

EECS Department

Graduate Student Advisory Definitions (Roles)

Approved by EECS graduate faculty January 2016

11-20-15

- 1) The EECS Department has two designated Graduate Coordinators: One for Electrical Engineering and one for Computer Science, for which each serves their respective faculty and students
- 2) The EECS Department distinguishes between the three following advisor terms:
 - a. Academic Advisor
 - b. Major Advisor
 - c. Thesis Advisor
- 3) Graduate Coordinators serve as the Academic and Major Advisors for all respective graduate students from start to completion of degree
- 4) Academic Advisor Role
 - a. The Graduate Office does not define the term Academic Advisor. Rather, the Graduate Office defines the role of Major Advisor, which in this present context, is one and the same as the Academic Advisor
 - b. Where signatures are required, signs in space for major advisor
 - c. Assists students with university regulations, including both graduate office and international office procedures, timelines, etc.
 - d. Assists students with understanding of graduate curriculum and course offerings, leading to an acceptable plan of study (note, students are free to seek advice from other faculty members on course selection and development of their plan of study).
 - e. Signs off on internal plan of study form (if applicable)
 - f. Signs off on graduate office plan of study form
 - g. Signs off on international office forms
 - h. Signs off on university forms, such as petitions, etc.
- 5) Major Advisor Role (in addition to the responsibilities as academic advisor)
 - a. Serves as primary supervisor for all students holding a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (in their respective programs)
 - b. Guides student towards selection of graduate study option (A or B) for EE and CS, and option C for CS only.
 - c. Communicates with faculty members who are advising option A students, i.e., the student's thesis advisor, regarding
 - i. Plan of Study (remains primary advisor)
 - ii. Committee Selection (may or may not serve on the committee)
 - iii. Examinations (coordinates all examinations)
- 6) Thesis Advisor Role
(Option A or B)
 - a. Student must identify and interview with perspective Thesis Advisor, which may or may not be the Graduate Coordinator.

- b. The faculty member who agrees to become the student's Thesis Advisor will alert Graduate Coordinator and work with student in completing the Graduate Office *Committee Request and Assignment of Graduate Faculty Form*.
 - c. Thesis Advisor will work with student on forming committee, comprised of
 - i. Thesis Advisor (member of Graduate Faculty) also referred to as Committee Chair
 - ii. Two or more other advisors (members of Graduate Faculty)
 - 1. One or two from program who has
 - a. been student's instructor for at least one course and/or
 - b. provided significant input on student's research
 - 2. One from another program may serve as a committee member who has provided significant input on student's research
 - iii. If warranted, the Student and Committee Chair may request to have up to two additional advisors on the committee, (not necessarily members of Graduate Faculty)
 - iv. Note, if Computer Science and Option B, the CS Graduate Coordinator must serve on the committee.
 - v. Graduate Faculty Representative, selected by graduate office
 - d. Thesis Advisor will submit form to Graduate Coordinator, who will submit to graduate office on behalf of the department.
 - i. Graduate Coordinator will sign form as Major Advisor.
 - ii. Thesis Advisor will sign form as Thesis/Dissertation Advisor.
 - iii. Thesis Advisor will sign form as Advisor.
- 7) Option C (Computer Science)
- a. Graduate Coordinator serves as Major Advisor and Advisor with regards to Graduate Office *Committee Request and Assignment of Graduate Faculty Form*.
 - b. Graduate Coordinator will work with student on forming committee, comprised of
 - i. Graduate Coordinator
 - ii. Two other advisors, with at least one who has been student's instructor for **at least one course** within the Computer Science Program. If one is selected from outside the program, the advisor should be listed on two or more courses on the student's plan of study.
 - iii. Graduate Faculty Representative, selected by graduate office
 - c. The Graduate Coordinator will submit to graduate office on behalf of the department.
 - i. Graduate Coordinator will sign form as Major Advisor.
 - ii. Graduate Coordinator will sign form as Advisor.

Advisory Committee

After consultation with the student, the head of the major department will designate a major advisor. As soon as possible, but no later than the completion of fifty (50) percent of the credits toward graduation, the major advisor will recommend to the Dean of the Graduate School (by submission of the committee approval request form) members of an Advisory Committee. All graduate students in master's (option A, B and C) degrees must form a committee. The Advisory Committee must be composed of three (3) to five (5) members. The committee must include:

- *Committee Chair* – must hold either full Graduate Faculty or Associate Graduate Faculty status at SDSU to chair master's (option B and C) committees. Committee Chair must hold full Graduate Faculty status at SDSU to chair master's (option A) committees. Lecturer or Senior Lecturer-rank faculty who hold Associate Graduate Faculty status may chair master's (option A) committees with Department Head approval. This member assists the student in developing a suitable graduate program, provides continuing guidance and counsel, evaluates student progress, informs the student as to who will provide primary research supervision, serves as a contact for the committee and ensures the completion of the degree requirements to the Dean of the Graduate School.
- *Additional member(s) with expertise within the discipline* - must hold either full Graduate Faculty or Associate Graduate Faculty status at SDSU. Additional members assist the student in developing a suitable graduate program, provide continuing guidance and counsel, evaluate student progress, and assist with the completion of the degree requirements. Additional members may serve as co-chairs.
- *Graduate Faculty Representative* - selected by the Dean of the Graduate School from within a distant, broadly-defined discipline. This member represents the Graduate Council to ensure the supervision of the student is carried out with sufficient integrity. This member ensures that minimal academic standards are maintained and acts as an advocate and counselor for the student. For votes regarding the final oral defense, the Graduate Faculty Representative must vote in the affirmative for the vote to carry.

Committee chairs, with department head approval, may request up to two (2) additional committee members. The Dean of the Graduate School approves requests for additional committee members.

Professional doctorate degree holders with full Graduate Faculty status may only serve as chair for a committee for the degree which they hold.

Adjunct faculty members or University employees holding a master's degree who fail to qualify as Associate Graduate Faculty member may serve on graduate student committees. Such committees must contain the minimum number of Full/Associate Graduate Faculty in addition to the master's degree holder. A committee may only include one master's degree holder. Addition of the master's degree holder does not alter the maximum number of committee members allowed. The master's degree holder is not considered as having Associate Graduate Faculty status and cannot serve as co-chair.

The Advisory Committee is responsible for approving the content and scope of comprehensive and final examinations, both written and oral. The committee must evaluate the student's performance for the final oral exam and all other degree requirements taken under the auspices of -798 coursework (including those internal to the program).

All committee members must be available for regular meetings with the student and/or committee. Each committee member has voting privileges. Only committee members may vote on business before the committee. For activities requiring committee votes, the chair must ensure due diligence for accommodating all members of the committee. The Graduate Faculty Representative and all but one (1) of the graduate committee must vote in the affirmative to pass the student.

The Department Head is responsible for informing the Graduate School if and when a committee member can no longer discharge her/his duties consistent with the policies of the University.

Master's Degree Checklist

<i>Requirements</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
Designation of Major Advisor	Upon acceptance into Graduate School.
Designation of Advisory Committee	During first semester of graduate work Graduate Faculty Representative will be assigned by the Graduate School.
Plan of Study	During the first semester of graduate work or before 50% of coursework is complete. Must be approved by major advisor and submitted to Graduate School.
Graduation Application	During final semester, by deadline.*
Final Oral Exam	During final semester, by deadline.* Final oral exam form must be submitted two (2) weeks prior to exam date.
Thesis Format Check (Option A Only)	After successful completion of final oral exam, by deadline.*
Final Submission of Thesis (Option A Only)	Must complete format check first. Final submission due by deadline.* Signed acceptance page and library fee must also be submitted.
Final Submission of Research/Design Paper (Option B Only)	Submitted directly to the Department by specified deadline.

* The Graduate School sets deadlines for graduation (<http://www.sdstate.edu/graduate/current/important-dates.cfm>) each semester. Please also consult with your Department for other program specific requirements and deadlines. All forms are available on the Graduate School Forms page (<http://www.sdstate.edu/graduate/forms/index.cfm>).