This document can be referenced to understand what is involved in selecting your major professor and advisory committee for Mechanical Engineering (ME) Masters & PhD students.

### Overview

All graduate students are required to select a Major Professor who acts as Chair of their Advisory Committee and agree to supervise the student’s graduate study, research & thesis preparation, if applicable.

All students are assigned a temporary advisor when admitted to the ME graduate program. Students can consult with their temporary advisor and other faculty to determine a Major Professor.

Students should choose a Major Professor before the end of their first semester and identify them on their Plan of Study (POS).

If employed as a research assistant, your Major Professor is the faculty member supervising the research.

Students may have a Major Professor who serves as a Chair of their Advisory Committee, or they may have two Co-Chairs who equally share the advisory role as Major Professors. Students cannot have a Chair and a Co-Chair.

Members of the Advisory Committee are to assist the student in preparation of the POS and to offer advice on graduate work, including research and thesis preparation. Selection of the Advisory Committee is done in consultation with the Major Professor, but the student should seek consent of all desired faculty members who are requested to serve on the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee is formally established when the POS is approved by the Graduate School.

### Master’s Advisory Committee

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Thesis Option</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consists of at least 3 members:</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Major Professor</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Another Professor (usually from ME) that is interested in the student’s major field</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ 3rd Professor (usually, but not necessarily, from outside ME)</td>
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Students with Co-Chairs need to select only one other member to complete the 3-member Advisory Committee.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Non-Thesis Option</th>
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<tr>
<td>Consists of one faculty member from Mechanical Engineering.</td>
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### PhD & Direct PhD (D-PhD) Advisory Committee

**PhD & D-PhD**

Consists of at least 4 members:
- Major Professor
- Two other Professors (usually from ME) who are interested in the student’s major field
- 4th Professor (required to be from outside ME) representing a related area

All must be regular or special graduate faculty (certified by the Graduate School to serve on the committee)

Students may also include non-Purdue academics (faculty from other Universities), scientists at national labs, or researchers in industry, but they require prior approval from the Graduate School, in the form of a certification as special graduate faculty.

**TO DO THIS:** The Major Professor (not the outside person) in one transaction, must send a letter to the Graduate Chair requesting special faculty certification with a clear justification for the specific expertise that the outside member brings to the student’s research, along with an electronic version of the complete vita for the outside person being considered for approval.

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**IUPUI-West Lafayette Cooperative PhD**

Consists of at least 4 members:

Co-Chairs consisting of one ME faculty member from IUPUI and one from Purdue West Lafayette campus, who serve as Major Professors

At least 2 members of the Advisory Committee (including a Co-Chair) must be ME faculty at the Purdue West Lafayette campus

One Committee member must be from a department/school outside of ME (can be from Purdue West Lafayette or IUPUI)

Students may also include non-Purdue academics (faculty from other Universities), scientists at national labs, or researchers in industry, but they require prior approval from the Graduate School, in the form of a certification as special graduate faculty.

**TO DO THIS:** The Co-Chairs (not the outside person) in one transaction, must send a letter to the Graduate Chair requesting special faculty certification with a clear justification for the specific expertise that the outside member brings to the student’s research, along with an electronic version of the complete vita for the outside person being considered for approval.

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### Changing the Advisory Committee

Requests for changes in the Advisory Committee are made electronically through myPurdue.

Each request for change must be accompanied by a rationale and signed by the student and each committee member whose status is affected by the request.

The request must be approved by the Major Professor and the Graduate Chair.