

Committee Membership Rules

The Graduate Division sets forth the following rules for constructing a dissertation committee for committees formed during or after Fall Quarter 2021, and defines what sorts of faculty members fit the roles laid out in its [Doctoral Committee Membership Table](#).

In consultation with their faculty dissertation advisor and following their Ph.D. program guidelines, candidates shall request to appoint a Doctoral Committee consisting of at least four members with faculty appointments at UC San Diego. Eligibility of faculty in different academic series at UC San Diego to serve on and/or chair Doctoral Committees is determined by the Graduate Council. At least one Doctoral Committee member must have their primary appointment in a different department than the one in which the candidate's dissertation advisor/Doctoral Committee Chair holds their primary appointment. (Doctoral Committee Co-Chairs from different departments or programs satisfy this requirement; note that, even with evenly split appointments, faculty are primary in one department). At least two Doctoral Committee members must be from the department or program in which the student is enrolled and at least one Doctoral Committee member must be tenured or emeritus.

We have worked with Graduate Division staff to further clarify how they interpret these rules when it comes to the dissertation committees for Political Science graduate students, and for students in the joint Political Science/GPS PhD program. Here are the general guidelines for students in the two programs, followed by the critical definitions of inside members and tenured outside members.

Political Science (PS75)

- Any eligible person from any department can chair or co-chair a POLI committee. This includes GPS faculty, faculty in other departments, whether senior or junior. However, at least one member must have a primary appointment in a different department than the chair's primary department. If a chair is an Adjunct Professor or a Professor of Practice, a ladder rank faculty member must serve as a co-chair.
- Any faculty with an appointment in Political Science can serve on a POLI committee as an inside member, regardless of their appointment percentage, including GPS faculty who hold joint appointments with POLI.
- Outside members are anyone without an appointment in Political Science. This includes many GPS faculty members. Faculty with GPS as their only appointment count as one outside member. Their status as a "whole" member is not affected if other members on the committee have joint GPS/POLI appointments.

Committee configurations for PS75

2+2 Committee:

The doctoral committee consists of two members from the student's department and two from outside the department, including one tenured or emeritus member. At least one member must have a primary appointment in a different department than the chair's primary department.

Note: Outside the program means outside POLI but within UC San Diego. An outside member may not be outside the University. If a student wants a faculty member on their committee that is outside of UCSD, they may serve as a fifth member with an approved exception. Appointment of such external members who will participate in Doctoral Committee decisions must be justified with a written explanation at the time of requesting committee constitution and must be approved by the Graduate Division.

3+1 Committee:

The doctoral committee consists of three members from the student's department and one member from outside the department including one tenured or emeritus member. The outside member cannot serve as the chair of the committee in this configuration.

Note: Outside the program means outside POLI but within UC San Diego. An outside member may not be outside the University. If a student wants a faculty member on their committee that is outside of UCSD, they may serve as a fifth member with an approved exception. Appointment of such external members who will participate in Doctoral Committee decisions must be justified with a written explanation at the time of requesting committee constitution and must be approved by the Graduate Division.

Political Science and International Affairs (PS76)

The doctoral committee overseeing the completion of the dissertation for a student in the joint PhD program in Political Science and International Affairs must consist of three faculty members from the Department of Political Science and the School of Global Policy and Strategy, with at least one member from each unit. The fourth member must be from outside *both* POLI and GPS.

Process to Establish a Committee

- A student must submit their committee members for approval to the Graduate Coordinator at least two weeks prior to their scheduled defense. The committee request must be submitted by the Graduate Coordinator to the Graduate Division for final approval. Failure to obtain Graduate Division approval prior to the defense may delay advancement, or may invalidate the defense completely. In the case that the defense is invalidated due to the committee not being approved, the student must defend again.
- The student should refer to the [Dissertation Preparation and Submission Manual](#) to ensure that they are following necessary steps to graduate.

- The student must notify the Graduate Coordinator *prior* to the scheduled Dissertation defense so that the Graduate Coordinator is aware of the defense date. Once the defense is complete, the student or a member of the committee must notify the Graduate Coordinator so that the DocuSign Final Report Form may be initiated. All members of the committee and the Chair of the department must sign the form after the exam. The DocuSign form will automatically route to the Graduate Division once all signatures are obtained.

Please contact the Graduate Coordinator if you have questions regarding any of the rules outlined in this document.