

## **TIME-LINES FOR THE COMPLETION OF PHD CANDIDACY IN THE DEPT. OF EARTH, OCEAN & ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES**

**Note 1:** The time-lines presented below are relative to the date of entry into the PhD program. At the discretion of the supervisory committee, up to 6 months can be added to these time-lines for students who transfer from the M.Sc. to the Ph.D. program. These transfer students will thus have a maximum of 30 months to achieve PhD candidacy from the date of entry into the M.Sc. program.

**Note 2:** A separate document explains the department philosophy regarding PhD Candidacy exams and provides general guidelines for how the exams should be conducted.

**Note 3:** The on-line 'GRADME' tool (available through the *my.eos* portal) should be used to record the outcomes and discussion points for all supervisory committee meetings.

**Note 4:** It is ultimately the student's responsibility to set the date and personnel for the PhD candidacy exam. However, it is expected that Research Supervisor will provide assistance and guidance in this process (*e.g.* suggestions for potential external examiners). Additionally, the Graduate Program Coordinator must be kept informed of the date set for the examination.

1. **First Year Review.** Approximately 9 months (2 academic terms) after a student has entered the PhD program (*e.g.* April / May for students who start in Sept.), a full supervisory committee meeting is convened. **The composition of the supervisory committee should be formalized at that time.** At this meeting, the student gives a short presentation outlining major research themes of interest and academic / research progress to date. The committee gives feedback on potential course work and reading materials to provide additional context for the research. A preliminary list of potential subject areas for the PhD exam should be discussed and recorded in the meeting notes. The committee should also provide general guidance on the structure and content of the PhD proposal.
2. **Draft Proposal Submission.** This should occur within ~ 15 months of entry into the PhD program – *i.e.* 6 months after the First Year Review. A meeting should be scheduled shortly after submission of the draft proposal, so that the supervisory committee can provide detailed feedback and determine whether the ideas presented in the proposal are sufficiently well developed to allow the student to proceed with a Candidacy exam. It is expected that the proposal will be revised, based on committee feedback, prior to the exam.
  - a. If the draft proposal is deemed to be acceptable (pending suitable revisions), the PhD exam should be scheduled within ~ 3-6 months (*i.e.* 18 – 21 months into the PhD program).
  - b. If the draft proposal is deemed unacceptable, the student has an additional 3 months to submit a revised version based on detailed feedback from the committee. After submission of the revised draft proposal and a follow up meeting with the supervisory committee, the student must schedule a PhD exam within 3 – 6 months (*i.e.* 21 – 24 months into the PhD program).
3. **PhD Candidacy Exam.** Based on the time-lines above, all PhD students must take a candidacy exam within 18 - 24 months of entry into the PhD program. Extensions beyond these time-limits will require

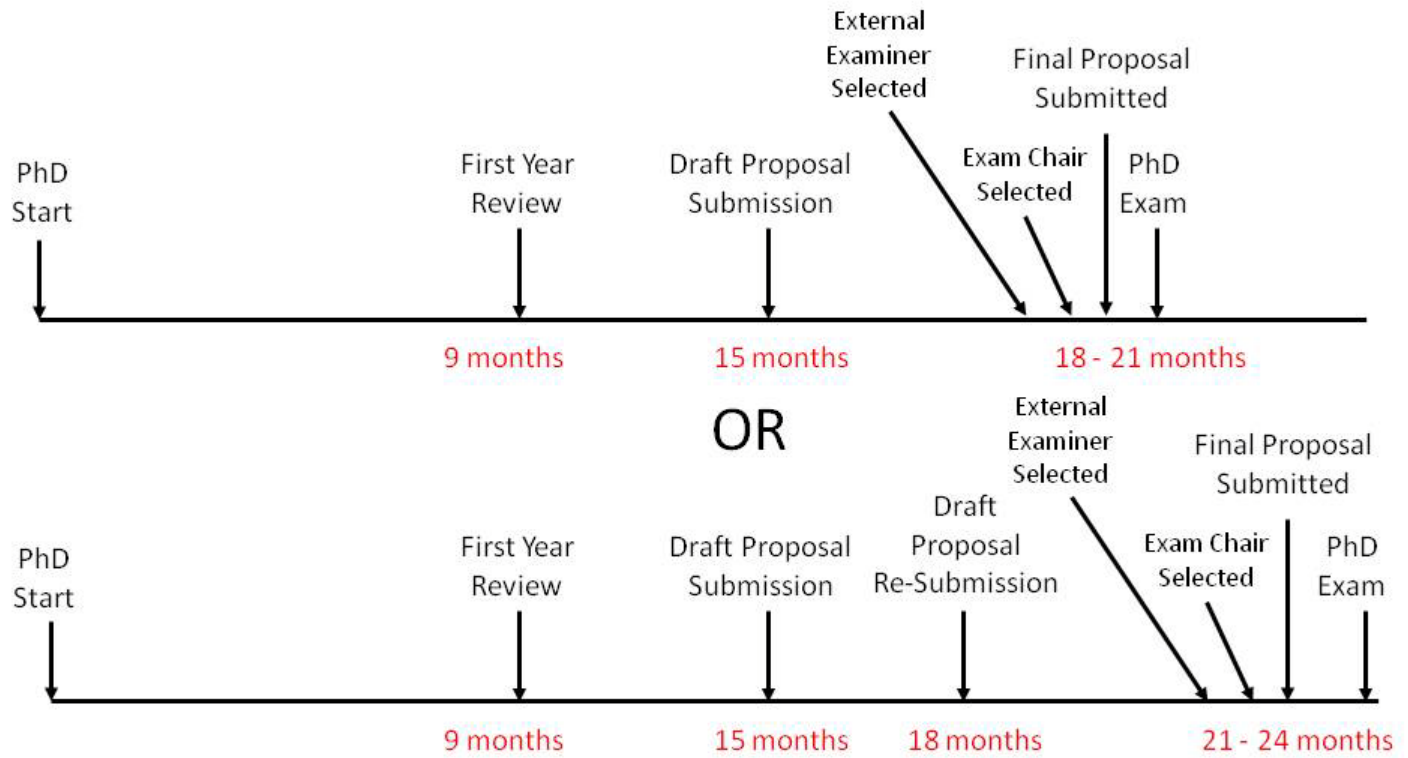
approval of a Graduate Advisor, and will only be made under exceptional circumstances. Requests for extensions should be made well in advance of the deadline.

- a. At the meeting where the draft research proposal is accepted, the committee should collectively decide on the subject areas that will be covered during the PhD exam. A general statement of reading topics should be documented in the meeting report, while specific reading lists will be provided to the student by each supervisory committee member in follow up one-on-one meetings. The detailed reading lists should be established as soon as possible after the acceptance of the draft proposal, and at least 3 months prior to the PhD exam.
- b. An external examiner should be selected for the PhD Candidacy exam at least two months prior to the exam date. This examiner should have a general understanding of the broad research area, but should not be on the student's supervisory committee or have a close involvement with the student's research project. The student should provide the external examiner with the most recent version of the proposal and should arrange a meeting to discuss exam topics and reading lists.
- c. A Chair for the exam should be identified at least one month prior to the exam. The Chair's role is to moderate the exam, document the results and ensure consistency and fairness across the department. There is a committee of Emeritus Professors (currently Calvert, Hsieh, Lewis and Clarke) who serve as PhD exam chairs.
- d. A final version of the proposal should be submitted to the examining committee at least two weeks prior to the Candidacy exam. This finalized version of the proposal must be officially accepted by the supervisory committee members as part of the Candidacy Exam.

### **Summary of Time-lines and Milestones** (See Figs. 1 and 2, and Table 1)

1. **First Year Review** at 9 months
2. **Draft Proposal Submission** at 15 months (if necessary, revised proposal submission at 18 months)
3. **PhD Candidacy Exam** at 18 – 21 months (in case of draft proposal re-submission, PhD exam at 21 – 24 months)
  - a. Selection of external examiner at least two months prior to the exam
  - b. Selection of exam chair at least one month prior to the exam
  - c. Submission of final thesis proposal to examining committee at least two weeks prior to the exam

**Figure 1:** Overview time-line of PhD program up to Candidacy



**Table 1:** Sample calendar templates for PhD program scheduling up to the Candidacy Exam

Activity / Milestone	Sept., 2014 Start	Jan., 2015 Start	May, 2015 Start
First Year Review	May, 2015	Sept., 2015	Jan., 2016
Draft proposal submission	Nov., 2015	Mar., 2016	July, 2016
Draft proposal re-submission <i>(if needed)</i>	Feb., 2016	June, 2016	Oct., 2016
Candidacy Exam <i>(First proposal accepted)</i>	Feb., 2016 – May, 2016	June, 2016 – Sept., 2016	Oct., 2016 – Jan., 2017
Candidacy Exam <i>(Revised proposal required)</i>	June, 2016 – Sept., 2016	Oct., 2016 – Jan., 2017	Feb., 2017 – May, 2017

**Figure 2:** Detailed Time-line for PhD exam Scheduling

