

**THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) POLICY**  
**FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN MS/MPH-THESIS OPTION PROGRAMS:**

TAC meeting purpose:

- Evaluate student progress toward degree.
- Provide critical input and advice that will facilitate the student's completion of their MS/ MPH-thesis in a timely manner.
- Provide additional mentorship to the student as needed (including discussion of the student's career goals as appropriate).

TAC membership requires approval from the Graduate Program Director and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, and will include:

- At least three members (including the student's primary research advisor) with expertise in one or more aspects of the student's project and who are familiar with the requirements of the graduate program for completion of a MS/ MPH-thesis. Students (in consultation with their faculty advisor and program director) may request specific faculty to serve on their TAC.
- At least two members must be members of the OHSU Graduate Faculty.
- One member may be from outside the OHSU Graduate Faculty, and either internal or external to OHSU. In such cases the Program Director must provide a brief CV of the proposed member and a short explanation of how the proposed member will provide expertise and/or professional contribution to the committee to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. The Associate Dean of Graduate Studies approves such requests.
- One member, who is a member of the OHSU Graduate Faculty, who has significant experience mentoring graduate students and who has served on a TAC before will serve as the TAC chair. The TAC chair may be the student's primary research advisor.
- In addition to the TAC chair, at least one other TAC member must have TAC experience.
- Members may be added or removed from the TAC with the approval of the Program Director and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. Following a change, the TAC composition will still adhere to the above requirements.
- Typically, TAC members will become the student's Oral Exam Committee. The Oral Exam Committee must include at least one member from outside the student's program. The chair of the Oral Exam Committee must be someone other than that student's primary research advisor.

TAC meeting format:

- Prior to a TAC meeting, students will submit a written summary of their recent work and prior TAC meeting summaries, to the committee members using the Thesis Advisory Committee Meeting Summary Form. For students who have just begun their MS-thesis research, this summary can consist of an outline of proposed aims. For more advanced students, this summary should include the goals identified by the committee at their previous TAC meeting, and a description of the student's work to address these goals (including successes and problems). Individual graduate programs have the option of requiring these summaries to be prepared in a specific format and according to a specific timeline, and might require additional elements to be included.
- The mentor should be prepared to provide an evaluative summary of student progress at the start of the meeting. Individual graduate programs also have the option of requiring mentors

to provide a brief written summary of their student's progress, prior to a TAC meeting. However, the mentor's evaluation of student progress will be discussed as part of the TAC meeting itself.

- For each TAC meeting, students should prepare an organized presentation of their recent progress, including a summary of the goals outlined by the TAC during their previous meeting; a discussion of their accomplishments and any problems encountered; and a summary of the directions they intend to pursue during the subsequent six months.
- After each TAC meeting, a short report that summarizes the issues raised and suggestions offered during the meeting should be prepared by the student in consultation with the TAC chair and shared with the TAC for review, revision and approval. TAC chairs are responsible for distributing revised copies of the TAC summary to the student, the TAC, the Graduate Program Director, the Graduate Program Coordinator, and the Graduate Studies Office.

The summary report should include:

- 1) Date and present and absent TAC members (a majority must be present)
- 2) Summary of the student's progress since the previous TAC meeting
- 3) Summary of any significant problems or issues that need to be addressed and potential solutions
- 4) Summary of what the student should attempt to accomplish in the next 6 months
- 5) When appropriate, summary of the student's future plans/career goals
- 6) Estimate of date of completion (this will be more precise as student advances)
- 7) Date when TAC agreed that the student is ready to write their thesis.

#### TAC meeting frequency:

- All students must identify their primary research mentor and form their TAC within nine months of matriculating into their graduate program and then meet with their TAC at least once every six months. Additional meetings may be scheduled by the student or by members of a TAC to ensure the student's progress towards their MS/ MPH-thesis.
- Individual graduate programs may require students to identify their primary research mentor and form their TAC earlier and meet more frequently than the minimum requirement outlined above.
- Individual graduate programs should establish a tracking mechanism to ensure that all students meet with their TAC at least every 6 months, and that TAC reports are completed in a timely manner.
- Failure by a student to meet with their TAC at least every six months may be considered "failure to progress" and could result in the placement of the student on academic probation.

Approved by Graduate Council: 11 November 2014