MA/PhD Progress Timeline: Recommendations and Requirements

[Amended with approval from Julia Carlson, UW Graduate School GEMS Director, 12/19/2018]

The purpose of this document is to assist students in planning their progress in the MA/PhD program. It contains four sections. The first section provides the recommended timeline in which students should aim to complete specific components (i.e., “milestones”) of the program, in order to complete their degree within their department-funded timeframe (i.e., 4 years for PhD students and 5 years for MA/PHD students). The second section presents the required deadlines for each milestone and explicates the consequences to students for missing any milestone deadline. For some milestones, the recommended timeline is more accelerated than the required deadline; for other milestones, the recommended timeline is also the required deadline. The third section explicates the other ways by which MA/PHD students must maintain good standing in the program, including maintaining the minimum GPA required by the UW Graduate School, avoiding more than two incompletes at any time, and ethical conduct in all aspects of scholarship. The fourth section explains the consequences of probation for IOR assignments, whether due to losing good academic standing or missing deadlines.

Note: The milestone deadline requirements and consequences for missing them pertain to full-time students only; timelines for part-time students must be approved by the GPC following approval from their faculty advisor. If students take leave from the program, deadlines are adjusted in correspondence with the length of their leave. All other requirements pertinent to maintaining good standing pertain to part-time students as well as full-time students.

SECTION 1: Recommended Timeline for Degree Completion within Funding Period

1.1) For PhD students:
- Pass COM500: Autumn quarter of Year 1
- Pass COM501: Winter quarter of Year 1
- Appoint a dissertation chair: Spring quarter of Year 1
- Complete an approved PHD program of study: Autumn quarter of Year 2
- Set General Exam readings: Winter quarter of Year 2
- Take General Exams: Spring quarter of Year 2
- Complete an approved Dissertation Proposal: Autumn quarter of Year 3 (or 1st quarter as a PHC)
- Defend Dissertation: Spring quarter of Year 4

1.2) For MA/PhD students:
- Pass COM500: Autumn quarter of Year 1
- Pass COM501: Winter quarter of Year 1
- Complete an approved MA program of study: Spring quarter of year 1
- Thesis Prospectus or Outline approved: Autumn quarter of year 2
- Defend MA Thesis: Spring quarter of Year 2
- Complete an approved PHD program of study: Autumn quarter of Year 3 (or 1st quarter
as a PHD student)

- Take General Exams: Spring quarter of Year 3 (or 3rd quarter as a PHD student)
- Complete Dissertation Proposal: Autumn quarter of Year 4 (or 1st quarter as a PHC).
- Defend Dissertation: Spring quarter of Year 5

SECTION 2: Required Deadlines and Consequences for Missing Deadlines

The information below explicates the required deadline for each milestone. Should students fail to meet a deadline due to faculty schedules, it is the responsibility of the committee chair to appeal to the Graduate Program Committee. Beyond that, exceptions for missing a deadline may be granted only in rare, extenuating circumstances with approval from the student's full committee and the Graduate Program Committee. In such circumstances, it is the student's responsibility to appeal any of these missed deadlines and their associated consequences.

2.1) For PhD students

Pass COM500 with a final grade of at least 2.7
- Deadline: Autumn Quarter of Year 1
- Consequence of not passing in Year 1: PHD students are required to pass two core courses, COM500 and COM501, as part of their degree program. Each course is taught once per year for first-year students. If a 1st-year student does not pass one or both of these courses, the student must retake the course(s) the following year together with the next cohort of students, and will be on probation for the two interim quarters and the quarter in which the student retakes the course(s). If a student fails either of these courses a second time, the student will be dropped from the program immediately by the UW Graduate School. [Policy statement pending approval from UW Graduate School]

Pass COM501 with a final grade of at least 2.7
- Deadline: Winter Quarter of Year 1
- Consequence of not passing in Year 1: PHD students are required to pass two core courses, COM500 and COM501, as part of their degree program. Each course is taught once per year for first-year students. If a 1st-year student does not pass one or both of these courses, the student must retake the course(s) the following year together with the next cohort of students, and will be on probation for the two interim quarters and the quarter in which the student retakes the course(s). If a student fails either of these courses a second time, the student will be dropped from the program immediately by the UW Graduate School.

Appoint a dissertation chair
- Deadline: Spring Quarter of Year 1
- Advance warning: In week 7 of the quarter prior to this deadline, students who have not yet completed this milestone will receive an advance warning notification that the milestone must be completed by the stated deadline in order to remain in good academic standing in the program.
Consequence for missing this milestone: Students who have not appointed a dissertation chair by the end of week 7 in their 3rd quarter will receive notification of pending probation status for their 4th quarter. Failure to appoint a dissertation chair by the end of week 7 in their 4th quarter will receive notification of pending final probation status for their 5th quarter. Students who do not appoint a dissertation chair by the end of their 6th quarter will be dropped from the program by the UW Graduate School.

Approved PHD Program of Study

- **Deadline:** Week 7, Winter Quarter of Year 2 (i.e., “5th Quarter”)
- **Advance warning:** In week 7 of the quarter prior to this deadline, students who have not yet completed this milestone will receive an advance warning notification that the milestone must be completed by the stated deadline in order to remain in good academic standing in the program.
- Consequence for missing this milestone: Students who have not submitted an approved PHD Program of Study by the end of week 7 in their 5th quarter will receive notification of pending probation status for their 6th quarter. Failure to submit an approved Program of Study by the end of week 7 in their 6th quarter will receive notification of pending final probation status for their 7th quarter. Students who do not submit an approved Program of Study by the end of their 7th quarter will be dropped from the program by the UW Graduate School.

Schedule General Exam

- **Deadline:** Week 7, Autumn Quarter of Year 3 (i.e., “7th Quarter”)
- **Advance warning:** In week 7 of the quarter prior to this deadline, students who have not yet completed this milestone will receive an advance warning notification that the milestone must be completed by the stated deadline in order to remain in good academic standing in the program.
- Consequence for missing this milestone: Students who have not scheduled their general exam by the end of week 7 in their 7th quarter will receive notification of pending probation status for their 8th quarter. Students who have not scheduled their exam by the end of week 7 in their 8th quarter will receive notification of pending final probation status for their 9th quarter. Students who have not scheduled their exam by the end of week 7 in their 9th quarter will be dropped from the program by the UW Graduate School.
- For the full policy on the General Exam see: [http://www.com.washington.edu/graduate-students/ph-d-requirements-and-policies/#examination](http://www.com.washington.edu/graduate-students/ph-d-requirements-and-policies/#examination)

Approved Dissertation Proposal

- **Deadline:** Week 7, 2nd quarter as a PHC.
- **Advance warning:** In week 7 of the quarter prior to this deadline, students who have not yet completed this milestone will receive an advance warning notification that the milestone must be completed by the stated deadline in order to remain in good academic standing in the program.
• Consequence for missing this milestone: Students who do not have approval of their dissertation proposal by Week 7 of their second post-exam quarter will receive warning notification of pending probation status for their third quarter as a PHC. Students without an approved dissertation proposal by the end of Week 7 of their third quarter as a PHC will receive warning notification of pending final probation status for the next quarter (i.e., 4th quarter as a PHC). Students without an approved dissertation proposal by Week 7 of their 4th quarter as a PHC quarter will be dropped from the program by the UW Graduate School.

2.2) For MA/PhD students

Pass COM500 with a final grade of at least 2.7
• Deadline: Autumn Quarter of Year 1
• Consequence of not passing COM500 in Year 1: MA/PhD students are required to pass two core courses, COM500 and COM501, as part of their degree program. Each course is taught once per year for first-year students. If a 1st-year student does not pass one or both of these courses, the student must retake the course(s) the following year together with the next cohort of students, and will be on probation for the two interim quarters and the quarter in which the student retakes the course(s). If a student fails either of these courses a second time, the student will be dropped from the program immediately by the UW Graduate School. [Policy statement pending approval from UW Graduate School]

Pass COM501 with a final grade of at least 2.7
• Winter Quarter of Year 1
• Consequence of not passing COM501 in Year 1: MA/PhD students are required to pass two core courses, COM500 and COM501, as part of their degree program. Each course is taught once per year for first-year students. If a 1st-year student does not pass one or both of these courses, the student must retake the course(s) the following year together with the next cohort of students, and will be on probation for the two interim quarters and the quarter in which the student retakes the course(s). If a student fails either of these courses a second time, the student will be dropped from the program immediately by the UW Graduate School. [Policy statement pending approval from UW Graduate School]

Approved MA Program of Study
• Deadline: Week 7, Fall Quarter of Year 2 (i.e., “4th Quarter”)
• Advance warning: In week 7 of the quarter prior to this deadline, students who have not yet completed this milestone will receive an advance warning notification that the milestone must be completed by the stated deadline in order to remain in good academic standing in the program.
• Consequence for missing this milestone: Students who have not submitted an approved MA Program of Study by the end of week 7 in their 4th quarter will receive warning notification of pending probation status for their 5th quarter. Students who have not submitted an approved MA Program of Study by the end week 7 in their 5th quarter will
receive warning-notification of pending final probation status for their 6th quarter. Students who have not submitted an approved MA Program of Study by the end of their 6th quarter will be dropped from the program by the UW Graduate School.

Approved Thesis Outline or Article Prospectus
- **Deadline:** Week 7, Winter Quarter of Year 2 (i.e., “5th Quarter”)
- **Advance warning:** In week 7 of the quarter prior to this deadline, students who have not yet completed this milestone will receive an advance warning notification that the milestone must be completed by the stated deadline in order to remain in good academic standing in the program.
- **Consequence for missing this milestone:** Students who have not submitted an approved thesis outline or article prospectus by the end of week 7 in their 5th quarter will receive warning-notification of pending probation status for their 6th quarter. Students who have not submitted an approved thesis outline or prospectus by the end of week 7 in their 6th quarter will receive warning-notification of pending final probation status for their 7th quarter. Students who have not submitted an approved thesis outline or prospectus by the end of their 7th quarter will be dropped from the program by the UW Graduate School.

Thesis Defended
- **Deadline:** Week 7, Spring-Autumn Quarter of Year 32 (i.e., “76th Quarter”)
- **Advance warning:** In week 7 of the quarter prior to this deadline, students who have not yet completed this milestone will receive an advance warning notification that the milestone must be completed by the stated deadline in order to remain in good academic standing in the program.
- **Consequence for missing this milestone:** Students who have not defended their thesis or substitutionary article successfully by the end of their 6th quarter will receive an initial warning. Students who do not defend their thesis by the end of week 7 in their 7th quarter will receive warning-notification of pending probation status for their 8th quarter. Students who have not defended their thesis by the end of week 7 in their 8th quarter will receive warning-notification of pending final probation status for their 9th quarter. Students who have not defended their thesis by the end of their 9th quarter will be dropped from the program by the UW Graduate School.

Approved PHD Program of Study
- **Deadline:** Week 7, 2nd Quarter as a PHD student
- **Advance warning:** In week 7 of the quarter prior to this deadline, students who have not yet completed this milestone will receive an advance warning notification that the milestone must be completed by the stated deadline in order to remain in good academic standing in the program.
- **Consequence for missing this milestone:** Students with a UW Comm MA who have not submitted an approved PHD Program of Study by the end of week 7 in their 2nd quarter as a PHD student as will receive warning-notification of pending probation status for their 3rd quarter as a PHD student. Students who have not submitted an approved PHD
Program of Study by the end week 7 in their 3rd quarter will receive warning notification of pending final probation status for their 4th quarter. Students with a UW Comm MA who have not submitted an approved PHD Program of Study by the end of their 4th quarter as a PHD student will be dropped from the program by the UW Graduate School.

Schedule General Exam
- **Deadline:** Week 7, 3rd Quarter as a PHD student
- **Advance warning:** In week 7 of the quarter prior to this deadline, students who have not yet completed this milestone will receive an advance warning notification that the milestone must be completed by the stated deadline in order to remain in good academic standing in the program.
- **Consequence for missing this deadline:** Students who have not scheduled their general exam by the end of week 7 in their 3rd quarter as a PHD student will receive warning notification of pending probation status for their 4th quarter. Students who have not scheduled their exam by the end week 7 in their 4th quarter will receive warning notification of pending final probation status for their 5th quarter. Students who have not scheduled their exam by the end of week 7 in their 5th quarter as a PHD student will be dropped from the program by the UW Graduate School.
- For the full policy on the General Exam see: [http://www.com.washington.edu/graduate-students/ph-d-requirements-and-policies/#examination](http://www.com.washington.edu/graduate-students/ph-d-requirements-and-policies/#examination)

Approved Dissertation Proposal
- **Deadline:** Week 7, 2nd Quarter as a PHC
- **Advance warning:** In week 7 of the quarter prior to this deadline, students who have not yet completed this milestone will receive an advance warning notification that the milestone must be completed by the stated deadline in order to remain in good academic standing in the program.
- **Consequence for missing this deadline:** Students who do not have approval of their dissertation proposal by Week 7 of their second quarter as a PHD will receive warning notification of pending probation status for their third quarter as a PHC. Students without an approved dissertation proposal by the end of Week 7 of their third quarter as a PHC will receive warning notification of pending final probation status for the next quarter (i.e., 4th quarter as a PHC). Students without an approved dissertation proposal by Week 7 of their 4th quarter as a PHC quarter will be dropped from the program by the UW Graduate School.

SECTION 3: Maintaining Good Academic Standing
Beyond these specific deadlines, graduate students are expected to remain in good academic standing throughout the entirety of their time in the program. In order to maintain good standing, graduate students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.0, and have no more than two incompletes. When a student with two incompletes receives a 3rd incomplete, a warning is issued immediately, (i.e. at the beginning of a quarter), stating that if the student still has 3 incompletes by week 7 of that same quarter, the student will be on probation the next quarter. If
the student still has 3 incompletes by week 7 of a probation quarter, the student will be on final probation the following quarter. If the student still has 3 incompletes by week 7 of a final probation quarter, the student will be dropped from the program by the UW Graduate School the next quarter.

Students must also demonstrate integrity in communication in and about their teaching and research and enact ethical scholarly practices in both their research and teaching. The latter include actions consistent with all UW codes for student conduct and standards explicated by the International Communication Association including: protecting the rights of research participants’ rights; ensuring appropriate authorship credit and avoiding plagiarism; reporting methods and findings in ways that support transparency and error correction; and non-discrimination and respect for human diversity. (See the ICA General Statement on Standards for further details: https://www.icahdq.org/page/MissionStatement, as well as the mission statement of the UW Center for Teaching and Learning: https://www.washington.edu/teaching/about-the-ctl/). Failure to remain in good standing in any of these may result in disciplinary consequences including the withdrawal of ASE funding, probation with the possibility of dismissal, or immediate dismissal from the program by the UW Graduate School.

SECTION 4: Consequences of Probation for IOR Assignments

Students who are on probation or final probation for any reason retain their assistantship funding but are ineligible to apply for an IOR assignment, or to teach a previously assigned IOR.

To specify further, in week 5 of any quarter in which a student:

- has not yet met (i.e., scheduled or completed) a milestone for which the deadline is that quarter;
- or in which a student is carrying more than two incompletes;
- or in which a student’s GPA is under 3.0;

the student will be notified of possible probation status for the next quarter. At that time a student who has already been assigned an IOR for the next quarter will be removed from the IOR assignment. This enables the PDC and UPC to cancel that IOR course or reassign it to a different IOR prior to the opening of registration for the next quarter.

In other words, a student on probation or final probation who has already been assigned an IOR for the next quarter must resolve and/or complete the requirement(s) that precipitated probation or final probation by week 5 of that quarter. If they do not, they will be removed from the IOR assignment for the next quarter.

In calendar terms, the consequences of probation/final probation for IOR assignments are:

- Any student on probation/final probation in Spring quarter who has not resolved/completed those requirements by week 5 of Spring quarter is not eligible to apply for an IOR for Winter quarter, and will forfeit any IOR assignment they might have received for Autumn quarter.

- Any student on probation/final probation in Autumn quarter who has not
resolved/completed those requirements by week 5 of Autumn is not eligible for an IOR for Spring or Summer quarter, and will forfeit any IOR assignment they might have received for Winter quarter.

· Any student on probation/final probation in Winter quarter who has not resolved/completed those requirements by week 5 of winter will forfeit any IOR assignment they might have received for Spring quarter.