KIN Advising Changes Policy
Approved March 30, 2012

MSU has established procedures for changes in advisor, or of guidance / dissertation committee members. In all instances, both students and advisors / committee members should engage in open and respectful communication at all times in order to allow changes and transitions to happen in a smooth and positive way. For students, it is of course always appropriate and courteous to discuss concerns with the current advisor before requesting any changes in the setup of committees, or a change of advisor. If at any time during the student’s tenure at MSU, a student’s advisor is incapable of fulfilling the role of advisor, the Graduate Coordinator will be responsible for assisting the student in finding a new advisor or finishing the student’s degree program requirements.

Change of guidance committee member: Student---initiated

Should a student wish to change any of her or his guidance committee members, it is necessary for the student to propose a replacement for the member(s) to her or his advisor, and seek approval of the advisor. The student should then discuss and inform the outgoing member and recruit the replacement member. Following approval, the student should inform all members of the original guidance committee about the change, and circulate the necessary forms for signatures.

Change of advisor: Student---initiated

Should a student wish to change her or his advisor, open communication should be paramount: The student should talk to the advisor about this, and propose a new advisor. If both the old and the new advisor agree on the change, all members of the guidance committee (or the dissertation committee), and the new advisor need to sign the relevant forms. The signed modification is then submitted to the Graduate secretary, approved by the Department chair, and placed in the student’s academic file. If a disagreement arises between the parties involved that cannot be resolved through discussion, then the Graduate Coordinator should mediate the discrepancy.

Change of Ph.D. advisor: Faculty retirement / leave

Faculty members should generally only accept graduate students they can, under foreseeable circumstances, mentor for the full length of the student’s graduate program; four years full---time (and multiples of that part---time) are assumed as regular duration of PhD studies.

Faculty members who retire earlier than planned, or leave the university, need to make sure that the student’s needs are being taken care of. Henceforth, in concert with the student, the outgoing faculty member should consult with the Graduate Coordinator to determine the replacement advisor or replacement dissertation director. Once a new advisor has been found, and has agreed to take on the student, all members of the guidance committee (or the dissertation committee), and the new advisor need to sign the
relevant forms. The signed modification is then submitted to the Graduate secretary, approved by the Department chair, and placed in the student’s academic file.

Forms are found under changes in advisor or of guidance committee. Graduate students should check with the graduate studies coordinator about those procedures if changes become necessary.