



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

Geosciences




PHD HANDBOOK

2021-2022

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A group of people, including students and faculty, are gathered on the deck of a boat. They are looking at a small electronic device held by one of the students. The boat is moving through the water, creating a large wake. The people are wearing various outdoor clothing like jackets, hats, and sunglasses. The background shows the churning water and the boat's structure.

This handbook is intended to help you meet all Departmental and Graduate College requirements for the Ph.D. degree in Geosciences. It is important that you acquaint yourself with these policies and deadlines and remain informed throughout your academic career.

GEOSCIENCES GRADUATE POLICY COMMITTEE

The Graduate Policy Committee, composed of Geosciences faculty members, formulates and monitors departmental policy governing your graduate studies. This committee is responsible for evaluating your academic progress and administering financial support throughout your academic career. Should you have concerns about graduate policy, the chairperson of the Graduate Policy Committee is a good person to approach to discuss your concerns academic career.

GEOSCIENCES GRADUATE OFFICE

The Graduate Office is responsible for monitoring your academic progress and assisting you in meeting all departmental and Graduate College degree requirements. This office is your primary contact. All paperwork towards your degree must be submitted to the Graduate Office for approval. <https://www.geo.arizona.edu/currentgrad>

GRADUATE ACADEMIC SERVICES, GRADUATE COLLEGE

The Graduate Student Academic Services Office in the Graduate College is responsible for overseeing all Graduate College degree requirements and for the final posting of your degree. <https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas>

The Graduate College is dedicated to promoting and strengthening family relationships. Resources: <https://grad.arizona.edu/new-and-current-students>

GENERAL INFORMATION

Information on requirements

Information on general requirements for the Ph.D. degree is available on-line through the Graduate College (<http://grad.arizona.edu/>) and Geosciences (<http://www.geo.arizona.edu/?q=node/36>). The Graduate College sets basic degree requirements, and there are additional Geosciences requirements that are outlined in this handbook.

MINIMUM GPA REQUIREMENT

A student cannot earn a graduate degree or certificate unless he or she has achieved a cumulative grade-point average of 3.00 or higher on all course work taken for graduate credit, whether or not the courses are offered in satisfaction of the specific requirements for a specific graduate program.

A student whose cumulative GPA is below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters will be disqualified. Programs may allow students to take additional course work while in non-degree status. In order to graduate, the student must apply for readmission to the Graduate College through their graduate department. Readmission is not guaranteed. No student on academic probation may hold a scholarship, fellowship, or assistantship.

DEFICIENCIES

A deficiency is a lack of coursework or knowledge in a basic area which may be critical to a student's graduate and professional work. A student's advisor may require that she or he satisfy these deficiencies through further coursework. A grade of C or better will satisfy deficiency requirements, but no deficiency will be eliminated on a pass/fail basis.

MINIMUM ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT

The Department of Geosciences requires that students on scholarship, fellowship, or assistantship support must register for a minimum of 9 graduate units per semester. Students at the end of their degree can arrange to take fewer units.



CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT

Ph.D. students are required to be enrolled each fall and spring semester for a minimum of 3 graduate units (9 graduate units if on scholarship, fellowship or assistantship) from original matriculation until the completion of all course work requirements, written and oral comprehensive exams, and 18 dissertation (GEOS 920) units. When these requirements are met, students must register for a minimum of 1 unit (9 graduate units if on scholarship, fellowship or assistantship) each semester until the final copy of the dissertation is submitted to the Graduate College. If degree requirements are to be completed in the summer or winter sessions, students are not required to register for graduate credit during that term.

Unless excused by an official Leave of Absence (which may not exceed one year throughout the student's degree program), all graduate students are subject to the Continuous Enrollment Policy and

GENERAL INFORMATION

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT (CONT)

must pay in-state and out-of-state tuition and fees in order to remain in the program. If the student fails to obtain a Leave of Absence or maintain continuous enrollment, he or she will be required to apply for re-admission, to pay the Graduate College application fee, and pay all overdue tuition and fees, including cumulative late penalties. There is no guarantee of re-admission. Tuition or registration waivers cannot be applied retroactively.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Satisfactory academic progress consists of meeting all enrollment and grade requirements outlined above, as well as meeting with committees once per year and submitting a subsequent annual progress report, and making adequate progress in taking exams, progressing in independent research, submitting papers to peer-reviewed journals, participating at conferences, and participation in proposal writing. Failure to meet these academic requirements as judged by the committee will be grounds for ineligibility for support and potentially dismissal. *Students not making satisfactory academic progress, as determined by the Graduate Policy Committee and the student's advisor, are not eligible for departmental support or departmental office space, and continued unsatisfactory progress will result in disqualification from the degree program.*

DISMISSAL AND APPEAL POLICY

Students may be dismissed from the Geosciences graduate program due to insufficient progress towards completion of the degree. The Graduate Policy Committee (GPC) monitors student progress and periodically notifies students who are not making satisfactory or timely progress. This notification is a written warning and requires the student to propose a schedule for degree completion which has been approved by the student's advisor.

GENERAL INFORMATION

DISMISSAL AND APPEAL POLICY (CONT)

Once the GPC accepts the proposed schedule, further noncompliance prompts a written notification that the student will be academically disqualified by the Graduate College at the start of the next semester. The student may appeal this status conversion in writing to the GPC chairperson, but this appeal must be received **before** the date of the status conversion. The student may appeal the GPC chairperson's decision to the Geosciences Department Head.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION RESOURCES

Graduate school can be a challenging and stressful endeavor, and disputes may arise with other students, with your advisor, or with other faculty members.

- [Geosciences dispute resolution policy](#)
- Graduate College [Summary of Grievance Types and Responsible Parties](#)

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

INITIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Students in their first semester will, in conjunction with their advisor, choose their Initial Advisory Committee. This committee, comprised of 3 tenured or tenure-track faculty members in Geosciences, is responsible for guiding the student's first two semesters of the PhD program and conducting their Diagnostic Exam.

DIAGNOSTIC EXAM

The Diagnostic Exam must be completed before the end of the PhD student's first semester in the program. The Diagnostic Exam shall consist of both a written and an oral part. The written portion of the exam will consist of answers to one or more questions from each of the student's three Initial Advisory Committee members. The questions are intended to explore the student's background in his or her chosen field of study and to advise the student on areas that will require additional coursework or independent study.

The oral portion of the exam shall consist of a brief presentation by the student on his or her general area of interest, followed by questions from the student's Initial Advisory Committee. Questions may be on any topic. The oral portion of the exam shall be less than 2 hours in duration. If the student fails either the oral or written part of the exam, it may be retaken a second time before the end of the following semester, with the approval of the student's committee.

MAJOR AND MINOR

The Graduate College requires that every PhD student declare and complete the requirements in a major and a minor subject/department, with the requirements for the major and minor set by the department that teaches that subject. A person can, however, complete a major and minor in the same subject/department.

The minor in Geosciences requires nine graduate

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

credits. Six out of the nine credits must be graded coursework. Up to three credits may be transferred from another institution, providing they are graduate credits with a letter grade. The Minor Committee is composed of one tenure-track faculty member from the Department of Geosciences at the rank of Assistant Professor or higher. The Written Exam portion of the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam is required by the Department of Geosciences..

PHD COURSE UNITS AND PLAN OF STUDY

A minimum of 63 units of graduate-level courses (500-level or above) are required for the Ph.D. degree. These include 36 coursework units in the Major, 9 coursework units (minimum, dependant on the minor department) in the Minor, and 18 dissertation units (GEOS 920, taken after comprehensive exams are passed).

At least 23 units of the 45 coursework units (major plus minor) must be graded units. Ph.D. students may transfer in up to 15 graded units from a MS degree earned at another university.

However, please note that students must take a minimum of 12 graded units at UA to establish a UA graduate GPA. The **Doctoral Plan of Study** (filed in the third semester) will detail the student's 45 coursework units as well as the 18 GEOS 920 units. First-year Geosciences students are required to take two semesters of GEOS 595A, Colloquium.

PHD TIME LIMITATION

All requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy must be completed within 5 years of passing the Comprehensive Exam. Should a student not finish within that time period, she or he may be required to re-take the Comprehensive Exam, dependant on permission from the Geosciences program and the Graduate College, and then proceed to complete other requirements, e.g., the dissertation. *It is expected that a Ph.D. degree will take four to five years to complete.*

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

The Comprehensive Exam Committee must consist of a minimum of 4 members:

- Three tenured or tenure-track Geoscience faculty (includes joint appointments)
- One tenured or tenure-track UA faculty or special member (includes adjunct, researchers or faculty from other institutions)

Students in their third semester will, in conjunction with their advisor, choose their Comprehensive Exam Committee. This committee is responsible for guiding the student's academic program, conducting their Comprehensive Exam, and advising the student during the early stages of research and writing of their dissertation. The Comprehensive Exam Committee will generally be comprised of the same members that make up the subsequent Doctoral Dissertation Committee, but students have an opportunity to change the composition of their committee prior to the Doctoral Dissertation Defense.

For student majoring in Geosciences, a minimum of three tenure-track faculty or research staff are needed to serve as Major members of the Comprehensive Exam Committee. For students minoring in Geosciences, a minimum of one tenure-track faculty member is needed to serve as the Minor member of the Comprehensive Exam Committee.

For students minoring in a subject that is not Geosciences, the committee must meet the requirements set by the Minor department. The majority of the committee must be tenured or tenure-track faculty in the Department of Geosciences. Tenured or tenure-track faculty in Geosciences must direct or co-direct all committees. At least two members of the Major portion of the Comprehensive Exam Committee must hold tenure-track appointments at the University of Arizona. If approved by special petition

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION COMMITTEE (CONT)

to the Graduate Policy Committee and the Graduate College, up to two members of the Committee may be non tenure-track, or non-University of Arizona faculty.

Students may not modify the membership of the Comprehensive Exam Committee between beginning their Written Comprehensive Exams and completing the Oral Comprehensive Exam. Students may not change their Minor department after the Comprehensive Exam.

YEARLY MEETING WITH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Geosciences department requires that PhD students meet with their advisory committee (i.e. the Initial Advisory Committee, Comprehensive Exam Committee, or Doctoral Dissertation Committee, depending on the student's stage in the program) at least once a year. In preparation for that meeting, the student is required to prepare a brief (no more than one page) written report that summarizes their pro-gress during the past year and outlines their goals for the coming year.

The advisory committee meeting is not supposed to be a mini-oral exam; the student's advisory committee should benefit them by providing advice and support. The meeting (30-60 minutes minimum) is an opportunity to discuss progress and goals as a group, identify relevant courses, provide advice on meeting research and writing goals, schedule events such as prelims and defenses, and consider funding opportunities. The student's prepared progress report should be signed by each member of the committee and a copy is due in the Geosciences Academic Affairs office (GLD-S 210) on May 1 of each year that the student is enrolled in a Geosciences graduate degree program. Students should contact the members of their advisory

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

YEARLY MEETING WITH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CONT)

committee to schedule a meeting and prepare their progress report in advance of the meeting. Students in their first year without committees should plan to meet with their advisor to discuss choosing a committee before the May 1 deadline. Please see the suggested schedule for yearly committee meetings here: <https://www.geo.arizona.edu/?q=node/36>

WRITTEN AND ORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Before admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree, the student must pass a written and an oral Doctoral Comprehensive Examination. The Comprehensive Exam must consist of both a written and an oral exam. The Comprehensive Exam must be successfully completed before the end of the student's fourth semester in the program. The student's Ph.D. advisor, working in consultation with the other members of the student's research committee, shall choose either the (a) *Research Proposal* plus written questions option or (b) *the Manuscript/Publication* plus written questions option at least three months before the start of the written portion of the Preliminary Exam:

A. *Research Proposal Plus Written Questions Option.*

The student shall prepare an NSF-style proposal for their Ph.D. research. The proposal shall, in general, consist of three sections: Project Summary (one page); Proposal Body (max. ten pages, including any figures or tables); and References Cited (no limit). The exact format and length is at the discretion of the student's Ph.D. advisor. The proposal should carefully describe and justify a research effort on a significant topic in the geosciences. The proposal should address both the intellectual merit and broader implications of the research.

Each of the student's committee members may ask the student one or more questions relevant to the

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

WRITTEN AND ORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION (CONT)

student's area of research. Each question or set of questions should require a written response. At the discretion of the committee member, the questions may be "open-book" or "closed book" and with a specified amount of time for their completion. The completed research proposal and written responses to questions shall be submitted to the student's committee at least three weeks prior to the oral portion of the Preliminary exam.

B. *Manuscript/Publication Plus Written Questions Option.* The student shall submit a publication-quality manuscript or a published paper on a topic relevant to the student's research area. The student's advisor may provide guidelines for format and length.

Each of the student's committee members may ask the student one or more questions relevant to the student's area of research. Each question or set of questions should require a written response. At the discretion of the committee member, the questions may be "open-book" or "closed book" and with a specified amount of time for their completion. The manuscript or publication and written responses to questions shall be submitted to the student's committee at least three weeks prior to the oral portion of the Preliminary exam.

The oral portion of the Comprehensive Exam will be according to existing Graduate College regulations regarding format and length.

BUSINESS PROCEDURES FOR WRITTEN AND ORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION:

- » At the beginning of the semester, notify your committee you will be taking your comprehensive exams.
- » Begin work early on pinning down a date for the oral exam, since it can be difficult to find a time all five of your committee members can meet.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

WRITTEN AND ORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION (CONT)

- » Take your written exams (if required by committee members) and submit your manuscript/proposal to your committee. When you email your manuscript/proposal to your committee, make sure to copy the Anne Chase in the Geosciences Academic Office Chase. Remind your committee that each of them must e-mail Anne Chase with his or her result for the proposal (pass/fail.) All written results must be received by the Academic Office before the oral exam can begin.
- » Submit **Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Examination** (GC) through GradPath to schedule oral exam. Form must be finished routing and approved by the Graduate College AT LEAST ONE WEEK before oral exam date.
- » Take oral exam.
- » Committee chair will file **Results of Comprehensive Exam** form on GradPath.
- » If the student fails either the oral or written part of the exam, it may be retaken a second time before the end of the following semester, with the approval of the student's committee.
- » Any changes in the timing or composition of these exams require the prior approval of the Chair of the Graduate Policy Committee or the Chair of the Department of Geosciences.

DISSERTATION AND DEFENSE

QUALITY OF THE RESEARCH AND DISSERTATION

All Ph.D. programs at UA require the completion of a dissertation which meets required standards of scholarship and demonstrates the candidate's ability to conduct original research. The research must involve the discovery of new principles, of new applications of principles already known, or of new ideas derived in the coordination of previously known facts and principles. The dissertation can include previously published or submitted works by the student but the published or publishable work must be logically connected and integrated into the dissertation in a coherent manner.

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Dissertation Committees must consist of a minimum of 4 members:

- » Three tenure or tenure track Geoscience faculty (includes joint appointments)
- » One tenure or tenure track UA faculty or special member (includes adjunct, researchers or faculty from other institutions)

For student majoring in Geosciences, a minimum of three tenure-track faculty or research staff are needed to serve as Major members of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee.

For students minoring in Geosciences, a minimum of one tenure-track faculty member is needed to serve as the Minor member of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee.

For students minoring in a subject that is not Geosciences, the committee must meet the requirements set by the Minor department. In the case that the minor committee member decide to waive being on the Dissertation Committee the student must add an additional member to meet

DISSERTATION AND DEFENSE

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION COMMITTEE (CONT)

the minimum requirement for Geosciences of 4 committee members.

The Graduate College also requires that the Doctoral Dissertation Committee consist of a minimum of three members, all of whom must be current University of Arizona faculty members that are tenured or tenure-track. Geosciences policy is that dissertation committees have a minimum of four members with three being tenured, or tenure-track, Geosciences professors and all members must attend the defense as the Doctoral Dissertation Committee.

If four or five members of the committee attend the defense, there may be one dissenting vote. The fourth member may be tenured or tenure-track, or an approved special member. Special members must be pre-approved by the Dean of the Graduate College. Any members beyond the fourth can also be tenured or tenure-track, or approved special members. All dissertation committee members are expected to attend the entire final defense.

DISSERTATION FORMAT

There are certain features of format that every dissertation must conform to. Instructions relating to the format of the dissertation and required abstracts are included in the Graduate College's Dissertation Formatting Guide (including those that include previously published papers, papers accepted for publication, and/or papers with multiple authors). The Dissertation Formatting Guide can be found at: <https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/dissertations-theses/sample-pages>

DISSERTATION AND DEFENSE

SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATION

Upon successful completion of the Final Oral Defense Examination, the candidate submits the dissertation electronically for forwarding to the Library of the University of Arizona and to University Microfilms, Inc (<http://www.etsdadmin.com/cgi-bin/school?siteId=63>).

IMPORTANCE OF PUBLISHING THE PRODUCTS OF RESEARCH

It is expected and strongly encouraged that students publish portions of their dissertation in peer-reviewed journals as they proceed in their research. The GPC recognizes that there are some types of studies that may not lend themselves to publication (e.g. research that involves proprietary agreements with industry), but in most cases PhD students should aim to publish most of the products of their re-search during their time at UA. This is especially important as the review process at peer-reviewed journals can a year or more, and a strong CV upon graduation usually has at least 2-3 papers published or accepted for publication.

PHD DEGREE TIMELINE

Ph.D. degrees are expected to take four to five years to complete. Students not following this schedule are at risk of making unsatisfactory academic progress. See <http://www.geo.arizona.edu/?q=node/36> for a more in-depth version of this checklist.

WHAT	WHEN
Diagnostic Exam File Diagnostic Exam form. Meet with Initial Advisory Committee; plan program of study. File Responsible Conduct of Research form (GradPath).	1st Semester
Plan of Study Submit Plan of Study form (GradPath).	3rd Semester
Comprehensive Exam Committee Appointment Choose Major Advisor and three Ph.D. Committee members. File Comprehensive Exam Committee Appointment form (GradPath).	3rd Semester
Comprehensive Exam Take written and oral comprehensive exams. File Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Exam form to schedule oral exam. (GradPath).	By end of 4th semester
Proposed Dissertation Research Formulate dissertation research proposal. Submit Proposed Dissertation Research form.	Semester following Comprehensive Exam
Doctoral Dissertation Committee Appointment Choose Final Defense Committee. Submit Doctoral Dissertation Committee Appointment form (GradPath).	Six months before final defense
Final Oral Defense Schedule Final Oral Defense and submit Announcement of Final Oral Defense (GradPath) form at least seven working days before the defense.	<u>by posted deadline</u>
Submit Dissertation Submit an electronic copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.	<u>by posted deadline</u>

(SAMPLE TITLE PAGE FOR PHD DISSERTATION)

TEMPERATURE VARIATIONS ACCOMPANYING THE FORMATION OF SKARNS NEAR
PATAGONIA, ARIZONA

by
Wille E. Coyote

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF GEOSCIENCES

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
2019

APPROVAL PAGE FOR DISSERTATION

Also known as Page 2

Option 1: Your Graduate Coordinator will use Adobe Sign to gather signatures for your approval page. Once the chair/co-chairs and committee members have all signed, you will include that signed approval page as page 2 in the dissertation.

Option 2: If your chair/co-chairs and committee members prefer to physically sign your approval page at the final defense, please follow these instructions:

Download a sample page at <https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/dissertations-theses/sample-pages> to prepare your approval page. Be sure to use the correct version, depending on whether you have one committee chair, or co-chairs. Type your name, dissertation title and the names of the members who will participate on your final exam committee. Use your defense date as the date for the signature lines.

Note: Anything in [brackets] should be replaced with the information indicated in those brackets.

Next, print out a hard copy to take to your defense and get the signatures of all your committee members. **Print this page in color for the watermark to show properly.** Your committee chair/co-chairs will need to sign the form twice (as a member and as chair/co-chair).

If a member or chair attends the defense remotely, scan the page, have them sign and send back to you. When all signatures are received, scan the signed approval page and insert it as page 2 of the dissertation. Keep the original for your records. *DO NOT add to ETD ProQuest as a supplementary file.*



GEOSCIENCES MENTORING POLICY

Commitment to Support

The Department of Geosciences is committed to the concept of building, supporting, and encouraging an active mentoring program between faculty and graduate students. To that end, the Department supports the definition of mentoring provided in the January 1991 Graduate Council position paper on mentoring:

Mentors are *advisors*, people with career experience willing to share their knowledge; *supporters*, people who give emotional and moral encouragement; *tutors*, people who give specific feedback on one's performance; *masters*, in the sense of employers to whom one is apprenticed; *sponsors*, sources of information about aid in obtaining opportunities; *models*, of identity, of the kind of person one should be to be an academic." Zelditch, M., 1990, "Mentor Roles", Proceedings of the 32nd Annual Meeting Western Association of Graduate Schools.

The Department understands that the relationship between mentor and student is a very personal one, but recognizes that it is important to develop appropriate departmental infrastructure to support mentoring relationships. Thus, the Department adopts, as a definable graduate Mentoring Program, the following guidelines and expectations:

- » The Department will provide clear indications of the requirements for graduation from the program, including all examinations, Graduate College requirements, and expected time to complete each step toward the degree. Much of this information will be made available through the departmental Graduate Academic Advisor.
- » Evaluation of student progress and performance will be provided by the departmental Graduate Policy Committee and Graduate Academic Advisor, which will provide at least annual written documentation of student progress. The Graduate Policy Committee will set a clear and reasonable policy regarding the norms for time-to-degree and student progress and will take appropriate action on the basis of this policy to assure that students meet these requirements. The Graduate Policy Committee will formulate explicit, well-publicized dismissal and appeal procedures.
- » Advisors (mentors) are expected to help students develop their writing skills, both for scholarly publications and grant writing. In addition, from time to time, the Department will offer special courses or seminars on technical and grant-writing skills.
- » The Department encourages timely initiation of research by making an initial assignment of a temporary faculty advisor for each graduate student. Thus, even during the first semesters here, students are encouraged and enabled to initiate research.
- » The Department actively encourages graduate student involvement in Departmental affairs in terms of committee representation wherever appropriate.
- » It is the expectation that students will participate in professional meetings. To this end, the Department has a long-established annual Geoscience Symposium organized by graduate students that provides the opportunity for student (graduate and undergraduate) presentations in the format used in national meetings. It is also a departmental degree requirement that graduate students will give a public presentation of their research, supported to the extent possible by research and departmental resources.
- » The Department encourages student teaching opportunities. The Department offers interested students, to the extent possible under funding limitations, the opportunity to teach laboratory sections under carefully supervised and structured conditions. Each GTA is evaluated at the end of the semester by both students and a faculty supervisor. The Department is committed to promoting interest in, and proficiency at, teaching.
- » The Department recognizes that the graduate student body represents a diverse and changing population. The Department is committed to supporting diversity, and actively recruits minority and under-represented students.

GEOSCIENCES MENTORING POLICY

- » The Department endeavors to create an atmosphere of collegiality that values and supports graduate students. To that end, the Department encourages graduate student organizations within the Department, sponsors social events that allow students, faculty and staff to interact as a community, and provides common student work space to the extent possible.

The Department acknowledges that effective mentoring (advising) is a consideration in performance and promotion/ tenure evaluations of faculty. Further, the Department recognizes that departmental commitment, and individual commitment on the part of each faculty member/advisor/mentor, is necessary for a successful mentoring program.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT POLICY

This Financial Support Policy is provided for students to inform them of departmental policy regarding graduate student support. The policies outlined below are intended to be consistent with four semesters in residence (two years) for an MS degree and eight semesters in residence (four years) for a Ph.D. degree.

- 1. Period of Eligibility** - Contingent upon availability of state funds, students admitted with support will be eligible for departmental support at the half-time level (20 hours per week) for four consecutive semesters (MS program) or eight consecutive semesters (Ph.D. program).
- 2. Support Commitment from Department** - Departmental support may be in the form of a Teaching Assistantship (TA), Research Assistantship (RA), scholarship, or some combination thereof. Departmental RA and scholarship support will be provided if academic progress is satisfactory. Departmental TA support will be provided if both teaching performance and academic progress are satisfactory.
- 3. Student Without or Beyond Support** - Students who are admitted to the program without support, or who have exhausted their period of eligibility, may be considered later for departmental support on a semester-by-semester basis, with no commitment for additional consecutive support.
- 4. Declining Departmental Support** - If departmental support is not desired during the period of eligibility, a written notice must be filed with the Graduate Office. Failure to do so in a timely fashion may result in the cancellation of future support. Eligibility for committed support lasts for the periods stipulated above, regardless of whether the support is declined or accepted. Extensions to support eligibility are not given for semesters during which departmental support is declined, with the exception of semesters when students are on official Leave of Absence.
- 5. Additional Support During the Eligibility Period** - During the period of eligibility, departmental support of less than the half-time level may be augmented by other forms of support such as scholarships, or fellowships (e.g., support may consist of a quarter-time TA plus a quarter-time scholarship). Students do not forfeit support by accepting external forms of aid (e.g., NSF or DOD Fellowships), unless their total value equals or exceeds the equivalent of a half-time assistantship.
- 6. Change of Status** - Change in status from the MS program to Ph.D. program, without completion of the MS, does not automatically increase the period of aid commitment. Extensions may be granted at the discretion of the Graduate Admissions Committee. However, the total period of commitment may not exceed eight semesters from the original date of admission. Students who have completed their MS here and have been accepted into the Ph.D. program will be re-evaluated for support along with other incoming graduate students that year. Change in status from a Ph.D. program to an M.S. program may affect a student's eligibility period for department support.
- 7. Satisfactory Performance and Progress** - Satisfactory progress is defined by maintaining full-time status, maintaining a 3.0 GPA or better, and making timely progress in taking exams and completing other requirements for the degree program. MS students who have not filed their Proposed Research by the end of their second semester in residence will be ineligible for departmental support. PhD students who have not taken their Preliminary Oral Exam by the end of their fourth semester will be ineligible for departmental support. TAs and RAs must be on campus by the starting date of their contracts unless written permission to arrive late has been given by their supervising professor. Failure to obtain previous permission for absences may result in cancellation of TA or RA support.