

Sept. 2015

Industrial and Systems Engineering PhD Milestones and Timely Progress

Completing a PhD is an exciting but challenging undertaking. The ISE PhD program, regardless of specialization, is structured to help students make progress towards their ultimate goal – a successful dissertation defense and graduation.

There are several important milestones to be aware of throughout a typical 5 year PhD program. Students, with assistance from their advisors and committee, are responsible for planning their work so that they are accomplishing milestones at appropriate times.

Name _____ Start Date (1st semester as UB graduate student) _____
I completed/am completing an MS with thesis as well as a PhD (Yes or No) _____

Milestone	Description	Expected Time	My Progress (Date)
B-Exam	Written exam with questions from 5 courses. Students must pass to continue.	End of year 1 (May) or August if retake needed	
Select Advisor	All PhD students must have an advisor. Students can meet with faculty, students, and the Director of Graduate Studies in making this choice. Both student and advisor must mutually agree.	End of the third semester at the latest. Ideally by the time of B-exam	
Select Committee Members	Students must have a committee of at least 3 members including the advisor. Students should work with their advisor to form the committee	By the end of 4 th semester (May)	
Submit Application to Candidacy(ATC)	A UB form lists the student's academic plan and committee (can be revised if needed).	Due by end of 4 th semester (May)	
Advanced Exam (A-Exam)	Research based exam set by committee, structure varies by discipline	During year 3, ideally before the end of semester 5	
Proposal Defense	Oral defense of detailed dissertation proposal to committee.	During year 4, ideally before end of semester 7 (Dec)	
Dissertation Defense	Oral defense of dissertation research, open to committee and public.	By end of year 5 ideally, may depend on research.	Planned date =

Additional details regarding these milestones and related policies and procedures are available on the ISE and UB websites.

Students and their advisors should make sure that the graduate administrative assistant is notified when milestones are completed beyond the B-exam.

Students who have not met milestones by the appropriate dates will be notified by the graduate director that they are not making timely progress towards their degrees, and encouraged to meet with their advisor and the graduate director to understand and try to resolve any challenges that are causing delays.

In awarding funding, the ISE department first considers students who are making timely progress in their programs.