

Updates to Regulations – Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Milestone

Current Location

Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Milestone (New Section):

<https://www.yorku.ca/gradstudies/students/current-students/regulations/degree-types-minimum-requirements-and-regulations/>

Background and Rationale

Progress through degree milestones is best accomplished as a cohort. For students who enter together, moving through academic activities simultaneously fosters mutual preparation and support. Program energies can be devoted to cohorts rather than placing all the responsibility for timely progress on the individual supervisory relationship.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies will expect full-time doctoral students to have completed their coursework, graduate milestone examinations, and dissertation proposal by the end of term 9. Failure to do so will result in an advising block placed on the student's account. The block will necessitate a meeting with the supervisor and Graduate Program Director to enact a plan for a program-approved dissertation proposal by the end of Term 10. In most circumstances, students will be required to withdraw from the graduate program and registration in the Faculty of Graduate Studies will be terminated absent a program-approved dissertation proposal received by the end of Term 10.

This regulation does not preclude programs from enacting earlier deadlines; for instance, requiring the approved dissertation proposal simultaneously with submission of the FGS supervisory committee form, due by the end of Term 8.

This milestone ensures that students arrive at the dissertation research and writing stage of their degree while they still having time left in their funding packages to materially support their work.

Scope and Application

This regulation will come into effect September 1, 2023 and apply to full-time doctoral students thereafter.

Teaching Assistant contracts cannot be held unless a student is registered active in their graduate program.

Implementation

The Faculty of Graduate Studies will automatically block registration for students into term 10. This block will be lifted pending receipt from the graduate program of the program-approved dissertation proposal as the final milestone for acknowledgement of all-but-dissertation (ABD) status.

Academic accommodations may adjust the expected rate of progress for some students with disabilities. Most beneficially at the start of a graduate degree, but at least prior to this new milestone, a student requiring academic accommodations should register with York University's [Student Accessibility Services](#) and a formal individualized progress plan be put into place. This plan should be communicated to the Faculty of Graduate Studies by petition to adjust the proposal milestone by 1, 2 or 3 terms. In no case should the accommodation delay the proposal milestone by more than one year.

Additional time may not itself be an effective accommodation. Other possibilities include:

- more frequent meetings with supervisors/supervisory committee
- referral to the supports for writing, counselling, etc. as needed
- support through access to technological tools
- referral to Employee Well-Being (EWB) for accommodated work assignments if existing employment is part of the reason for the academic delay
- if a student is ill or family demands severely delay academic progress, a Leave of Absence may be appropriate. While a Leave of Absence would negate some of the benefits progression of a cohort bring, it enables the student to stop the clock on funding, returning to their studies and funding when it becomes a better fit with their personal situation
- move to part-time status if that is a better reflection of the student's ability to engage in academic work (this remedy is particularly appropriate for those students engaged in significant employment outside York that is detracting from their ability to progress in the degree)

Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Milestone

| Existing Copy (Change From): | Proposed Copy (Change To): |
|------------------------------|--|
| N/A | <p>Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Milestone</p> <p>Full-time doctoral students are expected to have completed their coursework, graduate milestone examinations, and dissertation proposal by the end of term 9.</p> <p>Failure to do so will result in an advising block placed on the student's account. The block will necessitate a meeting with the supervisor and Graduate Program Director to enact a plan for a program-approved dissertation proposal by the end of Term 10. In most circumstances, students will be required to withdraw from the graduate program and registration in the Faculty of Graduate Studies will be terminated absent a program-approved dissertation proposal received by the end of Term 10.</p> <p>This regulation does not preclude programs from enacting earlier deadlines; for instance, requiring the approved dissertation proposal simultaneously with submission of the FGS supervisory committee form, due by the end of Term 8.</p> <p>FGS recommends 3,500 words as a maximum length for a dissertation proposal. Programs may communicate different norms, in writing, to their students; however, those norms must be achievable within the milestone deadline of the end of Term 9.</p> |