

Suggestions for Your First Committee Meeting:

- 1) Getting four professors in the same room at the same time is much more difficult than you may think. Schedule your committee meeting well in advance! Committee meetings usually take between an hour and an hour and a half.
- 2) Write up a 1-2 page summary of the aims of your project, the work you have completed, and the experiments you plan to undertake over the next year. Solicit input on this statement from your research advisor before you send it out to your committee. The committee should receive the statement at least 48 hours before your meeting.
- 3) Prepare a powerpoint (or similar) presentation that:
 - a) Introduces the committee to your project. Details are not as important as context—why is this an interesting area? What are the key questions? How will your project address one or more of those questions? **Do not assume** that your committee member know all of this already.
 - b) Explains your progress. Make sure that you avoid the use of jargon peculiar only to your subfield (or provide a chart as a handout for your committee members). **For each experiment, tell your committee why you did it, what you did, what you observed, and what it means.**
 - c) Provides a plan for your work over the next year. If you have yet to complete a key experiment demonstrating the feasibility of your approach, your committee may ask you to meet with them again in 3-6 months to discuss your progress. Remember, your committee is an experienced, intelligent group of researchers who are there to help you produce the best Ph.D. work you can!

It is often helpful for committee members to have a printout of your powerpoint presentation as a handout.

- 4) Bring the First Committee Meeting Form to your committee meeting.
- 5) Discuss the committee's evaluation with your advisor before you turn the form in to the Graduate Office.