

RECOMMENDATION OF THE DOCTORAL STUDIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
TO ESTABLISH A TIME LIMIT FOR THE DOCTORAL PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION

I. Current Policy

None

II. Proposed Policy

- A. Establish a time limit of 5 years from initial enrollment in a doctoral program to pass the preliminary examination(s)
- B. Allow a one-year extension for extenuating circumstances

III. Rationale

The policy is intended to encourage progress toward degree, decrease the number of appeals of the 10-year time limit for degree completion, and lead to better advising and more economical plans of study. The five year mark is a reasonable combination of the previous time limit (completion of degree within 5 years of passing the preliminary exam) and the current limit of 10 years to degree completion.

To date, there are 18 students who have been granted extensions to the 10-year time limit. Of these, 13 took more than 5 years to pass the doctoral preliminary examination. Average time to pass the preliminary exam was 6.7 years for the time extension group.

Among currently enrolled students who are near the time limit, there are 10 students who have completed at least 8 years of enrollment and have not yet passed the preliminary examination.

IV. Procedure

- A. The Graduate School will send students who have not passed the preliminary examination(s) within 4 years of initial enrollment in a doctoral program a warning letter.

- B.      The Graduate School will drop students who have not passed the preliminary examinations within 5 years of initial enrollment in a doctoral program.
- C.      Under extenuating circumstances, the Graduate School will consider an appeal for a one-year extension. The major professor and the doctoral program representative must support the appeal.
- D.      Students who are dropped for failure to pass the preliminary examination within the 5-year time period will no longer be able to register as a student in the doctoral program.

V.      Recommendation for Action

- A.      The proposed policy is approved as reflected in the document above.
- B.      This requirement is effective for students who begin a doctoral program during Semester I, 2000-01 and thereafter.