



**Policy Title: Thesis Supervisory Committee (Master’s)**

<b>Parent Policy</b>	A 2-25 Thesis Administration (Masters)
<b>Policy Administrator</b>	Associate Provost, Research & Graduate Studies
<b>Approving Body</b>	Senate
<b>Approval History</b>	2026-04-28; Senate Motion #2025/26 – 049 2022-05-03; Senate Motion #2021/22 – 025

**Purpose:**

The objectives of this policy are to clarify the composition and reporting requirements of the Thesis Supervisor and Supervisory Committee.

**Scope of this Policy:**

All programs offering thesis-based master’s degrees and students who are pursuing a master’s thesis.

**Policy Statement:**

Every student enrolled in a thesis-based master’s program must have a thesis supervisor and a supervisory committee. The supervisor and supervisory committee are described in the A 2-33 Graduate Student Supervision Policy (linked below). The supervisory committee will be established within the first six months of the student being enrolled in a thesis-based program.

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 Graduate Studies (OGS) must be notified so that the committee can be re-confirmed.

**1. Supervisor (or lead co-supervisor)**

- a. Must be 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.

- b. Should have competence in the student's proposed area of research.
- c. Provides primary supervision and guidance to the student as described in the A 2-33 Graduate Student Research Supervision policy which includes but is not limited to research planning (proposal, ethics approval, data collection, analysis), final writing, defence preparation, defence, and post-defence requirements to completion.
- d. Ensures that the student is conducting research in a manner that is ethical, safe, rigorous, and within realistic timelines.
- e. Facilitates the ethics review process, if applicable.
- f. Identifies, in consultation with the with the graduate program director, and the student, an appropriate co-supervisor and/or advisory member.
- g. In cases where a supervisor departs the University at any point after the thesis proposal has been approved, they will notify the OGS and, if relevant, apply for permission to continue the supervisory role.
- h. If a supervisor anticipates 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.

## **2. Co-supervisors**

- a. The lead co-supervisor must meet the qualifications and carry the responsibilities of a TWU thesis supervisor (outlined above).
- b. The second co-supervisor:
  - i. Is selected by the lead co-supervisor, in consultation with the student and the graduate program director.
  - ii. Must apply for approval by the OGS if not a TWU faculty member.
  - iii. May be a retired Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) member, if approved by the student's graduate program director.
  - iv. Works in close collaboration with lead co-supervisor, who takes ultimate responsibility to ensure roles and expectations are met.

## **3. Advisory member (also referred to as Supervisory Committee Member)**

- a. A secondary expert who reads the thesis for appropriate content, theory, and/ or methodology.
- b. Holds a doctorate or terminal degree in the discipline and is normally a tenured or tenure-track faculty member in the FGS.
- c. Selected by the thesis supervisor, in consultation with the student and the graduate program director.
- d. May be a retired FGS member if approved by the graduate program director.
- e. Participates in a supervisory committee as described in the A 2-33 Graduate Student Research Supervision policy including but not limited to discussion with the student regarding their thesis plan at an early stage of proposal development.
- f. Provides feedback to the supervisor for consideration in determining proposal approval.
- g. Is available for consultations and meetings while the student completes the thesis.

h. Participates in thesis defence.

**4. Meetings of the Thesis Supervisory Committee**

In addition to informal meetings, within the first two academic years of the student's enrollment in the thesis-based graduate program, the supervisory committee (or the thesis advisor if a committee has not yet been formed) must meet at least once with the student at least 3 months prior to the forecasted completion of the thesis. After the committee meeting the supervisor must submit a 1-page progress report (form provided by OGS) documenting the meeting to the OGS signed by each member of the supervisory committee (if applicable) no later than 10 days after the meeting of the supervisory committee with the student. In cases where the student's thesis is not completed within two academic years, the committee (or advisor if a full committee has not yet been formed) must meet at least once per year with the student. The supervisor is responsible for providing a single page report (form provided by the Office of Graduate Studies) signed by all members of the supervisory committee (if applicable) to the Office of Graduate Studies no later than 10 days after the annual committee meeting.

**Definitions:**

**FGS** – Faculty of Graduate Studies

**OGS** – Office of Graduate Studies

**Procedures:** None

**Child Policies:** None

**Other Related Policies:** A-2-26 Graduate Studies Exam Chair; A-2-27 Thesis Examining Committee (Master's); A-2-33 Graduate Student Research Supervision; A-2-34 Quality of Graduate Research Work Products