and if an appropriate new advisor acceptable to the student is secured, the unit head/program director will submit the proposed new appointment to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.
3. Should the unit head/program director or the current major advisor not agree to the proposed change and the conditions thereof, and if no compromise

acceptable to all parties can be reached, the matter shall be arbitrated by the unit graduate faculty (or its designated committee). Such arbitration may need to consider the question of ownership of data from research already undertaken by the student under the major advisor's supervision, similarly whether another appropriately specialized major advisor is available for the student. The unit head/program director will notify the Dean of the Graduate School of the decision reached by the department graduate faculty or its designated committee.

4. Any appeal of the department's decision by the student shall be directed to the Dean of the Graduate School.

4. In the event a student is unable to form a committee or install a chair/major advisor for their thesis/dissertation, the student is thus unable to move forward with their degree requirement. The student may have two options to consider:

- a. Withdraw from the academic program if they are not able to move forward with the thesis/dissertation requirement.
- b. Apply to change academic programs, thus encountering a new set of requirements.

Changes to or Vacancy in Major Advisor or Committee Member

1. Major Advisor terminating employment with Idaho State University.
 - a. Upon the announcement of a major advisor's resignation from Idaho State University, the primary responsibility for determining the new advisor for the graduate student will lie with the student and the department administering the program. If possible and desirable to all parties, the original Major Advisor can be retained temporarily on the department graduate faculty in order to remain on the committee and advise the student to degree completion. His/her role on the committee will also be negotiated by the student and the department. If it is not possible or desirable for the advisor to remain part of the committee, the department chair, the department graduate program director, and/or the department faculty will consult with the student and identify a new advisor. The Graduate School will be apprised of the process and the decision, and will ensure the process is fair for the student while maintaining rigorous standards in the program.
 - b. If the department's resolution is unsatisfactory to the student, the student may appeal to the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School, in consultation with the department, the Graduate Council, and the Graduate Faculty Representative (if one has been assigned), as necessary, will determine the student's advising status.
 - c. Among the advising options available to the student are the following:
 - i. If the student is well advanced and nearing completion of his/her project, s/he may remain at ISU and complete his/her degree, without a new Program of Study.
 - ii. If possible and desirable, the advisor may be retained on the department's graduate faculty for the time required for the student to complete the degree, not to exceed three years.
 - iii. The student may request to be re-assigned to a new major advisor from within the Program. A student currently paid from a major advisor's extra or intramural funds will be awarded a stipend subject to available program resources, in consultation with the Dean of the Graduate School and the relevant Graduate Program Director and Department Chair.
 - iv. In the case of doctoral students, if programmatically available, the student may instead complete a thesis and examination for a Master's Degree before exiting the Program. Decisions as to the desirability of these options will be made based on the progression of the student in his/her research project and how much time remains before completion of the work.
 - v. The student may leave ISU with the departing major advisor.
2. In the event of the death or incapacitation of the major advisor, resulting in an inability to fulfill the required advisory duties to the graduate student, the same procedure will apply (except, of course, 1.c.ii).
3. A student-initiated change of major advisor must be submitted to relevant Graduate Program Director and Department Chair as per the current Policy "Procedure for Changing a Major Advisor" (2012-2013 Graduate Catalog, p. 13).