

APPENDIX C: HOW TO PICK A COMMITTEE AND CHAIR FOR YOUR THESIS

Selecting a committee and chair for your thesis is one of the most important things you will do in route to completing the SUS program. To that end, you will want to think carefully about your selection. While there is no one way to make this decision, the points below provide some guidelines. Please keep these ideas in mind:

1. Before selecting a committee, think carefully about what you want to do after graduation. Then try to select a committee that will help you enter that world.
2. If possible, choose committee members who know your work and whose feedback has benefited you in the past. This may not always be possible in the SUS program, since we don't have full time faculty.
3. If you are unable to select faculty who know your work, then look for faculty who have similar research interest as yours. This will require some independent inquiries, perhaps starting with conversation with other students. Also, remember to use the SUS affiliated faculty as advisors in this process.
4. Take special care when choosing the chair of your committee. Some chairs will set regular deadlines for you while others will encourage you to work independently. Additionally, some chairs will serve as the "final word" when committee members offer conflicting comments. Others will expect the writer to resolve these differences. Think about what you need, how you work, and how your style compares to the style of your chair.
5. Make sure the chair of the committee is a full time, tenure track faculty who can guide your work.
6. If possible, speak to other students who have worked with your potential committee members to get an idea of expectations and work styles.
7. Establish the role each person on the committee will play. Some committee members may want to see every chapter, while others only want to see a completed draft and others will want to respond informally to your work-in-progress. Ask committee members what their expectations are and tell them what you would find helpful.