School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning
Arizona State University

How to: Advisor & Committee

Doctoral students will have an established faculty advisor at the time of admission. Master's students are admitted with the capstone course as their default culminating experience, which does not require a faculty advisor or committee. However, depending on the program, students may have the option to pursue a committee-based culminating experience, such as a thesis or applied project, which requires a faculty advisor and supervisory committee.

If the student's culminating experience requires a faculty advisor/committee, students work with their faculty advisor to map out their degree progression. Students are encouraged to consult with their advisor prior to registering for classes each semester to ensure classes will contribute to academic and career goals.

Students will also consult their faculty advisor to form a supervisory committee made up of members who can contribute to the student's research.

Supervisory Committee Guidelines

- Refer to the SGSUP Graduate Programs Handbook which aligns with your admit term year and to your applicable graduate program to determine what policies and procedures are most accurate to your case.
- Most supervisory committees must have a minimum of three members, including the faculty advisor, who usually serves as chair of the committee.
- At least 50% of the committee members must be SGSUP faculty. This may require adding a fourth committee member.
- Committee members typically must hold a PhD or other terminal degree.
- Faculty members outside SGSUP may serve as co-chair but not chair, unless otherwise endorsed as Graduate Faculty. MUEP thesis committee chair (or at least one co-chair) must be a member of the planning faculty.
- Committee members should be selected by the end of the second semester (MA and MUEP thesis/applied project students and PhD students with master's degree) or by the end of the fourth semester (PhD students without a master's degree).

Establishing the Committee

Thesis & Dissertation

- Confirm directly with the committee chair and members that each person is willing and able to participate on the committee. The student must add each committee member to the iPOS to officially establish the committee with the university.
- Committee changes must be submitted on the iPOS.
- Master's thesis students must submit the External Committee Member Request form under "Supervisory Committee" to add committee members outside of SGSUP.

- PhD students must submit the *External Committee Member Request* to add committee members outside SGSUP if the individual is not endorsed to serve on PhD committees by Graduate Faculty. To verify that a faculty member is approved to serve on PhD committees, visit Graduate Faculty. If the student is unsure if a faculty member is approved, or they know special approval is required to serve on the student's committee, contact the Manager of Graduate Programs.

Applied Project

- Confirm directly with the committee chair and members that each person is willing and able to participate on the committee. For MUEP committees, forward the faculty committee's written approval to MUEP program coordinator and the Graduate Programs Manager.
- MUEP Committee members must sign the *Applied Project Scope Statement* prior to beginning work on the applied project.
- If committee changes are needed, work with the Graduate Programs Manager.
- The committee chair must be added to iPOS (applied project committee members do not need to be submitted via iPOS).