

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 23-07

(Voting Units: Academic)

“Proposal to Change Michigan Tech’s Policy Regarding the Required Number of Members of Master of Science Examination Committees”

Background:

This proposal is made by the dean of the Graduate School on behalf of the Graduate Faculty Council (GFC). The GFC recommended that this proposal be approved at its February 6, 2007 meeting. Dr. Carl Anderson (MEEM) was the author of the original proposal which was brought to the GFC during its November, 2006 meeting.

This proposal reduces the *required* number of examiners on M.S. committees from four to three. Departments that wish to continue to require that four examiners serve on M.S. committees will be able to do so under the proposed policy. Most of Michigan Tech’s peers (table 1) require only three members on M.S. examination committees. The proposed new wording of the M.S. policy closely resembles the wording of the current Ph.D. examination committee policy.

Table 1: Michigan Tech’s peer institutions’ requirements for number of members on M.S. committees.

<i>Institution Name</i>	<i>Required # of Members on M.S. Committees</i>	<i>Web Address</i>
Cal Poly	Minimum of 3	www.calpoly.edu/~rgp/pdf/thesiscommittee.pdf
Carnegie Mellon	Minimum of 4	www.cit.cmu.edu/default.aspx?id=162
Clarkson Univ	Minimum of 3	www.clarkson.edu/getting_into_clarkson/graduate/mstheis.html
Colorado School of Mines	Minimum of 3	www.mines.edu/admiss/grad/thesis_information.htm
Georgia Inst. Of Tech	Minimum of 3	www.grad.gatech.edu/admin/advise_policy.html
Lehigh University	Minimum of 3	www.ees.lehigh.edu/graduate/grad_handbook.html
Rensselaer Poly Inst	Advisor Only	www.rpi.edu/dept/mane/deptweb/academics/grad/ms.req.html

Univ. of Missouri – Rolla	Minimum of 3	http://ece.umn.edu/documents/ECE_Graduate_handbook.pdf
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he current Master of Science examination committee policy is:

"Examination Committee—Must be nominated by the chair of the major department, usually in consultation with the advisor, and approved by the dean of the Graduate School. At least three of the four examiners must be members of the graduate faculty and at least one of the graduate faculty must be from outside the major department."

(<http://www.admin.mtu.edu/rgs/graduate/ms-science.html>)

For comparison, the current Ph.D. examination committee policy is:

"The Examining Committee will be appointed by the dean of the Graduate School in consultation with the department chair. The committee will consist of at least four members of the graduate faculty. At least one of these will be from outside the student's administrative home department. The primary advisor, or a co-advisor who serves as chair of the committee, must be from the student's home department. For interdisciplinary and non-departmental programs, the outside examiner may not be affiliated with the interdisciplinary or non-departmental program. A person external to MTU may be appointed as an ad hoc member of the Graduate Faculty to serve as the outside examiner. Persons who are not members of the Graduate Faculty may not serve as voting members of doctoral examination committees."

(<http://www.admin.mtu.edu/rgs/graduate/phd.html>)

Proposal:

Change the current Master of Science Examination committee policy to the following:

"The examination committee will be appointed by the dean of the Graduate School in consultation with the department chair (1). The committee will consist of at least three members of the graduate faculty (2). At least one of these will be from outside the student's administrative home department (3). The primary advisor, or a co-advisor who serves as chair of the committee, must be from the student's administrative home department (4).

(1) The wording of this sentence matches exactly the wording of the policy for Ph.D. committees. (2) This is the main thrust of the proposal, that is, to change the required number of committee members from four to three. (3) The use of the phrase 'administrative home department' makes the policy flexible so that it can be directly applied to interdisciplinary degree programs. (4) This sentence states clearly that the student's advisor or co-advisor must be from the same department as the student, and that the chair of the examination committee must be from the student's department. This sentence is included because during 2005-2006 the GFC determined that it was very important for a student's advisor to be familiar with the policies of the department that house the student.

Introduced to the Senate: 21 March 2007

Adopted by the Senate: 18 April 2007

Approved by Administration: 26 April 2007