

PhD Student Progress and Review

Formal Requirements

The formal requirements for the PhD degree include the following milestones:

1. Completing required coursework.
2. Achieving candidacy, as determined by degree program. May be achieved through qualifying examinations, comprehensive examination(s), and/or an oral defense of the dissertation proposal.
3. Identifying a faculty research advisor.
4. Forming a dissertation committee.
5. Writing and completing a successful oral defense of the dissertation proposal before the PhD committee.
6. Completing a successful oral defense of dissertation before the PhD committee.
7. Approval of written dissertation by dissertation committee and Graduate School of Engineering.

Time Limits

Departments shall define standards for satisfactory performance progress for PhD students that include the following time limits:

DIRECT-ENTRY PHD STUDENTS

1. Candidacy must be achieved within three years of entering the PhD program.
2. The degree must be completed within seven years of entering the PhD program.

ADVANCED-ENTRY PHD STUDENTS

1. Candidacy must be achieved within three years of entering the PhD program.
2. The degree must be completed within five years of entering the PhD program.

Performance Progress

Departments shall establish a review process by which the performance progress of every PhD student is evaluated not more than once per semester and at least annually. As part of this review, students should submit information **that must include achievement of milestones** and could include descriptions of their plans, achievements, progress toward goals, transcripts, CV, publications, conferences attended, recognition they have received, and awards. The review process must include feedback from the student's faculty advisor.

If a department finds that a PhD student is not making satisfactory progress, the student shall be placed on performance probation. Members of the department shall work with the student to develop a performance improvement plan that includes specific actions the student should take to return to satisfactory progress. The performance progress of each PhD student on performance probation shall be reviewed by their department no earlier than one semester and no later than one year after being placed on probation. If a student on performance probation is again found to be not making satisfactory progress, the student shall be dismissed from their degree program. If a student on performance probation is found to be making satisfactory progress, the student shall leave performance probation status.

A copy of the performance progress review and performance improvement plan, if applicable, shall be submitted to the student. For all students, the result of the performance progress review shall be submitted to the Graduate School of Engineering. For all students who receive an unsatisfactory review, a summary of the performance progress review and performance improvement plan shall be submitted to the Graduate School of Engineering. Students dismissed from their program will be notified by the Graduate School of Engineering. A student who is dismissed from their program may submit an appeal through the college's graduate appeals process.

For the purposes of determining the timing of performance reviews specified by this policy, the summer first-half and summer second-half semesters shall collectively be considered one semester.