

Departmental Procedures for SGS PhD Annual Progress Reports Policy

May 20, 2021

The Departmental procedures for the SGS PhD Annual Progress Reports policy based on the [SGS General Regulation for Annual Progress Reports](#) and the [FEAS Graduate Council approval on May 2012](#) has been in effect since 2013. The Departmental procedures for SGS PhD Annual Progress Reports Policy was reviewed by the ECE Graduate Studies Academic Advisory Committee (GSAC) in its meetings on March 5, April 16, and May 17, 2021, and then by the Department in its meeting on May 20, 2021, and the revised Departmental procedures for SGS PhD Annual Progress Reports policy are as follows.

To be in good academic standing, PhD students must make continuous, satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree, as well as comply with the General Regulations of the School of Graduate Studies. PhD students are responsible for submitting a complete *Annual Progress Report* to their PhD Advisory Committee once a year, detailing their progress since the last report, as well as their plans and objectives for the next year.

Each member of the PhD Advisory Committee decides whether the progress has been *satisfactory* or *unsatisfactory*. They must provide feedback on the student's progress and comment as to whether the proposed plan and objectives are reasonable and compatible with timely degree completion. There is also an opportunity to outline how any unanticipated delays in progress can be addressed. Further comments is essential when an unsatisfactory assessment is given by a Committee member.

In the event that an "unsatisfactory" assessment is received from any of the committee members, it is the responsibility of the Supervisor(s) to ensure that a Committee meeting is held to review the report and reach a collective decision of "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory". The PhD Advisory Committee is to meet with the PhD student before arriving at their decision. The student is invited to the meeting to give a brief, formal oral presentation of their work. The PhD student is then asked to be withdrawn from the room during the discussion. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate to the PhD Advisory Committee any special circumstances that should be considered by the Committee in reaching its assessment.

- Note: the PhD Advisory Committee, if they wish, can meet independently first without the PhD student, and then hold a subsequent meeting with the student to discuss the results.

In the event that the PhD Advisory Committee assesses the student's progress as "unsatisfactory", a memorandum will be submitted by the PhD Advisory Committee to the Graduate Coordinator providing the rationale for the decision, along with recommendations to correct the research progress. The Graduate Coordinator will inform the PhD student of the PhD Advisory Committee's decision. The student is given the opportunity to respond to the PhD Advisory Committee's comments. The Graduate Coordinator shall, in consultation with the Supervisor, decide upon the timing of the next meeting of the PhD Advisory Committee and submission of the next Progress Report. This meeting must be held within the year, but no earlier than 4 months, from the date of the meeting whose outcome was unsatisfactory. The next meeting can be replaced by Part I or Part II of the PhD Comprehensive examination, if it takes place within one year, but no earlier than 4 months. More frequent meetings may be convened if

requested by the PhD student, the Supervisor, or the Graduate Coordinator. A student will normally be required to withdraw upon receipt of two consecutive “unsatisfactory” progress assessments.

In summary, the procedure is as follows:

- Deadlines:
 - Deadline for the PhD Annual Progress reports: May 1st
 - Deadline for the feedback from the Committee members: May 15th
 - Deadline for the feedback from the PhD Advisory Committee to the Department: June 1st
 - Deadline for the Department to inform the student of the PhD Advisory Committee’s decision: June 10th
 - Deadline for the student response, if any: June 21st
 - Deadline for the Department to conclude the process: June 30th

Case I): Every committee member votes for “Satisfactory”.

- The reports will be forwarded to the students and their supervisors.
- No meeting is required.
- The student, only if they wish, can respond to the comments by June 21st.

Case II): ***At least*** one committee member votes for “Unsatisfactory.”

- The reports will be forwarded only to the Supervisor(s) at this stage. The Supervisor(s) are responsible for setting up the PhD Advisory Committee meeting as soon as possible.
- At the meeting, a collective agreement must be made with binary decision, “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory”. The student is invited to the meeting; but during the discussion, the student is asked to be withdrawn from the room.
 - The PhD Advisory Committee, if they wish, can meet independently first without the PhD student, and then hold a subsequent meeting with the student to discuss the results.
- As soon as a decision is made, the student is verbally informed of the outcome and the rationale behind the decision, as well as specific recommendations to rectify the situation. The PhD Advisory Committee will then submit their decision in writing to the Graduate Coordinator. This must be done by June 1st.
- The Graduate Coordinator will inform the student of the PhD Advisory Committee’s decision by June 10th.
- The student can respond, if they wish, by June 21st.
- From the date of the meeting, a next meeting must be scheduled within one year, but no earlier than 4 months. The next meeting can be replaced by Part I or Part II of the PhD Comprehensive examination, if it takes place within one year, but no earlier than 4 months.
- Two successive unsatisfactory decisions are grounds for withdrawal.