



**Instructions:** Graduate students should work with their faculty mentor to establish their committees within the first 2-3 semesters of their program. Other graduate forms (i.e. Program of study etc.) will not be accepted by the Registrar until the student's committee is approved and on file in the Registrar's office. Reference the Graduate Committee Formation policy if there are questions on committee formation. This document is available on the Office of the Registrar webpage under Graduate Student Forms, Petitions and Guidelines, [http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/students/graduate\\_student\\_forms.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/students/graduate_student_forms.html).

### **Committee membership roles**

**Chair:** The Chair serves as the primary resource for student direction and sees that all steps of the graduate program proceed in a timely fashion. Any tenure track faculty or extended term academic professional who holds a terminal degree, emeritus faculty or faculty who serve via University-Agency cooperative agreements may serve as chair for granting degrees within their academic home. In most cases, annually appointed academic faculty (temporary, visiting research professor, clinical professor and professor of practice should not generally chair graduate committees. **The decision to serve as a graduate committee chair implies the following commitment:**

*"I agree to take primary responsibility for guiding the student in all aspects of degree completion, and to provide the student with professional and personal support. I will ensure regular committee meetings and clearly communicated expectations to enable the student to progress towards the degree completion in a timely manner as long as the student meets the program requirements and expectations of their program."*

**Co-Chair:** Any faculty capable of serving as Chair and any extended term Academic Professional who does not hold a terminal degree but who demonstrates a record of research or creative activity appropriate to the student's degree may serve as a committee co-chair.

**Outside member:** The role of the Outside member is to uphold the rigor and fairness of the graduate process. An outside member should usually be a tenured faculty member. Untenured tenure-track faculty may serve as the outside member if the faculty member has demonstrated experience mentoring graduate students and the Committee chair has no role in evaluating the untenured faculty member. Outside member, tenured or untenured, must have an academic home outside of the degree-granting unit. **A faculty's agreement to serve as the outside member implies the following:**

*"I agree, in addition to providing academic assistance to the student, to monitor this graduate committee for its adherence to University policies, assure that the student is treated fairly and that the student meets University standards of academic achievement worthy of the degree being pursued."*

**Required members-** Required members are needed to compose a full committee (a total of 3 for Masters and Ed.D. and 5 members on Ph.D. committees). Required members include any UW faculty who is active in a research or creative program pertinent to the student's degree. Required members must hold a degree equal to or higher than the degree sought by the student. (Written exception requests are possible and the student should consult with the department head or their chair to consider an exception).

**External members:** Individuals not employed by UW may serve if they hold a degree equal to or higher than the degree the student seeks and who hold expertise within the student's discipline. External members may not replace Outside members.

**Other members:** Any UW faculty capable of serving in other committee roles *and* any UW faculty or academic professional may serve as additional committee members without seeking an exception. Additional faculty including *annually appointed academic faculty*, can be added to any committee for their expertise as desired. Students should limit the number of committee members to ensure that timely meetings and committee function is not compromised by unwieldy committee size. In no case can the total of External and other members out-number required members.

**Exceptions** in committee service are proposed by the Department Head and approved by the College Dean and Academic Affairs. In some cases, *individual faculty* with particular expertise can be approved for exceptions to the service roles described above. Students should consult first with their committee chair and the department to pursue an exception in forming their graduate committee.