

GUIDELINES ON TIME FOR REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF QUALIFYING PAPERS, THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

GRADUATE SCHOOL-NEW BRUNSWICK

The Graduate School-New Brunswick expects that each of its degree programs maintain a culture of mutual respect between students and faculty members and that this include excellent communication among them. In particular, students must allow sufficient time for faculty members to review and assess their work and faculty members must be as prompt as circumstances allow in responding to their students with such assessments.

Further, it is the responsibility of advisors and students to keep committees informed and engaged throughout the process of the student's research and to ensure that the committee is given adequate time to assess the final product before it is defended.

The Graduate School expects that each degree program will establish, disseminate and promote clear discipline-specific rules concerning both the lead time that students allow for review and assessment of qualifying papers, theses and dissertations and the response time for faculty members to inform students of such assessments and for providing feedback. As a general rule, material should be submitted by the student at least two weeks before an examination or other deadline and at least two weeks (but not more than four weeks) should be allowed the faculty member for informing students of the assessment. This may vary with the nature of the discipline and would of course have to be adjusted for exceptional circumstances. Exceptions, to be determined by each graduate program, might include end-of-semester "crunch", faculty members in the field without good access to the internet, and medical incapacity.

Program guidelines should be clearly stated, as should the exceptions the program makes, such as allowing more time for the review of full dissertations than is allowed for papers or proposals. The guidelines should be regularly announced to both students and faculty members, all of whom should in any case be in regular communication with each other with regard to these timelines as well as the other facets of their relationships. For example, students should alert faculty members to their intention to submit work at a certain time and faculty members should indicate their expectations for the timing of their responses.

Physics and Astronomy Guidelines on Time for Review and Assessment on Qualifying Papers, Theses and Dissertations

Following is a summary of Physics and Astronomy Guidelines related to the Ph.D. Candidacy exams, Annual Committee Meetings, and Ph.D. Final Examination. Additional information is available on the Department web pages, particularly <http://www.physics.rutgers.edu/grad/redbook10/Red-www-phd.html>.

1. Ph.D. Candidacy Exams:

The Ph.D. candidacy exam in Physics and Astronomy consists of a research project leading to a written paper, presentation, and questioning. The Qualifier Committee evaluates the candidate, who must independently pass each of the three components.

1. Students are generally expected to take the Ph.D. candidacy exam in the fall of their second year and be advanced to candidacy before their third year. Examinations may be delayed with the permission of the Graduate Program Director and Qualifier Committee Chair.
2. The student should notify the Graduate Program Director of the name of their mentor by May 1 of their first year, and transmit a one-page summary of the proposed project by September 1. Deadlines are delayed one term for students entering in January rather than September.
3. The Qualifier Committee Chair will appoint the student's 3-person Qualifier Committee during September. The student shall schedule the examination with the Committee and mentor. The examination is generally expected to take place before December 1.
4. The student shall write a paper in the form of a review or research proposal in the style of a journal article. The paper should be 10 - 12 pages long. The paper will be distributed to the committee at least one week before the examination. A review paper will be evaluated considering whether the student has grasped the key issues in an area and shown critical judgment of the work reviewed. A research proposal will be evaluated considering whether the student has evaluated the relevant existing work in an area and whether the proposed project can reasonably be accomplished.
5. For the examination, the student shall prepare a 20 minute talk, in the form of a conference presentation. The talk will be limited to 25 minutes. The committee will question the student to examine the student's understanding of the material, including the basic physics relevant to the topic and basic undergraduate physics. The evaluation of the student will include the following:
 - (a) Has the student explained why the selected topic is important/relevant/worthwhile?
 - (b) Has the student organized the material cogently and concisely?

- (c) Was the oral presentation understandable and a suitable summary of the paper?
 - (d) Is the student familiar with relevant background material?
 - (e) Does the student have a good grasp of the underlying physics?
6. The candidacy exam has three independent parts, the written paper, the presentation, and the oral examination, which all need to be independently passed. The core courses also need to be passed, with a grade of B or better, for the student to be advanced to candidacy. The student shall be promptly notified if they fail any portion of the candidacy exam. Students who pass the candidacy exam but have not completed the core courses shall be notified what courses they are required to pass. Students who are eligible for advancement will be advanced during the term after they pass their candidacy exam.

2. Annual Committee Meetings

1. The Graduate Program Director will appoint a Ph.D. committee chaired by the student's research adviser after the student has been advanced to candidacy.
2. Starting the academic year after being advanced to candidacy, students shall have annual committee meetings to review the student's progress towards their Ph.D. Students are responsible for scheduling the meetings with their committee.
3. Students should distribute a 2 - 3 page writeup on their work to the committee at least one week prior to the committee meeting.
4. Students should prepare a 20 - 30 minute presentation for the meeting.
5. On the basis of the writeup, the presentation, and responses to questions, the committee shall determine immediately after in closed session if the student is making adequate progress towards completing their Ph.D. research.
6. The Annual Research Committee Report Form shall be completed and returned to the student for submission to the Graduate Program Director. The Committee Chair shall discuss the Committee's evaluation with the student.

3. Ph.D. Final Examination

1. The Ph.D. Final Examination is a public defense of the candidate's Ph.D. thesis.
2. The student shall consult with their adviser and submit to the Graduate Program Director the name and CV of an outside committee member to serve on the Ph.D. Committee, in addition to the regular members of the student's Research Committee. The outside committee member should be determined at least 2 weeks prior to the defense.
3. The student is responsible for scheduling the defense.

4. The student shall send their thesis to the Committee at least two weeks before the defense.
5. The defense is generally in the form of a seminar on the research. The suggested duration of the prepared talk without questions is 30 minutes. The Committee shall test the student's understanding and may also probe the student's breadth of knowledge. Questions may be solicited from the public attendees.
6. The Committee shall evaluate the defense in closed session upon completion of the questions. The student shall be immediately informed of the result of the evaluation. The Committee may require modification to the thesis subsequent to the defense.