



## Policy Title: Thesis Supervisory Committee (Master's)

Parent Policy	A 2-25 Thesis Administration (Master's)
Policy Administrator	Associate Provost, Research & Graduate Studies
Approving Body	Senate
Approval History	2022-05-03; Senate Motion #2021/22 – 025

### Purpose:

The objectives of this policy are to clarify the composition, qualifications, roles, and responsibilities of the Thesis Supervisor and Supervisory Committee.

### Scope of this Policy:

Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) students from both the School of Graduate Studies (TWU) and the Graduate School of Theological Studies (ACTS).

### Policy Statement:

Every student in a thesis-based master's program must have a thesis supervisor and a supervisory committee. The supervisor will provide commitment, accessibility, professionalism, guidance, respect, and consistent encouragement to the student. The committee should be established as early in the student's program as possible.

Formal examination committees are required for thesis-based master's final examinations, doctoral candidacy examinations, and doctoral final examinations.

### Types of Thesis Supervisory Eligibility, Roles & Responsibilities

#### Supervisory Committee

A thesis supervisory committee consists minimally of two or more members: a primary supervisor and second reader or two co-supervisors. In the case of co-supervisors, at least one must meet the eligibility of a TWU thesis supervisor. The supervisor will consult with the graduate program faculty and/ or student in the selection of an appropriate second reader or co-supervisor.

If there are changes to the composition or distribution of roles on a supervisory committee after approval of the thesis proposal, the Office of Research and Graduate Studies must be notified so that the committee can be re-confirmed.

#### a. Thesis supervisor (or lead co-supervisor)

- i. A doctoral-prepared TWU tenure-track or tenured faculty member from the graduate program offering the degree, and who holds the rank of assistant, associate, or full professor.

- ii. Should have competence in the student's proposed area of research.
- iii. Provides primary supervision and guidance to the student through research planning (proposal, ethics approval, data collection, analysis), final writing, defence preparation, defence, and post-defence requirements to completion.
- iv. Ensures that the student is conducting research in a manner that is ethical, safe, rigorous, and within realistic timelines.
- v. Facilitates the ethics review process, if applicable.
- vi. Together with the graduate program director, and in consultation with the student, identifies an appropriate second reader.
- vii. If a supervisor departs the university at any point after the thesis proposal has been approved, they will notify the Office of Research and Graduate Studies and, if relevant, apply for permission to continue the supervisory role.
- viii. If a supervisor is anticipating retirement or is on leave for longer than three (3) months, the graduate program is responsible to ensure continuity of supervision, including identification of an alternate supervisor.

**b. Co-supervisors**

- i. The lead co-supervisor must meet the qualifications and carry the responsibilities of a TWU thesis supervisor (outlined above).
- ii. The second co-supervisor:
  - 1. Is selected by the lead co-supervisor, in consultation with the student and the graduate program director.
  - 2. If not a TWU faculty member, must be approved by application to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.
  - 3. May be a retired FGS member, if approved by the student's graduate program director.
  - 4. Works in close collaboration with lead co-supervisor, who takes ultimate responsibility to ensure roles and expectations are met.

**c. Second Reader**

- i. A secondary expert who reads the thesis for appropriate content, theory, and/ or methodology.
- ii. Holds a doctorate or terminal degree in the discipline and is normally a tenured or tenure-track faculty member in the FGS
- iii. Selected by the thesis supervisor, in consultation with the student and the graduate program director.
- iv. May be a retired FGS member if approved by the graduate program director
- v. Participates in a supervisory committee to discuss the student's thesis plan at an early stage of proposal development
- vi. Reviews the proposal and provides feedback to the supervisor for consideration in determining proposal approval
- vii. Is available for consultations and meetings while the student completes the thesis
- viii. Participates in thesis defence.

**Definitions:** None

**Procedures:** None

**Child Policies:** None

**Other Related Policies:** A 2-26 Thesis Exam Chair; A 2-27 Thesis Examining Committee (Master's)