

Policy Recommendation on Periodic Review and Evaluation of Doctoral Student Progress

In order to achieve excellence in student mentoring in doctoral programs within the School of Graduate Studies at Case Western Reserve University, an annual review of student progress toward the degree is required for every doctoral student. This review has two purposes: i) to support mentoring of students by providing regular and timely feedback that will enhance their success at CWRU and their career goals and professional development, and ii) to evaluate progress toward completion of the degree. To achieve these goals, the review should evaluate the previous year's progress, detail the student's strengths and areas that need improvement, and make recommendations for future action to complete the degree.

Each doctoral program shall develop its own annual review format and timing within these minimal guidelines:

(1) Every doctoral student will submit an annual progress report to their program, department, or school. The report should describe progress toward the degree in the past year, future plans for completing the degree, career goals and progress toward professional development.

(2) Faculty of the program, department, or school will review the student reports to evaluate student progress in the program. The review process shall include at least two faculty members, such as the faculty advisor, dissertation or thesis chair or committee, graduate student director, or other subset of faculty designated by the department. Additional faculty members may be asked to provide input to help the review process.

(3) The findings of the evaluation shall be communicated to the student in a written report and, whenever possible, discussed in person, that details the student's current status in the program, progress towards completion, career goals and professional development, and makes concrete suggestions for future actions.

(4) Master's level students may be evaluated in a similar fashion at the discretion of the program, department, or school.

If a doctoral program already has an annual review policy in place, the program shall inform the School of Graduate Studies of what form that review takes. For programs that do not have an annual review policy, the School of Graduate Studies requests that they create an annual review policy within a year from the approval of the policy. This policy does not mandate the use of one student review format. Examples of existing formats for review of student progress will be posted on the Graduate Studies website.

For some programs, the annual report can be coordinated with other reporting needs (e.g. NIH grants) so as to eliminate redundancy in reporting for the student.

Compliance with this policy will be monitored by SGS. Programs shall provide an annual list of names of students who have been reviewed by June 30th. A template of the department review form shall be provided to SGS. Copies of an individual student's annual reviews will be made available to SGS upon request.

The School of Graduate Studies shall conduct a process evaluation two years after implementation of this policy.