

# ADVISORY SYSTEM

Degree programs are planned by the advisory committee after consultation with the student, unless a field of study has established a uniform curriculum. There is considerable flexibility in meeting special needs insofar as these are consistent with the regulations of The Graduate School. A degree program may entail coursework in more than one field of study, but each program must include a coherent emphasis within one existing field of study and area of concentration, if applicable.

## Major Advisors

Each student in a graduate degree program must have a major advisor. A major advisor must be appointed to the Graduate Faculty at the appropriate level by the Dean of The Graduate School, by authorization of the President of the University, to advise students at that level in a particular field of study or area of concentration. Since consistency of direction is important, a durable relationship between the student and the major advisor should be formed as early as possible. Occasionally, it may be desirable or appropriate for a student's degree program to be directed by co-major advisors (not more than two). Each co-major advisor must hold an appropriate Graduate Faculty appointment in the student's field of study and area of concentration (if applicable). Only one co-major advisor must be from the student's home department. Co-major advisors outside the student's home department must be approved by the student's home department.

In applying for admission, an applicant may indicate a preference for a particular major advisor. If at the time of admission an applicant expresses no preference, or if the preferred advisor is unable to accept, another advisor may be appointed. If a change of major advisor becomes necessary for any reason, the student must file a special form, bearing the signature of the new advisor, with the Office of the Registrar. The Change of Graduate Major Advisor form can be found on the Registrar's website at [registrar.uconn.edu](http://registrar.uconn.edu) (<http://registrar.uconn.edu>). In cases where a student has co-major advisors, the other co-major advisor becomes the advisor if they are in the student's home department.

The major advisor or both co-major advisors of any master's or doctoral student is/are responsible for coordinating the supervisory work of the advisory committee. Therefore, when the major advisor is to be on leave or is not in residence, it is the major advisor's responsibility to appoint an acting major advisor. The acting major advisor must be a member of the University's Graduate Faculty or be fully eligible for such an appointment. The acting major advisor will assume all duties and responsibilities of the major advisor for the duration of the appointment. In cases of co-major advisors, the co-major advisor who is not on leave will be responsible while the other co-major advisor is on leave.

A member of the University of Connecticut faculty who has recently retired from active service or left the University without retiring may continue to serve on a student's advisory committee (as a major or associate advisor) with the endorsement of the appropriate department head or program director, based on a reasonable expectation that the person will be able and willing to remain actively engaged in advising the student through the remainder of the student's program. In addition, a retired member of the Graduate Faculty may be considered for appointment as major advisor for a newly-admitted master's or doctoral student with the endorsement of the appropriate department or program head, based on substantial evidence of ongoing research and scholarly activity in the field. Separate application is required for each student for whom a faculty member who is no longer in active service at the

University wishes to serve (or continue to serve) as major advisor. Such appointments are made by the Dean of The Graduate School with the advice of the Executive Committee.

If for any reason a major advisor intends to resign from their role as major advisor, they must concurrently send a notification of the intent to resign to the student, the student's department head or program director, and The Graduate School. The notification should include a date when the resignation is expected to become effective and a brief explanation of the circumstances or reasons that have led to the intended resignation. Whenever possible, the effective date should be at least 30 business days after the date of notification. The department head or program director must then work with the student, the major advisor, and the advisory committee to identify a new major advisor, making all reasonable efforts to identify such a person, and report the outcome of this process to The Graduate School within 30 business days of the notification of intent to resign. This outcome would normally be one of the following:

1. a suitable new major advisor has been found;
2. the current major advisor has withdrawn the intention to resign and will remain as the student's major advisor;
3. the department or program has determined that the student is not academically qualified to remain in the program and is therefore recommending dismissal of the student; or
4. the department or program has determined that the student is academically qualified to remain in the program but, despite reasonable efforts by all parties to find a new advisor, a new advisor cannot be found and therefore the department or program recommends termination of the student.

When the intended resignation occurs during a summer session or winter session, the 30 business days begin on the first day of classes of the next fall or spring semester. In cases where a student has co-major advisors, the other co-major advisor becomes the advisor if they are in the student's home department. When resignation of a major advisor results in termination or dismissal, the student may appeal the dismissal or termination under the provisions of the Appeal and Hearing Procedures.

## Advisory Committees

Unless a field of study has established another advisory system, a student must also have an advisory committee. The advisory committee is formed after consultation between the major advisor and the student. The advisory committee must include at least two associate advisors, one of whom must hold a current appointment to the Graduate Faculty at the appropriate level in the student's particular field of study or area of concentration. An associate advisor must possess suitable academic or scientific credentials in the student's field of study. A current graduate student may not serve as a member of another graduate student's advisory committee.

If deemed appropriate by a graduate student's major advisor or both co-major advisors, the major advisor or both co-major advisors may request that a suitably qualified external associate advisor be appointed to the student's advisory committee by writing to The Graduate School. The request should be accompanied by a curriculum vitae for the individual being recommended for appointment. Such appointments are made on the basis of advanced training and significant experience in the field of study. An appointment as external associate advisor is limited to an individual student's advisory committee and does not imply in any way membership on the Graduate Faculty of the University. Ordinarily, not more than one external associate advisor is appointed to any master's

or doctoral student's advisory committee. Readers, examiners, or other reviewers who have not been recognized as associate advisors by The Graduate School are not members of the student's advisory committee.

The advisory committee should be formed before the student has completed 12 credits of degree program coursework and shall then supervise the remainder of the student's degree program. Students' advisory committees are accountable directly to the Dean of The Graduate School.

If the advisory committee consists of three members, decisions must be unanimous. If the advisory committee consists of four or more members, decisions are considered adopted if there is no more than one negative vote, although the major advisor or both co-major advisors must always vote in the affirmative. For Ph.D. students, advisory committee decisions involving the outcome of the General Examination, approval of the Dissertation Proposal, oral defense of the dissertation, or approval of the dissertation itself, must be unanimous.