

Thesis Committees

Department of Physics
University of Chicago

Formation of the Committee

Students are required to form a Thesis Committee by the end of their second year. The Committee's role is to offer critical feedback on your research and to help you progress toward the degree in a timely manner. The process of forming a Committee is initiated by the student, first, by meeting with your advisor to discuss potential Committee members, and second, by notifying the Director of Graduate Studies of your choices. The Director of Graduate Studies will contact prospective members and form the Committee.

The Committee should consist of four or five people, three of which must be Department of Physics faculty. Normally, there is to be one member of similar research style (theory or experiment) whose specialty is very different from yours and one member of opposite style whose specialty is related to yours. If your research advisor is not a faculty member in the Department of Physics, a member of your committee who is on the department's faculty must be designated as your Department Sponsor.

If by the end of the second year you do not yet have an advisor, you will form a temporary Advisory Committee in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies.

First Committee meeting

Students should schedule the first meeting with their Committee by the end of Autumn Quarter of their third year. At this meeting, students should discuss their academic status, including candidacy and course requirements, give a brief description of the research they have been doing, state their academic and research plans for the coming year, and solicit the committee for any recommendations and advice. An *Annual Academic Progress Report* form must be signed by each member of the Committee at the end of the meeting and then returned to the Student Affairs Administrator. A copy of the form can be found [here](#).

Annual Committee meeting

Following the first Committee meeting, students should meet with the Committee annually until graduation. Scheduling Committee meetings is initiated by the student. An *Annual Academic Progress Report* form must be signed by each member of the Committee at the end of each meeting and then returned to the Student Affairs Administrator.

Year 5 and beyond

Beginning in Year 5, the *Annual Academic Progress Report* form must contain a written plan for the remainder of the student's graduate program. The signature of each member of the Committee on the report certifies their agreement with the written plan. In all cases, the plan will be reviewed by the Director of Graduate Studies.

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