

## **Dissertation/Thesis Committee and Defense Rules**

### **Composition of the Committee:**

The dissertation is completed under the direction of a committee consisting of a chair (the dissertation/thesis advisor) and at least three additional members. The chair and the majority of members must be core, associate, or affiliate faculty in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Georgia State with graduate faculty status. Generally, affiliate members may not serve as chair. The remaining members may have a faculty appointment in a department at GSU or another university or research institution as graduate faculty. At most one member can be from outside the department. Two members of the committee must have been part of the Candidacy Exam/Dissertation Proposal Committee of the student.

For thesis committees similar rules are to be followed with the following changes: at least three members are expected to form the committee.

### **How to nominate a committee:**

When nominating the members of the dissertation/thesis committee, the student will submit a Nomination of Dissertation/Thesis Committee Form. The student should prepare the form in consultation with his/her advisor. The student will provide the following information:

- a. Title of the dissertation/thesis;
- b. List of committee members from GSU;
- c. A current Curriculum Vitae for any person who is not a tenured or tenure-track faculty member of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

### **When to form the Dissertation Committee:**

A completed *Nomination of Dissertation/Thesis Committee Form* must be submitted to the Graduate Director by all students at least three months before the planned dissertation defense.

## **Use of Consultants for Dissertations:**

Doctoral dissertations and masters theses must be the product of the student to whom the degree is awarded. A doctoral/ thesis committee's approval of a student's dissertation is not only an approval of the manuscript and of the research described in it but also a certification that the student is qualified to conduct research in the areas examined. Basic to that certification is the knowledge that the student was primarily responsible for investigating the topic proposed, designing the proofs and theory, analyzing the data, and discussing the results, with minor help from his or her advisor, committee members, and others.

Hiring someone to conceptualize, design, analyze, or write a dissertation undermines the purpose of a dissertation and is inconsistent with the mission of a research university. With regard to the use of consultants, no student is allowed to obtain help with the design and analysis of his or her dissertation/thesis without prior written approval from his/her committee. This approval should not be granted if it is against the spirit of what was described above.

## **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of the student and the chair of the committee to prevent plagiarism. The chair of the committee is advised to use existent software to prevent plagiarism.

## **Dissertation/Thesis Defense**

Timing:

### **a. Two Months Prior to Dissertation/Thesis Defense Date:**

A student must consult with his/her Dissertation/Thesis Committee at least 2 months before the planned Dissertation/Thesis defense date in order to discuss the dissertation. At that time the committee will decide on the feasibility of the proposed Dissertation/Thesis defense date.

### **b. Four Weeks Prior to Dissertation/Thesis Defense Date:**

A copy of the entire complete dissertation must first be approved by the dissertation chair and then submitted by the student to all Dissertation/Thesis Committee members at least 4 weeks before the proposed Dissertation

Defense date. This allows at least 3 weeks for the student to work with his/her Dissertation/Thesis Committee in order to obtain approval from the Committee that the dissertation/thesis is ready for defense and 1 week for scheduling. To schedule the defense, the student must submit the completed *Permission Form* to the Graduate Director and provide a copy of the dissertation/thesis in its final form to the Front Office. The student and committee members should be aware that after this submission only small changes will be allowed to the manuscript.

c. At Least 1 Week Prior to the Dissertation/Thesis Defense: After the Dissertation/Thesis Committee agrees that the dissertation/thesis is ready for defense the student must schedule the defense.

The student will schedule a room for the presentation and ensure that an announcement is sent to all faculty and graduate students at least 1 week before the defense (note that rooms are usually difficult to reserve; therefore, it is recommended that a room be reserved as soon as possible). The dissertation/thesis abstract must accompany the announcement. A copy of the final dissertation/thesis must be available for faculty examination in the Front Office at least 1 week prior to the presentation.