

## How to Establish Your Supervisory Committee

***Read the Graduate Student Manual.*** There is a very detailed section in the PhD portion of the manual on establishing your supervisory committee. This “How-To” is intended to supplement, rather than supercede, these instructions.

Your Supervisory Committee works with you to plan your graduate training, and it conducts the General Examination and the Final Examination (Dissertation Defense). **Much of the structure and function of this committee is determined by the Graduate School and not by the Department. Details on the Graduate School rules can be found at: <http://www.grad.washington.edu/Acad/gsmemos/gsmemo13.htm>**

***WHEN:*** Your supervisory committee should be formed as soon as academically reasonable. The Women Studies Department expects its graduate students to form their supervisory committees **no later than Fall Quarter of their third year of study.** By the end of your second year is even better. In any case, the Graduate School requires that the committee be formed at least four months prior to the time the warrant for the General Exam is presented to the Graduate School.

### ***Composition of the Supervisory Committee:***

The Supervisory Committee will consist of at least three, with a maximum of five, voting members, and a GSR.

***The Chair*** of the Supervisory Committee must be a Women Studies Core Faculty member who is a member of the Graduate Faculty and approved to Chair Supervisory committees. Not all faculty members are appointed to the Graduate Faculty and not all members of the Graduate Faculty are approved to Chair a supervisory committee. You can check whether a faculty member's Graduate Faculty status at:

<http://www.grad.washington.edu/gradfac/>

### ***The Graduate School Representative (GSR)***

You will also select a faculty member from outside the department to serve as the GSR on your committee. This person must also be a member of the Graduate Faculty and approved to Chair Supervisory committees.

The Graduate Schools' rules on selecting the GSR can be found at:

[http://www.grad.washington.edu/stsv/doccommroles.htm#Graduate%20School%20Representative%20\(GSR\)](http://www.grad.washington.edu/stsv/doccommroles.htm#Graduate%20School%20Representative%20(GSR)). ***Given the fact that many WS faculty have adjunct appointments in other departments and many feminist scholars in other departments have adjunct appointments in Women Studies, selection of a GSR can be difficult.*** Keep an eye out for a good GSR as you take classes or attend seminars in other departments. Work with your committee chair, other WS faculty and the Director of Graduate Training to locate

the right person for your committee. A person who can contribute to the quality of your dissertation work is the ideal.

***Steps to Take:***

- A. Talk to your advisor(s) to discuss potential committee members. Schedule an appointment with each potential committee member to determine their suitability and willingness to serve on your Supervisory Committee.
- B. Download the PhD Supervisory Committee Form from the Forms page in the Graduate section of the website.
- C. Each committee member must sign the form indicating their willingness to serve on the committee. The Supervisory Committee Chair, should sign the form twice – once, agreeing to serve on the committee and the second time signifying approval of the entire committee.
- D. Return the completed form to the Graduate Program Assistant who will enter the committee request for the Graduate School. Keep a copy for yourself. You, and each of your committee members, will be notified by e-mail from the Graduate School when the committee appointments are officially established.