**MASTER’S**

**Major Professor**  
The Major Professor serves as the student's advisor and mentor. Students should confer with the Department (or equivalent) to confirm the internal process and timeline for the selection and appointment of the Major Professor. The student must identify a major professor from the student’s Department (or equivalent) and receive that person's agreement to serve as major professor. The selection of the Major Professor must be approved and appointed by the Department as soon as possible, but no later than the time the student has completed 50% of the program. Students must have a major professor in order to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress.

If a major professor cannot be identified or in the event a major professor is unable or unwilling to continue serving on the student's committee, the student is responsible for finding another major professor from the Department (or equivalent). Students who are unable to find a replacement major professor should confer with the Program Director for available options (including converting to a non-thesis program if available.) If no other options exist, the student may be requested to voluntarily withdraw from the program or may be honorably withdrawn in good academic standing. The student and major professor should plan a program of study which, when completed, will satisfy the degree requirements specified. A copy of this program, signed by the student and professor, must be maintained in the student's department file.

Major Professors must meet the following requirements:

* Be from the student’s home Department (or serves as a co-major professor with someone from the Department)
* Be graduate faculty\*, as defined by the University, from the student's academic area.
* Be engaged in current and sustained scholarly, creative, or research activities and have met departmental (or equivalent) requirements
* Have been approved by the student’s Department Chair (or equivalent) to serve as a Major Professor or Co-Major Professor

*\*Affiliate Graduate Faculty may serve as a Co-Major Professor with a graduate faculty from the student’s department. Co-Major Professors may be two graduate faculty or one graduate faculty and one approved Graduate Affiliate Faculty*

The membership of graduate faculty will be based upon criteria developed within the appropriate program or department and approved at the college level. These criteria must be forwarded to the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies.

In the event a Major Professor leaves the University (i.e., for an appointment at another university, due to retirement, etc.) and the Major Professor is willing and able to continue serving on the student's committee, the Major Professor then becomes a Co-Major Professor on the Committee and another graduate faculty from the student’s Department is appointed as the other Co-Major Professor. In the event that the other Co-Major is Affiliate Graduate Faculty, the faculty leaving the University may remain as a member, with another graduate faculty from within the student’s Department appointed as the other Co-Major Professor.To ensure that the student can make satisfactory progress, one of the Co-Major Professors must be accessible on the University campus for the student to make satisfactory progress on the thesis/dissertation. In the event a Major Professor is on temporary leave (e.g. sabbatical, research, etc.); the Major Professor shall coordinate with the Program Director to facilitate the needs of the student. In some instances a student may choose to have two professors serve as Major Professor. In this situation the faculty are approved as “Co-Major Professors” and jointly serve in that role. Consequently both faculty must sign approval on paperwork pertaining to the student's processing (i.e., committee form, change of committee form, etc.)

**(Co-)Major Professor(s) of the Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Responsibilities**  
Available on the Office of Graduate Studies Website: [**http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php**](http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php)

**Thesis Committee**  
Students working toward a thesis degree will have the benefit of a committee of members of the graduate faculty. The Committee will approve the course of study for the student and plan for research, supervise the research and any comprehensive qualifying exams, and read and approve the thesis for content and format.

***Committee Member Definition***  
All graduate faculty, as defined by the University and the College/Department, and approved by their department and college, are assumed by the Office of Graduate Studies as qualified to be a member of and/or supervise a committee. Persons desiring to serve on a Masters committee who are not defined as Graduate Faculty (i.e. visiting faculty, professionals, etc.) by the University and the College/Department must submit a curriculum vitae and be approved by the Department, College, and Office of Graduate Studies, for each committee.

Committee Members must meet the following requirements:

* be graduate or affiliate graduate faculty, as defined by the University
* have the background and expertise that contributes to the success of the student.

In addition to the requirements specified in the Graduate Faculty definition, committee membership will be based upon criteria developed within the appropriate program or department and approved at the college level.  These criteria must be forwarded to the Dean of Office of Graduate Studies.

***Composition***  
The committee will consist of either:

* the major professor and at least two other members or
* two co-major professors and at least one other member
* A minimum of two members, including the Major Professor, must be from the student’s Department

Committee members should be from the general research-area in which the degree is sought. (Colleges and Programs may require additional committee members and specify characteristics.)

***Approval***  
Once a committee has been determined, a Supervisory Committee Form needs to be completed by the student and submitted to the Committee Members for original signatures. Check with the College for instructions and forms. The original appointment form and two (2) copies should be submitted to the College Associate Dean's office for approval. A copy of the approved form should be kept in the student's file. An approved and current Committee Form must be on file in the program/college before graduation may be certified. Committee forms need to be processed as early in the program as possible, but no later than the semester prior to graduation. (Colleges and departments may institute additional requirements for membership on Supervisory Committees.)

**Doctoral**

**Major Professor**

The Major Professor serves as the student's advisor and mentor. Students should confer with the Department (equivalent) to confirm the internal process and timeline for the selection and appointment of the Major Professor. The student must identify a major professor student’s from the Department (or equivalent) and receive that person's agreement to serve as major professor. The selection of the Major Professor must be approved and appointed by the department as soon as possible, but no later than the time the student has completed 50% of the program. Students must have a major professor in order to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress.

If a Major Professor cannot be identified or in the event a Major Professor is unable or unwilling to continue serving on the student's committee, the student is responsible for finding another Major Professor. Students who are unable to find a replacement Major Professor should confer with the Program Director for available options. If no other options exist the student may be requested to voluntarily withdraw from the program or may be honorably withdrawn in good academic standing. The student and Major Professor should plan a program of study which, when completed, will satisfy the degree requirements specified. A copy of this program, signed by the student and professor, should be maintained in the student's department file.

Major Professors must meet the following requirements:

* Be from the student’s home Department (or serves as a co-major professor with someone from the Department)
* Be graduate faculty\*, as defined by the University, from the student’s academic area
* Be engaged in current and sustained scholarly, creative, or research activities and have met departmental (or equivalent) requirements
* Be active in scholarly pursuits as evidenced by at least one refereed publication in the last three years.
* Have been approved by the student’s Department Chair (or equivalent) to serve as a Major Professor or Co-Major Professor.

*\*Affiliate Graduate Faculty may serve as a Co-Major Professor with a graduate faculty from the student’s department. Co-Major Professors may be two graduate faculty or one graduate faculty and one approved Graduate Affiliate Faculty*

The membership of graduate faculty will be based upon criteria developed within the appropriate program or department and approved at the college level. These criteria must be forwarded to the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies.

In the event a Major Professor leaves the University (i.e., for an appointment at another university, due to retirement, etc.) and the Major Professor is willing and able to continue serving on the student's committee, the Major Professor then becomes a Co-Major Professor on the Committee and another graduate faculty from the student’s Department is appointed as the other Co-Major Professor. In the event that the other Co-Major is Affiliate Graduate Faculty, the faculty leaving the University may remain as a member, with another graduate faculty from within the student’s Department appointed as the other Co-Major Professor. It is important that one of the Co-Major Professors be accessible on the university campus for the student to make satisfactory progress on the thesis/dissertation. In the event a Major Professor is on temporary leave (e.g. sabbatical, research, etc.); the Major Professor shall coordinate with the Program Director to facilitate the needs of the student. In some instances, a student may choose to have two professors serve as Major Professor. In this situation the faculty are approved as “Co-Major Professors” and jointly serve in that role. Consequently, both faculty must sign approval on paperwork pertaining to the student's processing (i.e. committee form, change of committee form, admission to candidacy, etc.)

**(Co-)Major Professor(s) of the Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Responsibilities**  
Available on the Office of Graduate Studies Website: [**http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php**](http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php)

**Doctoral Dissertation Committee**  
Some Colleges have a Program Committee comprised of graduate faculty, who advise the student from admission up to doctoral candidacy, when the formal Doctoral Dissertation Committee is formed.  As soon as an area of research is determined and a major professor is selected, a Doctoral Dissertation Committee will be appointed and approved for the student. The Department will request approval of the Doctoral Committee from the Dean of the College and, as needed, the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies. The Doctoral Committee will approve the student's course of study and plan for research, supervise the research, grade the written comprehensive qualifying examination, read and approve the dissertation for content and format, and conduct the dissertation defense.

***Role of Doctoral Committee***

Depending on the College, either the Program Committee or the Doctoral Dissertation Committee is responsible for:

* approving the student's course of study
* grading the written comprehensive qualifying examination

***Doctoral Dissertation Committee***

Doctoral Dissertation Committees will

* approve the plan for research
* supervise the research
* read and approve the dissertation, and
* conduct the dissertation defense.

***Member Definition***  
All graduate faculty, as defined by the University and the College/Department, and approved by their department and college, are assumed by the Office of Graduate Studies as qualified to be a member of and/or supervise a committee. Persons desiring to serve on a Doctoral committee who are not defined as Graduate Faculty (i.e. visiting faculty, professionals, etc.) by the University and the College/Department must submit a curriculum vitae and be approved by the Department, College, and Office of Graduate Studies, for each committee.

Committee Members must meet the following requirements:

* be graduate or affiliate graduate faculty, as defined by the University
* have the background and expertise that contributes to the success of the student.

In addition to the requirements specified in the Graduate Faculty definition, committee membership will be based upon criteria developed within the appropriate program or department and approved at the college level.  These criteria must be forwarded to the Dean of Office of Graduate Studies

***Composition***  
The Doctoral Dissertation Committee will consist of at least four members from the graduate faculty

* the Major Professor must be from the student’s department and academic area
* two additional members must come from the academic area (i.e. discipline) of the student
* at least one external member (from outside the Department, School, or equivalent, hosting the doctoral program, but may be within the academic discipline)
* A minimum of two members, including the Major Professor, must be from the student’s Department

Faculty holding joint or adjunct appointments in the degree-granting academic unit (i.e. Department or equivalent) cannot be external members on a student's committee.

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***Approval***Once a committee has been determined, a Doctoral Dissertation Committee Form needs to be completed by the student and submitted to the Committee Members for original signature. Check with the College for instructions and forms. To insure uniformity of excellence across the colleges, the (Co-)Major Professor(s) of Doctoral Dissertation Committees will need to submit a current curriculum vitae (equivalent to an NIH Bio, approximately two pages long with the last three (3) years of scholarly activity included) with the committee appointment form to the College Dean or designee. This approval is in addition to the approval from their department chairperson. (Colleges and departments may institute additional requirements for membership on Doctoral Dissertation Committees.) Once approved, the original form and the approved Curriculum Vitae (CV) are placed in the student’s file. An approved and current Form must be on file in the program/college before graduation may be certified. Doctoral Dissertation Committee Forms need to be processed as early in the program as possible, but no later than the semester prior to graduation.