

## school of sustainable engineering and the built environment

civil, environmental and sustainable  
engineering



### Supervisory Committee

During the first semester of enrollment it is recommended that the newly admitted PhD student select a Graduate Supervisory Committee (GSC). The chair of the committee will be the faculty member directing the student's research program, must be a tenure/tenure-track member of the Civil, Environmental, Sustainable Engineering (CESE) graduate faculty, and must be approved by the Graduate College. In select circumstances, students can also choose to have two faculty members act as co-chairs of their committee. The Graduate College maintains a [list of ASU faculty](#) who can serve as a chair of the dissertation committee in each department. The chair will assist the student in the selection of the remainder of the supervisory committee. At least half of the committee must be tenure/tenure-track faculty within the CESE program. The committee consists of the chair and a minimum of two other faculty members whose interests lie in the areas of the student's planned study and research.

Structures (GSC) shall consist of at least five members out of which at least four must be ASU tenure track faculty as follows:

- 1) Advisor (Structures Group, GSC Chair).
- 2) At least two additional members from the Structures Group.
- 3) At least one member must be outside of SSEBE and must meet the Graduate College requirements for serving on a doctoral dissertation committee.

### Plan of Study

A formal Plan of Study (POS) must be filed with the Graduate College *before* registration for the second semester or *before* completion of 9 approved graduate credit hours, whichever comes first. The POS is a formal plan that includes all of the courses the student must take to complete their degree and is an agreement that those classes will be sufficient for the desired degree. The student's supervisory committee and the Graduate College must approve the POS before the student may take the comprehensive examination. The student must have *regular* admission status when filing the POS and submit it on-line via myASU. After you complete your POS in myASU, print out the course approval page and have each member on your GSC sign it. Turn in your signed POS to the School of Sustainable Engineering Built Environment Advising Center. Note that your on-line POS will not be reviewed until the signature approval page is turned in to the GAA. If corrections need to be made, your on-line POS will be sent back to you with comments. Changes to an approved on-line Plan of study can be completed by going to myASU and making the necessary changes. The changes will be electronically sent to the Graduate College for approval.

## Ph.D. information manual

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## Course Requirements

In general, a PhD student is expected to complete a minimum of 84 semester hours of academic credit beyond the bachelor's degree. This normally includes 30 semester hours for the master's degree, an additional 30 hours of PhD course work (500 level or higher), 12 hours CEE 792 research, and 12 hours CEE 799 dissertation. All PhD students must include 12 (and only 12) credit hours of CEE 799 dissertation on their POS. A student may take no more than 6 hours of CEE790 with one faculty member who is a member of the Graduate Supervisory Committee. Students may request up to 12 semester hours of credit taken at another institution and not counted toward a previous degree, as transfer credits. The student's GSC will determine if the courses can count as transfer credits. Transfer credits must also meet all Graduate College requirements for [Transfer Credits](#) and [Maximum Time Limit](#). A "Z" grade is assigned for research (CEE 792) and dissertation (CEE 799) until the dissertation is completed. At that time, a grade of "Y" (passing) is given for successful completion of the dissertation and for passing the oral examination. If a student does not complete the dissertation, the dissertation advisor may assign a grade of "E". All courses beyond the master's degree must be at the 500 level or above. Omnibus courses such as Research Methods, Reading and Conference, and Seminar may count for academic credit when approved by the student's GSC. To remain in the PhD degree program, the candidate must maintain a cumulative 3.0 or better GPA. **Students should note that the doctoral course work is not taken from a prescribed list of courses but is individualized for each student. The course work should be formed in consultation with the student's primary advisor(s) and the graduate supervisory committee members so as to meet the requirements of Graduate College and the CESE degree program as well as help the student meet the expectations of their (individual) PhD Comprehensive Exam.**

Additional course requirements are listed by specialty area: [geotechnical/geoenvironmental](#), [environmental](#), [structures/materials](#), [transportation/materials](#), and [water resources](#).

## Comprehensive Examination

A student must pass a comprehensive examination prior to being formally admitted to candidacy for the PhD degree. The student's GSC or a select group of faculty from the student's specialty area approved by the candidate's GSC, administers this examination after the student has essentially completed the course work. This examination can be scheduled no earlier than one calendar year into the PhD program and must be taken no later than the semester in which the 30th POS course work credit hour is taken beyond the MS degree. This oral **and** written examination is designed to probe the depth of the student's knowledge in the area of specialization. It will **also** include an oral defense of the dissertation proposal. The student must have an approved POS on file prior to taking the comprehensive examination. The PhD student and the supervisory committee chair will schedule a time for the examination. The examination must be taken during one of the two regular semesters (i.e., fall, spring). The student will receive a PASS or FAIL grade on the comprehensive examination. A pass grade is awarded if the student receives a majority vote of "pass", including a pass vote by the committee chair. After passing the comprehensive examination, a student may apply to the Graduate College for admission to candidacy for the PhD degree. Should the student fail the examination, the GSC will decide if and when a retake of the examination is allowed and approval must also be received through a petition to the Graduate College. The second examination must be taken within a period of three to 12 months after the first examination. Only one retake examination is permitted. If the student fails to pass the comprehensive exam in the retake, the department may recommend to the Graduate College the withdrawal of the student from the PhD program.



## Admission to Candidacy

Immediately after the comprehensive examination has been passed and after successfully defending the dissertation proposal, the student must fill out and submit the *Report of Doctoral Comprehensive Exams and the Results of the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal/Prospectus* forms and submit the forms to the graduate advisor in SEBE Advising Office. The student is then advanced to candidacy.

## Dissertation

A student is expected to become an active participant in a research program the first semester of study after being admitted to a PhD degree program. Research leading to a dissertation is performed under the direction of the supervisory committee. The candidate must register for a total of at least 12 hours of research and 12 hours of dissertation. Dissertation research will normally be undertaken on campus. Off campus research will be considered only by special petition. Such research will be considered only if the research cannot be undertaken on campus and if the problem appears to be of sufficient merit that it should be pursued even though proper facilities do not exist on campus.

## Dissertation Defense

Upon completion of the dissertation, the student must pass an oral examination in defense of the dissertation. The examination will not be conducted earlier than six months after the student's formal admission to candidacy. The [Format Manual](#) is available online at the Graduate College. The [Doctoral Defense Schedule Form and the Format Approval Sheet](#) are available on-line.

## Open Dissertation Defenses

Doctoral dissertation defenses are open to all members of the university community and the public. In general, it is expected that oral defenses will be held on an ASU campus during regular business hours to facilitate student, faculty, and public accessibility. The student should send the GAA their dissertation abstract page as well as the, date, time, and location of their defense. The GAA will post the announcement on the SSEBE website as well as notify the students and faculty by e-mail prior to the defense. Defenses must be scheduled with the Graduate College at least 10 business days in advance. Students must also follow all [Graduate College defense and graduation deadlines and procedures](#).