

English Department Policy on Doctoral Committees

November 3, 2011

This document updates the English Department's policies on the composition of doctoral committees to accord with the revised Graduate School policy on doctoral committees approved in October, 2009. The revised Graduate School policy states:

“Of the four members,* the chair must hold an Endorsement to Chair Doctoral Committees, and no more than one may be an Adjunct Member** of the graduate faculty. The committee chair must be from the major department, and it is recommended that when appropriate, one member be selected from the minor area of study. If at any time the advisory/dissertation committee decreases in number to fewer than four members, additional members of the graduate faculty must be approved by the Dean of The Graduate School to bring the number to at least four.”

In accordance with these requirements, the English Department's policies on doctoral committees (which here includes both exam and dissertation committees) are as follows:

- 1) English Department doctoral committees will consist of three faculty members. However, if a student's committee includes a faculty member from outside the Department or University, that committee would be required to have four members (i.e. three from English plus one other).
- 2) The chair must hold an Endorsement to Chair Doctoral Committees from the Graduate School.
- 3) No more than one member of a doctoral committee may be an Adjunct Member of the graduate faculty.
- 4) At least one member of a doctoral committee must be a tenured faculty member.
- 5) If warranted by specific circumstances, Advanced Assistant Professors, with the approval of the Head and the Director of Graduate Studies, may direct a doctoral committee, if they are successful in applying for an Endorsement to Chair from the Graduate School.

For additional recommendations about doctoral committees, please see the English Department's **“Best Practices for Graduate Committees and Advising.”**

*NOTE: The English Department has made special arrangements with the Graduate School allowing us to have only three members on each doctoral committee.

**NOTE: The Graduate School considers Adjunct Professors, visiting faculty members, lecturers, part-time faculty, and other (primarily non-tenure track) faculty who still hold an advanced degree in their field to be “Adjunct Members” of the graduate faculty.