

FLORIDA	OFFICIAL
POLYTECHNIC	UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY	ACADEMIC POLICY

Subject/Title: Graduate Thesis Committee & Project Advisory Group
FPU Policy Number: FPU-5.0123AP
<input type="checkbox"/> New Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major Revision of Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Minor Technical Revision of Policy
Date First Adopted: May 20, 2016
Date Revised: October 9, 2020
Responsible Division/Department: Academic Affairs
Initiating Authority: Provost & Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs

A. APPLICABILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

This policy applies to all faculty and graduate students.

B. POLICY STATEMENT

1. Thesis-Students. A student working towards a degree that requires a thesis must have a Graduate Thesis Committee. The Committee must be comprised of at least three full-time faculty members (not adjunct, nor visiting, nor courtesy). The Committee Chair (thesis advisor) must be an expert in the subject matter of the proposed thesis. In appropriate cases, industry partners may serve on the Committee as members in addition to minimum required full-time faculty. The Committee Chair's responsibilities include, but may not be limited to, advising the student's course of study; forming the committee in consultation with Department Chair; supervising the student's research; and, along with the committee, reading and approving the thesis for content and format, and working with the student and committee to schedule a defense. The Department Chair must approve the makeup of the Committee.
 - a. Thesis Advisors
 - i. Disciplinary Track: The Committee Chair (thesis advisor) must be from the department that includes the "track" for the graduate degree.
 - ii. Interdisciplinary Track: The Committee Chair (thesis advisor) must be from one of the departments that sponsors courses for the interdisciplinary track.
 - b. Thesis Committees
 - i. Disciplinary Track: Each department must determine how to staff graduate committees for the "track" in the department. One of the Thesis Committee members should be a faculty member in the department that is responsible for the track that the student has chosen, while the second Thesis Committee member should be from outside the department but with experience relevant to the student's research area. Likewise, members from outside the University must have experience relevant to the student's research area. All committees must include at minimum three faculty members with appointments as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor.
 - ii. Interdisciplinary Track: The Thesis Committee must include a third committee member (four members total). This third committee

member must 1. be a subject matter expert in a field relevant to the student's thesis area; 2. be a member of a department other than the faculty advisor's home department; and 3. be a member of a department that contributes to the interdisciplinary track. This committee member must be approved by the Chair of the Department that sponsors the track chosen by the student.

2. Project-Students. Students working toward a degree that culminates in a project must have a Project Advisory Group. The Project Advisory Group consists of at least two full-time faculty members (not adjunct, nor visiting, nor courtesy): the student's advisor who serves as the chair of the group, and a second faculty member. Both members should be from the Department supporting the degree-program track. The Department Chair must approve the makeup of the Project Advisory Group.
 - a. For interdisciplinary projects, a third member from outside the student's primary disciplinary focus may be required per direction of the Department Chair, Graduate Division Director, Provost, or designee.
3. Changing from Thesis to Project. Students on the Thesis track may opt for a Project prior to enrolling in Thesis 2, or students may be reassigned to a Project at the direction of their advisor or committee. Both actions must be approved by the Department Chair for the degree program or track the student is registered in and the Graduate Division Director. Students pursuing a Project are required to fulfill the course requirements for a program with the Project as the culminating experience, meaning an additional course may be required. Thesis 1 will not count towards the degree for those students whose program culminates in a Project.

C. PROCEDURES

1. Each department sets its own procedures for assigning faculty advisors (Committee Chair) and each faculty advisor/student pairing must be approved by the Department Chair (or designee) and the Graduate Division Director (or if there is no division director, the Provost or designee).
2. The student follows the processes set by their primary advisor's department.
3. Detailed procedures, timelines, and information for students in non-thesis, or project-tracks may be found in the Graduate Student Handbook and/or Thesis Manual and the Graduate Division Operations Handbook.
4. All forms may be obtained from the Office of the University Registrar.

POLICY APPROVAL	
Policy No.: FPU-5.0123AP	
Initiating Authority	Date
Policies & Procedures Committee Chair	Date
Vice President of Academic Affairs	Date
President/Designee	Date
Approved by FPU BOT, if required	Date
EXECUTED SIGNATURE PAGES ARE AVAILABLE IN THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL	