

MEETINGS

A committee is convened by the chair no fewer than two times and often three or more times, depending upon the student's progress. Committee members are expected to respond promptly to the call for a meeting. All committee members are expected to attend committee meetings. Majority decisions of the committee prevail.

First Obligatory Meeting

At least ten days before this meeting, with the approval of the committee chair, the student gives each member a copy of the prospectus developed to the level of complexity deemed appropriate by the chair. The prospectus typically may include an introduction, a statement of purpose (problem, questions, hypotheses), a selected review of literature, and a description of the student's research methods and procedures. At this meeting, the committee assesses the student's prospectus and ability to carry out the research. The committee makes suggestions to the chair concerning the course work or study still needed by the student and establishes the time limitations for the currency of the research data. The committee decision takes one of the several forms listed below.

1. Unqualified approval: If the prospectus is followed in precise detail, the student's research design will not later be challenged.
2. Qualified approval: Changes may be made under the supervision of the chair without further committee involvement.
3. Qualified disapproval: The student must revise the prospectus and meet again with the whole committee.
4. Unqualified disapproval: The student must prepare a new prospectus or withdraw from the program.

When the committee has granted unqualified approval to a prospectus for a thesis or dissertation, the student must file in the Graduate School a copy of the prospectus bearing the approval signatures of all committee members, the department chair, and the academic dean. (This filing is not required for professional papers.) The prospectus is due no later than the semester prior to graduation. No study may be implemented prior to receiving notification of approval from the Graduate School. Revisions may be required at any level of the review process. Departments typically require a more extensive prospectus, however, the copy filed in the Graduate School must be no longer than ten pages, setting forth salient aspects of the following:

- tentative title,
- purpose and rationale for the study,
- statement of the problem,
- proposed procedures, and
- other information deemed necessary by the committee.

If human subjects, animals, or outside agencies are involved, the appropriate permission and approval statements must also be filed with the prospectus. See the Graduate School publication *Guide to the Preparation and Processing of Dissertations, Theses, and Professional Papers*.

Students may not begin the collection of data prior to receiving prospectus approval (even if IRB approval is not required) in the form of a letter/email received from the Graduate School and copied to the committee chair. Special exceptions may be approved by the Graduate School.

Second Obligatory Meeting

At least ten days before this meeting, with the approval of the committee chair, the student gives each member of the committee a copy of the completed major study. At this meeting the student must defend the major study, although relevant questions outside its purview may be asked. The component decides whether the examination is written or oral. If the examination is oral, the meeting is announced and is open to the component faculty. Ordinarily, only the committee and the candidate participate in the examination; however, the committee may invite the participation of other faculty members. The committee's decision, made in executive session, takes one of the several forms listed below.

1. Unqualified approval: The committee recommends the student be approved for the degree by the Dean of the Graduate School.
2. Qualified approval: Suggested changes are made under the direction of the chair without another meeting of the committee and the committee will then recommend that the Dean of the Graduate School approve granting the degree.
3. Qualified disapproval: The research needs to be repeated or modified, or the major study rewritten extensively and resubmitted for another meeting of the committee. If a second formal defense of the major study is scheduled, two such meetings may not be scheduled in the same semester. (Two consecutive summer terms are considered one semester.)
4. Unqualified disapproval: The student is advised to withdraw from the program without completing the degree.

The committee chair promptly informs in writing the Dean of the Graduate School, the head(s) of the component(s), and the student of any decision falling into the category of unqualified approval or unqualified disapproval.

Students must file their thesis with the Graduate School by the filing deadline (<https://www.twu.edu/gradschool/current-students/degree-completion>) to be allowed to graduate in that term. All theses will be read by the Graduate Reader for quality and professionalism and may require corrections before students are allowed to receive their degrees. Students are encouraged to file their thesis early if complete.