

Guideline for Membership and Chairing of PhD Comprehensive Exam and Dissertation Committees with Interpretive Statements

Comprehensive Exam Committee

Chair

- The Comprehensive Exam chair may or may not be the student's planned dissertation chair.
- The chair of the committee must be College of Nursing Faculty and need not be a member of the discipline of nursing: is a member of the graduate faculty with assistant, associate, or professor rank, tenured, or tenure-earning. Faculty with emeritus status may serve as a Co-chair.

Members

- A minimum of two College of Nursing faculty members, one of which is a member of the discipline of nursing, is required for each comprehensive exam committee.
- Committee members must be College of Nursing faculty member, who are members of the graduate faculty with assistant, associate, or professor rank and tenured, tenure-earning, or emeritus status.
- No members are outside the College of Nursing.

Dissertation

Chair

- The dissertation committee chair must be a full-time professor, associate professor, assistant professor, tenured, tenure-earning at the College of Nursing and need not be a member of the discipline of nursing, with a minimum of two years of experience serving on PhD dissertation committees. Faculty with emeritus status may serve as a Co-chair.

Interpretive statements:

1. Dissertation committee chairs/co-chairs must be FAU graduate faculty members. Graduate Faculty may serve as chair; Associate Graduate Faculty may serve as co-chair. (CON Graduate College Governance Policy <https://nursing.fau.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-handbook/governance/governance-policy.php>)

Members

- The committee, which includes the chair, shall consist of nursing Graduate faculty members with the majority within the discipline of nursing. At least one member will be outside the College of Nursing and outside the discipline of nursing.

- The committee members must be a Graduate faculty member with assistant, associate, or professor rank, tenured, or tenure-earning, or emeritus status. Affiliate faculty with graduate faculty status may serve as an outside member.

Interpretive statements:

1. All dissertation committee members must be FAU graduate faculty members (Graduate Faculty or Associate Graduate Faculty) including affiliate faculty.
2. CON faculty members, FAU faculty members and Affiliate faculty members who represent a discipline other than nursing, may serve as “outside the discipline” members of the dissertation committee.
3. Affiliate faculty members who represent the discipline of nursing may count toward establishing the “the majority within the discipline of nursing” committee membership requirement.
4. Committee members, depending on their academic/professional credentials, may fulfill more than one committee membership category: “college of nursing”, “outside the college”, “discipline of nursing”, and/or “outside the discipline”. Examples: A committee member may serve as a “college of nursing” and an “outside the discipline” member of the committee. An affiliate faculty committee member could be considered an “outside the college” committee member and count toward meeting “the majority within the discipline of nursing” requirement.

Reviewed and revised by the PhD Committee Sept. 13, 2021. Discussed and edited at Faculty Assembly on September 26, 2021. Approved by 73% of faculty October 8, 2021. Interpretive statements approved by the PhD Committee on December 6, 2021.

Reviewed and Revised: August 15, 2025, PhD Committee. Approved by Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing at the Faculty Assembly meeting by vote on September 29, 2025.