

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR COMPLETING PH.D. FORM I

NOTE: Much of the text below is adapted from UCI's *Graduate Policies & Procedures Handbook* <https://grad.uci.edu/current-students/academic-policies/>

ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

Regulation 840. Advancement to Candidacy

The student must be advanced to candidacy for the degree prior to the first day of the quarter in which the degree is to be received. Application for advancement to candidacy must be made through the Dean of the Graduate Division and must contain a general statement of the studies upon which candidacy is based. [Part II – Regulations of the Irvine Division — Academic Senate \(uci.edu\)](https://grad.uci.edu/current-students/academic-policies/)

Senate Regulation 320

A student advances to candidacy for the Ph.D. upon successfully demonstrating a high level of scholarship in full-time study at the Ph.D. level, and upon completing all preparatory work and demonstrating readiness to proceed to the dissertation phase. A complete description of the policy on advancement to candidacy and advancement committees is provided below. Also refer to the University's conflict of interest (COI) policy related to student committees in [Section VII, Graduate Degree Programs](#).

a) Irvine Regulation (IR) 915 Advancement to Candidacy (Revised: Approved by Irvine Division May 11, 2000)

Graduate students are nominated for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree in a particular field by the academic unit responsible for advanced degrees in that field. Students are admitted to candidacy if they pass by unanimous vote an oral examination administered by a Candidacy Committee. The Dean of the Graduate Division may delegate to the academic units the role of appointing Candidacy Committees. When the membership of the proposed Candidacy Committee conforms to Senate policy as defined in Irvine Senate Regulation 918, authority both to evaluate and to approve the committee may be delegated to the academic unit. However, the Dean of the Graduate Division retains sole authority to grant any exceptions to this policy, and to appoint a nominee as Oversight Member in those cases where the possibility of a conflict of interest that is potentially harmful to the graduate student exists. It is understood that the Oversight Member shall not bear a possible conflict of interest potentially harmful to the graduate student in the discharge of their role. **Requests for approval of exceptions must be submitted in writing by the Chair of the academic unit to the Dean of the Graduate Division at least two weeks prior to the scheduled exam to allow a reasonable time for review.**

The academic unit must also inform students regarding the policy on candidacy committees including policy related to possible conflict of interest that is potentially harmful to graduate students.

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the academic unit, the Departmental Faculty Advisor/Mentor or Associate Dean of the School as appropriate, and the Chair of the Candidacy Committee to ensure that these Academic Senate policies are followed. Should these Senate policies not be followed, the student, at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate Division, will be required to retake the Advancement Exam.

b) Irvine Regulation (IR) 918 Candidacy Committee (Revised: Approved by Irvine Division December 1, 2002)

The Candidacy Committee is comprised of three to five faculty who are voting members of the University of California Academic Senate or by equivalent scholarly standing, by exception. Non-voting Senate members, faculty members from other universities, or non-Senate faculty with equivalent scholarly standing will be considered for general membership on the committee on an exception basis only. Candidacy committee members need not necessarily be from the Irvine Division — but a majority must hold primary or joint appointments in the student's department. If the student is not affiliated with an individual department, a majority of the committee must hold either primary or joint appointments with the academic unit granting the doctoral degree. The following additional criteria apply to the membership of the committee.

***Note Definitions of Academic Unit**

1. Department.
2. If "1" fails, Interdisciplinary Program.
3. If "1" and "2" fail, the graduate program which oversees the student's progress.
4. If "1", "2" and "3" fail, the School (or Department of Education).
5. In cases where multicampus programs are involved, the same definitions will apply across all campuses relevant to the program.

Composition of the Advancement Committee

The Chair

The Chair of the Candidacy Committee must hold either a primary or joint appointment in the student's department (or academic unit) and must be a voting member of the UC Academic Senate. No exceptions to these requirements will be considered. [Please see "Definitions of Academic Unit".]¹

General Membership

The requirement that a majority of voting members hold appointments in the student's department or academic unit may be waived under exceptional circumstances. Non-voting Senate members, faculty members from other universities, or non-Senate faculty with equivalent scholarly standing will be considered for general membership on the committee on an exception only basis. Exceptions will be granted by the Dean of the Graduate Division.

Additional Membership

Degree granting programs can choose to require either a three-, four-, or five-member Candidacy Committee consistent with the requirements above. They may also choose to require that one member of the Candidacy Committee be an "outside member," i.e., a member of the Irvine Division of the UC Academic Senate, who does not hold a primary appointment in the student's department or academic unit.

Whichever options are chosen, they must apply to all students in the degree program, be on record in the Graduate Division, and be published in a student handbook and/or on a departmental website.

The Oversight Member: If the Chair, Research/Thesis advisor or other member of the committee has a financial interest in an outside entity that carries a possibility of a conflict of interest potentially harmful to the graduate student, an oversight member must be appointed in addition to the three general members. It is understood that the Oversight Member shall not bear a possible conflict of interest potentially harmful to the graduate student in the discharge of their role.

Role of the Oversight Member: The Oversight Member shall participate on all student research advisory and/or thesis committees. An additional role of the Oversight Member is to be fully cognizant of the issues related to the possible conflict of interest and its potential impact on the student, and to be fully cognizant of the UCI resources available should a conflict of interest problem arise. If there do not appear to be any harmful results from the conflict of interest, the Oversight Member shall sign a statement to that effect after each committee meeting and the statement shall be placed in the student's file as well as forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate Division. If the Oversight Member perceives that there is a problem arising from conflict of interest issues, then they shall not sign off on the committee deliberation, but shall instead inform the Dean of the Graduate Division in writing.

Appointment Procedures and Requirements for Committee Membership

The qualifications of all committee members must be evaluated and approved by the academic unit Chair or designee. When the membership of the proposed committee conforms to Senate policy as defined in this regulation, the Dean of the Graduate Division, on behalf of the Graduate Council, may delegate to the academic unit the authority to appoint, evaluate and approve the committee. When the proposed membership deviates from this policy, as in the case of non-voting Senate members or faculty members from other universities, or when appointment of an Oversight Member is perceived to be necessary, a request for an exception or nomination must be submitted in writing to the Dean of the Graduate Division (see below).

Non-voting Senate members or faculty holding professorial titles at other Universities will be considered on an exception-only basis. The Dean of the Graduate Division retains sole authority to grant these exceptions, which must be submitted in writing by the Chair of the academic unit at least two weeks prior to the scheduled exam, and must be accompanied by a curriculum vitae of the individual for whom the exception is being requested. A list of the faculty holding primary or joint appointments with the student's department or academic unit may be required by the Dean of the Graduate Division.

Oversight Member: The Dean of the Graduate Division shall select the Oversight Member from a list of three nominees consisting of UCI Senate faculty members from outside of the student's home department agreed upon by the student, the faculty research advisor, and the departmental representative. If these individuals cannot agree on three nominees, the departmental representative (either the graduate advisor or the department chair if the advisor is conflicted) will select the nominees. The departmental representative shall submit a written request to appoint an Oversight Member to the Dean of the Graduate Division no less than two weeks prior to the date of the exam to allow a reasonable time for review. This request should include background information describing the circumstances of the possible conflict. The Dean of the Graduate Division will retain sole authority to appoint the Oversight Member. No exceptions to this requirement will be considered.

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the academic unit, the Departmental Faculty Advisor/Mentor or Associate Dean for Graduate Affairs as appropriate, and the Chair of the Candidacy Committee: (1) to inform the student regarding the policy on Candidacy Committees, including full disclosure of issues pertaining to the possibility of a conflict of interest that is potentially harmful to graduate students; (2) to provide graduate students with a policy statement on such possible conflict of interest prior to the student designating a research topic, forming a graduate committee, or being employed as a researcher or teaching assistant, whichever comes first; and (3) to ensure that these Academic Senate policies are followed.

Should these Senate policies not be followed the student will be required to retake the Qualifying Exam.

Duties and Responsibilities of Advancement Committee Members

The Candidacy Committee is charged with determining the fitness of the student to proceed with the doctoral dissertation through a formal Qualifying Examination. The examination should evaluate both general preparedness in the discipline, and specific competence to pursue the proposed dissertation topic. In its deliberation, the Committee ordinarily will review the student's academic record, preliminary examinations and evaluations by other faculty. The Committee may conduct any other examination it deems appropriate.

The Committee ordinarily will review an outline of the proposed dissertation project and will determine by oral examination the student's competence in that area. When, by unanimous vote, the Committee decides the student is qualified for the dissertation phase, it shall recommend advancement to candidacy to the Graduate Council via the Dean of the Graduate Division.

Following its formal appointment, the Committee is free to adopt whatever procedures it deems appropriate to conduct the Qualifying Examination for candidacy, subject to the rules of the program and those specified below:

1. Administration of the Qualifying Examination must conform to the policies established by the Graduate Council.
2. The student must be given adequate notice of the content, form, and time of the examination.
3. The Committee must meet to decide upon the procedures to be followed, and the student given an opportunity to comment upon the selected procedures.

Voting Procedures

Before voting upon its recommendation for or against candidacy, the Committee, as a whole, shall meet with the student, and any member of the Committee will have the right to pose appropriate questions to the student. If it decides to do so, the Committee may conduct part of the examination on an individual basis, e.g., the student may meet with each member in turn. However, the Committee must conclude its examination when convened with the student present.

Conduct of the Exam

Although the formal Qualifying Examination for candidacy ordinarily is conducted in a single day, the Committee may meet intermittently over a longer period, and may decide to reexamine the student on one or more topics after a specified interval. When the Committee meets to conduct the oral Qualifying Examination, it must report to the Graduate Council via the Dean of the Graduate Division within 30 days. If the Committee decides to reexamine the student at a later date or does not pass the student for any reason, this must be reported to the Dean of the Graduate Division. The final vote and recommendation of the Committee must be unanimous and unequivocal. A recommendation that a student not be advanced is subject to conditions described herein.

Procedure for Validating and Recording Results

Upon completion of the Qualifying Examination, the results should be submitted to the Graduate Division on the Advancement to Candidacy – Ph.D. Degree, Ph.D. Form I (i.e., pages 1 and 2 of this form packet). The Ph.D. Form I must be signed by all committee members at the time the candidacy examination is concluded and submitted. The student must submit the Ph.D. Advancement to Candidacy Form I to the Graduate Division (via the DocuSign form). The date the student submits the signed and validated Ph.D. Form I will be the official date of advancement. The candidate and graduate program will be notified of formal advancement and the appointment of a Doctoral Committee.

Lapse of Candidacy

Candidacy for the Ph.D. will lapse automatically if the student loses graduate standing by academic disqualification or failure to comply with the University policy on continuous registration. A readmitted student who was a candidate for the Ph.D. must again advance to candidacy and thereafter enroll as a candidate for at least one academic quarter before the Ph.D. will be conferred.

The Doctoral Committee (IR 920)

(Revised: Approved by the Irvine Division December 6, 2022)

A. Dissertation

The doctoral committee shall supervise the preparation and completion of the dissertation and the final examination.

B. Membership

The doctoral committee is composed of three voting members of the University of California Academic Senate — not necessarily the Irvine Division — or by equivalent scholarly standing, by exception. A majority of the committee, but not necessarily all, shall be affiliated with the program. At least one member of the student's committee must hold a primary appointment in the student's department.

C. Chair

The Chair of the Committee shall always hold a primary or joint academic appointment in the academic unit/program supervising the doctoral program; no exceptions will be granted for this position. [Please see Footnote 1 for "Definitions of Academic Unit".]¹

D. Oversight Member

If the Chair, Research/Thesis advisor or other member of the committee has a financial interest in an outside entity that carries a possibility of a conflict of interest potentially harmful to the graduate student, an oversight member must be appointed in addition to the two general members. It is understood that the Oversight Member will not bear a possible conflict of interest potentially harmful to the graduate student in the discharge of their role as Oversight Member.*

E. Role of the Oversight Member

The Oversight Member shall participate on all student research advisory and/or dissertation committees. An additional role of the Oversight Member is to be fully cognizant of the issues related to the possible conflict of interest and its potential impact on the student, and to be fully cognizant of the UCI resources available should a conflict of interest problem arise. If there do not appear to be any harmful results accruing from the conflict of interest, the Oversight Member shall sign a statement to that effect after each committee meeting and the statement shall be placed in the student's file as well as forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate Division. If the Oversight Member perceives that there is a problem arising from conflict of interest issues, then they should not sign off on the committee deliberation, but should instead inform the Dean of the Graduate Division in writing.*

F. Appointment Procedures

The qualifications of all committee members must be evaluated and approved by the academic unit Chair or designee. When the membership of the proposed committee conforms to Senate policy as defined in this regulation, the Dean of the Graduate Division, on behalf of the Graduate Council, may delegate to the academic unit the authority to appoint, evaluate and approve the remaining members of the Doctoral Committee.

G. Oversight Member

In those cases where a possible conflict of interest as described above exists, the Dean of the Graduate Division shall select the Oversight Member from a list of three nominees agreed upon by the student, the faculty research advisor and the departmental representative. If no agreement can be reached on three nominees, the departmental representative — either the graduate advisor or the chair if the advisor is conflicted — shall select the nominees. The request for appointment of an Oversight Member must be submitted in writing to the Dean of the Graduate Division no less than two weeks prior to the date of the exam to allow a reasonable time for review. This request will also include background information describing the circumstances of the possible conflict. The Dean of the Graduate Division will retain sole authority to appoint the Oversight Member. No exceptions to this requirement will be considered.

H. General Members

The Dean of the Graduate Division, on behalf of the Graduate Council, retains sole authority to grant exceptions. All such requests must be submitted in writing by the Chair of the academic unit to the Dean of the Graduate Division at least two weeks prior to the date of the exam to allow a reasonable time for review.

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the academic unit, the departmental Faculty Advisor/Mentor or Associate Dean for Graduate Affairs as applicable, and the Chair of the Doctoral Committee; 1) to inform the student regarding the policy on Doctoral Committees — including full disclosure of issues pertaining to the possibility of conflict of interest potentially harmful to the student; 2) to provide graduate students with a policy statement on conflict of interest prior to the student designating a research topic, forming a graduate committee, or being employed as a research or teaching assistant, whichever comes first; and 3) to ensure that the Academic Senate policies are adhered to.*

* Note: Areas of assigned responsibility are further defined in the UCI Academic Senate policy statement dated March 2, 2000 and entitled "Proposed Policy and Procedures for Implementation of Academic Senate Policy on Conflict of Interest and Graduate Education." (See Appendix XII.)

I. Duties and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the academic unit, the departmental Faculty Advisor/Mentor or Associate Dean for Graduate Affairs as applicable, and the Chair of the Doctoral Committee to:

1. Inform the student regarding the policy on Doctoral Committees, including full disclosure of issues pertaining to the possibility of conflict of interest potentially harmful to the student.
2. Provide graduate students with a policy statement on conflict of interest prior to the student designating a research topic, forming a graduate committee, or being employed as a research or teaching assistant, whichever comes first; and
3. Ensure that the Academic Senate policies are adhered to.

¹ Definitions of Academic Unit

- a. Department
- b. If "a" fails, Interdisciplinary Program.
- c. If "a" and "b" fail, the graduate program which oversees the student's progress.
- d. If "a", "b" and "c" fail, the School.
- e. In cases where multicampus programs are involved, the same definitions will apply across all campuses relevant to the program.