

2.3 Dissertation Committee

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(A) Form and Timing

Students who have met all program requirements for an approved dissertation prospectus should submit a dissertation committee form to obtain LGS approval for their committees.

Student must obtain approval no later than March 15 of their fourth year.

Students who do not meet this deadline will be placed on academic probation, will not be eligible for PDS funds, and may forfeit financial support. These sanctions will be lifted when the student files a dissertation committee form.

(B) Changes to the Committee

If the membership of a dissertation committee needs to change, students should submit a change of dissertation committee form as soon as possible.

When a student submits a completed dissertation, the membership of the dissertation committee must match the members listed on the most recent dissertation committee form submitted and approved by the Laney Graduate School.

(C) Membership

The Laney Graduate School requires at least three members of the committee belong to the Laney Graduate School faculty. Once this requirement is met, additional Emory faculty who are not Laney Graduate School faculty may also serve on the committee.

Laney Graduate School recognizes the value of involving scholars who possess expertise relevant to the interest of PhD candidates who are not Emory faculty. The Laney Graduate School encourages programs to identify, where appropriate, committee members of PhD dissertations drawn from outside Emory. In the event that a committee member outside the University is selected, the Director of Graduate Studies or Division Director will write a request to seek approval from the Dean of Laney Graduate School. The request should include the proposed member's recent CV and a memo explaining how this member will contribute to the student's committee. The request should be submitted by the student as part of the dissertation committee approval form. In addition, members of the Emory community who are not faculty but who possess expertise relevant to the dissertation project may serve on the committee with the approval of the student's program and the Dean. This request should be submitted to the Dean in a similar fashion as requests for scholars located at other institutions.

When a dissertation committee member, co-chair/co-advisor, and chair/advisor moves from Emory to another academic or research institution or a faculty member retires,

the student should consult with his or her advisor and Director of Graduate Studies or Program Director for guidance on how to proceed with the composition of their committee. This action ensures that the student has the support and guidance needed to complete the dissertation project.

Below is the Laney Graduate School policy for dissertation committee composition when faculty members move from Emory or retire:

Serve as a member of the Dissertation Committee

- A faculty member who moves from Emory to another academic or research institution may continue to serve as one of the three required Laney Graduate School faculty members on a dissertation committee if the committee was already formed before the faculty member leaves the Emory faculty. The faculty member may serve in this capacity up to three years after departure. Under extraordinary circumstances the Director of Graduate Studies or Program Director may petition the Dean, on behalf of the student, to extend this time limit.
- Retired or Emeriti Professors who were affiliated with an Emory doctoral program may continue to serve on dissertation committees as Laney Graduate School faculty for five years after they retire. After five years, they may continue to serve as a member, but will not remain as one of the three required LGS faculty.

Serve as a co-chair/co-advisor of the Dissertation Committee

- A faculty member who currently serves as co-chair/co-advisor of a dissertation committee and then moves from Emory to another academic or research institution may continue to serve as co-chair/co-advisor of the committee, as one of the three Laney Graduate School faculty members, for up to a three years after departure, assuming that the other co-chair/co-advisor is an LGS faculty member. If the other co-chair/co-advisor is not a Laney Graduate School faculty member, then the committee will need to be reconstituted to include one current LGS faculty member as co-chair/co-advisor. Under extraordinary circumstances the Director of Graduate Studies or Program Director may petition the Dean, on behalf of the student, to extend this time limit.
- Retired or Emeriti Professors who were affiliated with an Emory doctoral program may continue to serve as a co-chair/co-advisor on dissertation committees as Laney Graduate School faculty for five years after they retire. After five years, they may continue to serve as co-chair/co-advisor, but will not remain as one of the three required LGS faculty.

Serve as a chair/advisor of the Dissertation Committee

- A faculty member who currently serves as chair/advisor of the dissertation committee and then moves from Emory to another academic or research institution may continue to serve as chair/advisor of the committee, as one of the three Laney Graduate School faculty members, if the student completes the dissertation within one year of the chairperson's/advisor's departure. If the student's dissertation is not completed within a one year period, the faculty

- member may continue to serve as co-chair/co-advisor with a current member of the LGS faculty for up to three years after departure.
- Retired or Emeriti Professors who currently serve as chair/advisor of the dissertation committee may continue to serve as chair/advisor of the committee, as one of the three Laney Graduate School faculty members, if the student completes the dissertation within one year of the chairperson's/ advisor's departure. If the student's dissertation is not completed within a one year period, the faculty member may continue to serve as co-chair/co-advisor with a current member of the LGS faculty for up to five years after they retire.
 - Faculty who move from Emory to another academic or research institution and retired or Emeriti Professors who were affiliated with an Emory doctoral program may continue to serve as a chair/advisor of dissertation committees for a limited time by special arrangement (see the [LGS Dissertation Committee webpage](#) for more details).

(D) Effective Date

This policy is effective starting fall semester 2017, and applies to all students immediately, with two exceptions: students who started their programs before the fall of 2017 must meet the dissertation committee deadline in effect when they first enrolled, and must have an approved dissertation committee no later than August 1 before their fifth year of study; and students who started their programs before the fall of 2017 will not be placed on probation if they fail to meet the dissertation proposal defense deadline.

- [Download previous LGS Handbook \(2016-17\)](#)

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