

February 15, 2006 (Revised)
Doctoral Studies Committee

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PHD STUDENTS

The goal of the annual review of doctoral students is to ensure continuing excellence by all doctoral students by assessing each student's progress in the program and offering advice about that progress. These reviews apply to all doctoral students in the School of Information who have not yet presented a dissertation proposal, although those students who have entered into candidacy and presented proposals are encouraged to participate as well.

Rationale and dates

These reviews will be held in the spring semester for all doctoral students during February and March every year. From the student's point of view, the major goals of the review are to:

- Allow the students to report to the faculty what they have accomplished over the previous year.
- Indicate the student's goals for the coming year.
- Indicate the student's intentions for meeting the various doctoral deadlines, e.g., presenting a program of work, completing coursework, taking qualifying examinations, presenting a dissertation proposal, and defending a dissertation.
- Allow the student to establish and maintain relationships with as many faculty members as possible.

From the faculty's point of view, among the major goals of the annual review of doctoral students are to:

- Ensure students' steady progress through the program.
- Ensure the achievement of excellence by all iSchool PhD students and to counsel students about improving their performance.
- Allow students to demonstrate their breadth of vision of the field and their evolving professional personae and goals within it.
- Ensure that all students have an opportunity to participate with as many faculty members as possible in doing research and teaching as well as to interact with all members of the faculty.
- Particularly focus on each student's research and publication record and to suggest opportunities for enhancing it.

What the student must produce

Each student will write a self-assessment of about three pages for each annual review discussing the major facets of the student's work in the previous year and plans for the next year. The self-assessment should begin with a brief paragraph or two expressing the student's professional goals and any changes in those goals over the past year. The self-assessment should include, but not be limited to, consideration of research and writing, course work in the iSchool and elsewhere, status of major PhD program milestones, and plans for achieving those milestones. The review committee will especially focus on the student's research and publication record and provide suggestions for enhancing it. Students are encouraged to attach copies of any conference papers, research proposals, and journal publications they produced since the last

review. They should also include in their self-assessment discussion of all of their attempts to submit creative work in the past year, whether successful or not.

The emphasis in the self-assessment should emphasize achievement over the past year and plans for achievement over the next year.

This self-assessment should also include a list of all courses taken since beginning the doctoral program, whether in the School of Information or elsewhere, and the grades achieved in those courses. Students should attach an up-to-date, relatively short *curriculum vitae* to the self-assessment. The self-assessment and attached CV must be distributed to all members of the student's review committee and to the Graduate Coordinator (Carol Carreon) at least one week before the review.

The student's CV should be selective and emphasize professional activities in school and at work **pertinent to the student's program of study and professional goals**. The CV should not start any earlier than the student's earning of a bachelor's degree or equivalent, and should include all graduate-level work, publications, research efforts, committee participation, membership in professional associations, and the like.

Logistics

The annual reviews will ordinarily be face-to-face meetings, last about 30 minutes, and include the student's three-member committee. The student may invite anyone to attend, including other members of the SI and UT-Austin faculty that she has worked with since the previous review, either in research, in teaching, or in committee work. All other members of the SI faculty are encouraged to attend and take part in these reviews as their schedules and interests allow.

Doctoral students themselves will be responsible for contacting the appropriate faculty members, scheduling their reviews, and the like. The chair of the Doctoral Studies Committee will ordinarily reserve blocks of time in an appropriate room for the reviews; all other arrangements, however, will be the responsibility of the student alone.

The faculty members will read the student's self-assessment, review the student's CV, and discuss the student's specific strengths and weaknesses in order to offer an evaluation of the previous year's work and particular suggestions for improvement. The outcome of each review will be satisfactory or not satisfactory. The PhD student's advisor will notify the student of the outcome of the review in writing within seven days, providing an additional copy of the letter to the Graduate Coordinator for the student's file.

A satisfactory outcome will require no additional action, while an unsatisfactory outcome will result in the committee's production of a detailed schedule and list of activities that the student must complete successfully in order to return to satisfactory status. The committee will also establish a timetable for review of the student's progress toward that goal.

To be deemed satisfactory, a student must demonstrate pro-activity, creativity, and excellence throughout all phases of the program. While the faculty will especially emphasize writing and research (the essence of scholarly life), the reviewing committee will look for signs of academic achievement throughout a student's program of study. The committee will also expect students to be able to articulate how the past year's achievement and plans for the next year contribute to their professional goals.

The supervising committee will submit the files of students whose performance is deemed unsatisfactory to the GSC. The GSC will then make a recommendation for remediation or termination. As with all such procedures, students are afforded the right and opportunity of formal appeal.

A student who does not participate in the review cannot proceed in the program. For students not in residence, review can be by videoconference, telephone, or other appropriate means, at the students' own expense. As with the face-to-face reviews, students not in residence are responsible for making all appropriate scheduling and other arrangements.