

SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOL OF MINES AND TECHNOLOGY

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Proprietary Thesis Petition

NUMBER: Policy II-29-2 (Formerly Policy II-D-8)

Access to potential proprietary technical material of a thesis research project will be restricted for a specified period of time after approval has been granted by the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology to a petition submitted by a Graduate Committee on behalf of a graduate student.

1. The graduate student will request, in writing, (including justification) to the SDSM&T Office of Graduate Education that a proprietary thesis program be granted. This request will be supported by an explanation by the project sponsor for the need for a proprietary thesis program and such an endorsement will include the appropriate authorized signature from the sponsor.
2. The proposed proprietary status of all experimental materials, computational data, manuscripts, and final thesis product for the candidate will be maintained for a period that will not exceed three calendar years from the date of the final thesis defense. The initial proprietary period or any extension thereof will be recommended by the student's Graduate Committee in consultation with the project sponsor; final proposals and extension of the proprietary period must be approved by the executive administrator with responsibility for Graduate Education and the Council on Graduate Education. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs receives information copies of appropriate correspondence and program documents.
3. A proprietary thesis Graduate Committee will consist of the major professor, department head, the executive administrator with responsibility for Graduate Education who acts as the Graduate Education representative, one additional faculty member for MS programs, and two additional faculty members for Ph.D. programs. Any faculty member may decline to serve without prejudice on any committee involving a proprietary thesis program.
4. Only the Graduate Committee may witness the proprietary thesis defense or examine the proprietary material whether for a thesis defense or in any other capacity.
5. Proprietary thesis copies normally required for distribution will in these cases not be released to department and school libraries but will be retained in confidential Office of Graduate Education files for the duration of the proprietary period.

6. A proprietary thesis agreement will be prepared for the purposes of program approval and must be signed by the sponsor, petitioning graduate student, all Graduate Committee members, and executive administrator with responsibility for Graduate Education at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology prior to effecting the proprietary aspects of the students program of study.

7. Definition of terms
 - A. Graduate Committee: A committee organized for the purpose of guiding the graduate student through his or her program. This committee is variable in size depending on the level of the graduate program but must consist of a major professor (chairman), a Graduate Education and Research representative, and other department members. The Graduate Committee has the responsibility to provide direction and counsel to the graduate student in areas of technical and administrative procedures relative to the degree program.
 - B. Major Professor: A member of the faculty who serves as the chairman of the Graduate Committee and who is a member of the degree-granting department. The major professor has the prime responsibility to direct the research activities of the student and convene the Graduate Committee for purposes of examining the student.
 - C. Proprietary Period: The length of time (as recommended by the Graduate Committee within the limitations) set by this policy during which all proprietary materials and information shall be restricted in distribution as specified in the policy.
 - D. Proprietary Thesis: A document representing the technical results of the proprietary research program.
 - E. Proprietary Thesis Program: The program requested by the sponsor and directed by the Graduate Committee to provide reasonable security in restricted distribution of proprietary materials, including the proprietary thesis.

SOURCE: Graduate Office; Graduate Office, Aug. 1994; Graduate Office Dec. 2009

BOR Reference: Policy 4:34