

Graduate Committee Policy Department of Botany Graduate Program

The formation of a thesis or dissertation committee is initiated only after the student has interacted sufficiently with prospective faculty so that informed decisions can be made. Formation of a thesis or dissertation committee should happen no later than the end of a student's second semester in the graduate program, and it is strongly advised that students form their committee by the end of their first semester. The student will propose potential committee members to their adviser who will determine whether the proposed faculty are available to serve on the committee. Current members of the UH Manoa graduate faculty are listed on this Graduate Division website:

<http://manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/select-eligible-committee-members>. After approval by the Graduate Chair, the proposed permanent chairperson and committee will be presented to the Graduate Division for approval.

A candidate should make maximum use of his/her whole committee, indeed of the whole faculty, at all stages of his/her research. The committee expects to be kept informed of the progress of the research, and certainly the first encounter should not be through a draft thesis or dissertation.

A candidate has a right to use the expertise of his/her committee but he/she must use it properly. This applies particularly to the examination of a thesis or dissertation. A candidate is asking his/her committee members to support, with their reputations, the statement that he/she has completed a thesis or dissertation demonstrating an ability to conduct independent research. In this respect, drafts of thesis or dissertation chapters should always be submitted directly to the committee chairperson for his/her approval before being circulated to other members of the student's committee. The committees are composed as follows:

- **Ph.D.:** The committee must include at least five members. The committee may be larger but in all cases the majority must be Department of Botany Graduate Faculty and at least two (including the chairperson) must be instructional faculty in the Department of Botany. In addition, the University Representative must be from outside the Department of Botany Graduate Faculty and from another academic unit at UH Manoa.
- **M.S.:** The committee must include at least three members. The chairperson must be instructional faculty in the Department of Botany and the majority must be members of the Department of Botany Graduate Faculty.

In circumstances where one or more proposed committee members are not on the Botany Graduate Faculty, approval of the committee composition and of the new appointment to the Botany Graduate Faculty must be obtained by vote of the Department of Botany Faculty. To do this, the following materials need to be provided to the Graduate Chair **at least one week** before a proposed permanent graduate committee is brought to the faculty for consideration.

- Names of the proposed committee members. This should include a CV (abbreviated CV is OK) for the proposed committee member(s) who is/are not on the Botany Graduate Faculty.
- A short statement (few sentences) that describes the intended research. This does not have to be specific at this time as details are often not possible until the permanent committee is in place.
- A short statement describing how any committee members who are not on the Botany Graduate Faculty will help support the intended research, even if this seems obvious.

These items will be made available for review by the Graduate Chair to the Department of Botany faculty prior to the faculty meeting where the research topic and proposed committee will be discussed and voted upon. If a majority of Botany faculty vote in favor of the potential committee member(s), their names and CVs will be forwarded to the Graduate Division for ultimate approval of the committee composition.