

Policy 6-203: Graduate Studies and Degrees, Doctor of Philosophy

I. Purpose and Scope

(Reserved)

II. Definitions

(Reserved)

III. Policy: General Requirements and Provisions for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The Doctor of Philosophy degree is awarded for high attainment in an advanced specialized field of study. It requires competence in independent research and an understanding of related subjects. This degree is not awarded simply for the fulfillment of residence requirements and the accumulation of credits.

A. Study Requirements

Candidates for the Ph.D. degree must ordinarily complete not less than three full years (six semesters) of approved graduate work, inclusive of work for the master's degree. More time may be required. In truly exceptional cases, a shorter period of time in graduate work may be approved by the dean of the Graduate School. At least one year of the doctoral program must be spent in full-time academic work at the University of Utah, defined as two consecutive semesters of registration for at least nine hours. Noninteractive distance or telecourses do not satisfy the residency requirement. (Normally, no more than six semester hours of high quality work may be transferred from another institution.)

B. Time Limit

The time limit for completing a Ph.D. degree is determined by individual departmental policy approved by the Graduate Council. Requests to exceed established time limits must be recommended by a candidate's supervisory committee and approved by the departmental director of graduate studies and the dean of the Graduate school. Students whose studies have been interrupted for long periods of time and who have been granted extended time to complete their degrees may be required to complete additional courses, to pass examinations, or otherwise to demonstrate that they are current in their field.

C. Supervisory Committee

A committee of three or five faculty members is appointed to supervise a student's graduate work. One or more members of the supervisory committee shall be appointed from another department where such appointments will enhance the ability of the committee to supervise the student's work. The supervisory committee is responsible for approving the student's academic program, preparing and judging the qualifying examinations, approving the dissertation subject and final dissertation, and administering and judging the final oral examination. The chairperson of the supervisory committee normally directs the student's research and writing of the dissertation. The final oral examination may be chaired by any member of the supervisory committee consistent with departmental policy. Decisions concerning program requirements, examinations, and the dissertation are made by majority vote of the supervisory committee.

Supervisory committee members should be members of the university faculty, including tenure-line, visiting, or adjunct, clinical, faculty (See [Policy 6-300](#)). They should hold an academic or professional doctorate, and should have demonstrated competence to do research, scholarly, or artistic work in the general field of the student's studies. Appointments to graduate supervisory committees of persons who do not meet these requirements must be recommended and justified by the director of graduate studies of the department and approved by the dean of the Graduate School.

It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for a supervisory committee. The department chairperson or director of graduate studies, depending on departmental policy, appoints the chairperson and the committee members subject to approval by the dean of the Graduate school. All University of Utah faculty members (including tenure-line and career-line faculty) are eligible to serve as supervisory committee chairpersons consistent with individual departmental regulations. In special cases faculty holding only visiting or adjunct appointments in the university may be chairpersons if recommended by the department and approved by the dean of the Graduate School.

D. Language Requirements

Whether foreign language proficiency is required of candidates is determined by departmental policy. Where such proficiency is required, it must be certified by the Graduate Language Committee. In some instances, language proficiency may be certified by individual departments if appropriate Procedures have been approved in advance by the Graduate Language Committee. In most cases, however, fulfillment of the language requirements must be certified by the Graduate Language Committee. The Graduate Language Committee certifies language proficiency on the basis of special examinations or academic courses completed in the language. Detailed regulations concerning language requirements are published in the Bulletin of the University of Utah Graduate School.

E. Qualifying Examination

Written and oral qualifying examinations (preliminary examinations) are required of each candidate. The nature and format of these examinations are established by individual departments subject to approval by the Graduate Council. At the discretion of the student's supervisory committee, an examination or parts of an examination may be repeated only once.

Qualifying examinations normally are prepared, administered, and evaluated by the student's supervisory committee. However, a department has the option of appointing a departmental examination committee which administers the qualifying examinations and ensures that examinations are properly prepared and evaluated.

F. Dissertations

The candidate must submit a dissertation embodying the results of the scientific or scholarly research or artistic creativity which gives evidence of originality and ability in independent investigation and is a contribution to knowledge or the creative arts. The dissertation must show a mastery of the relevant literature and be presented in acceptable style. The style and format of the dissertation are determined by departmental policy and registered with the Thesis Editor, who approves the style and format of the individual dissertations in accordance with departmental policy. The dissertation is approved by the student's supervisory committee.

The doctoral dissertation is expected to be available to other scholars and to the general public. As copyright holders, it is the responsibility of all doctoral candidates to arrange for the publication of their dissertations. The university accepts three alternatives for complying with the publication requirements:

1. The entire dissertation may be published and distributed by a publisher of the candidate's choice, exclusive of vanity publishing.
2. The entire dissertation may consist of an article or articles accepted for publication in approved scholarly journals.
3. The dissertation may be included in a University-approved electronic thesis and dissertation database for public sale and the University of Utah Digital Library for public access, either immediately or after an embargo period not to exceed 3 years. Embargo periods exceeding 3 years may be requested but they are subject to negotiation with the Dean of the Graduate School..

Regardless of the option used for meeting the publication requirement, an abstract of each dissertation is to be published in University Microfilm's Dissertation Abstracts International.

Detailed policies and procedures concerning the publication requirement and other matters pertaining to the preparation and acceptance of the dissertation are contained in A Handbook for Theses and Dissertations published by The Graduate School.

G. Final Examination

A final oral examination must be passed before graduation. The examination must follow receipt of the dissertation by the supervisory committee. The committee schedules and announces a public oral examination at which the candidate must defend the dissertation. The final oral examination may be chaired by any member of the supervisory committee consistent with departmental policy.

In order to guarantee graduation in a particular semester, the candidate must submit a copy of the dissertation for format approval to the thesis and dissertation editor four weeks prior to the last day of classes of that semester. The copy submitted for format approval must be defended and fully approved by the supervisory committee and the final reader of the dissertation.

H. Registration

The candidate must register for a minimum of 14 credit hours of Thesis Research (7970 Thesis Research-Ph.D.). The candidate must be regularly enrolled at the university for three or more credit hours during the semester in which the final oral examination is taken.

I. Exceptions

Individual student exceptions to the general requirements for the Ph.D. as stated herein must be approved by the dean of the Graduate School upon the

recommendation of the student's supervisory committee and the respective director of graduate studies or department chair. The Graduate Council may approve departmental or programmatic exceptions to the minimum residency requirements and proposals for new programs or academic offerings using distance learning technologies and/or off-campus sites, as provided by Graduate School policy.

[Note: The parts this Regulation (listed below) are Regulations Resource Information – the contents of which are not approved by the Academic Senate or Board of Trustees, and are to be updated from time to time as determined appropriate by the cognizant Policy Officer and the Institutional Policy Committee, as per Policy 1-001 and Rule 1-001.]

IV. Rules, Procedures, Guidelines, Forms and other Related Resources

- A. Rules
- B. Procedures
- C. Guidelines
- D. Forms
- E. Other related resource materials

V. References

(Reserved)

VI. Contacts

Policy Owner:

Questions about this Policy and any related Rules, Procedures and Guidelines should be directed to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Policy Officers:

Only the Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Sr. Vice President for Health Sciences or their designees have the authority to grant exceptions to this policy.

VII. History

Renumbering. Renumbered as Policy 6-203 effective 9/15/2008, formerly known as PPM 9-9.3, and previously as Faculty Regulations Chapter IX - Section 9.

Revision history:

Current version: Revision 5. Approved by Academic Senate [May 5, 2014. Approved by Board of Trustees June 10, 2014, with effective date of June 10, 2014

Earlier Revisions. Revision 4 {link to copy marked outdated} Effective dates July 10, 1995 to June 9, 2014