UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
Graduate Program in Life Sciences

Physical Rehabilitation Science Doctoral Program

2023 Student Handbook

This handbook is not a contract, and all information is subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of the Program, School, and/or University.

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Overview of the Program

The Doctor of Philosophy program in Physical Rehabilitation Science is aimed at training the next generation of rehabilitation scientists to comprehensively investigate critical areas of research that can help prevent or reduce physical disability. Drawing on links with key departments within the University of Maryland Baltimore as well as University of Maryland College Park and University of Maryland Baltimore County, the program offers a comprehensive interdisciplinary learning experience leading to a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Physical Rehabilitation Science.

Program Philosophy

The complex and highly integrated systems of the human body have traditionally been studied in isolation, under both normal and pathological conditions. While this approach has been highly successful in elucidating basic mechanisms of health and disease, the dynamic interactions of the body's organ systems and the broader societal and economic influences are often left unappreciated. Since a significant percentage of the population has some degree of physical disability, scientific and medical communities must implement a holistic approach to studying the causes and amelioration of function impairment, physical disability, and reduced participation in society. The adverse consequences of chronic systemic disease, congenital defects, trauma-related damage, progressive decline in tissue viability, and socioeconomic disadvantages can be reduced through intensive research focused on a plethora of topics addressing the mechanisms and management of systems disorders and socioeconomic factors. A relevant translational approach (from laboratory bench to clinical patient care) will help facilitate an understanding of the integrated functions of these systems. Over time, this new information will increase the ability of medical personnel to accurately diagnose disabling disorders and prescribe appropriate preventative or corrective counter measures.

To ensure that adequate numbers of rehabilitation researchers are trained and available to meet society's needs, the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Graduate Program in Life Sciences (GPILS) offers a formal program of interdisciplinary study leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Physical Rehabilitation Science. This program draws on nationally and internationally recognized research expertise found within the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science, and other basic science and clinical departments within the School of Medicine, as well as programs throughout the University of Maryland System. The program is focused on critical areas of research that help prevent or dramatically reduce the many forms of disability that restrict significant numbers of individuals from functioning fully and freely in their surroundings.

Goals and Expected Outcomes of the PhD Program

The PhD program will:

1. Provide graduate faculty mentorship opportunities for in depth research in rehabilitation science to facilitate timely completion of the PhD degree.
   Expected Outcome: Graduate faculty will provide and facilitate research opportunities to learn research skills relative to the student's area of interests and their advisor's research program.

2. Provide core courses in foundations of rehabilitation science.
   Expected Outcome: Core coursework will be provided for all enrolled PhD students

3. Prepare students to conduct and disseminate original research that will advance rehabilitation science
   Expected Outcome: The PhD program will ensure that all established program milestones are met and will provide ongoing learning opportunities and experiences in scientific writing and research presentations.

4. Provide opportunities to teach content in an area of expertise
   Expected Outcome: Within UMB, a teaching and learning course and opportunities for teaching through lectures, laboratories, or seminars in the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program.

The PhD student will:

1. Maintain a minimum of a weighted B average in all PhD coursework.
   Expected Outcome: 100% of students will meet all passing requirements and maintain or exceed a weighted B average in all coursework.

2. Provide evidence of continuous scholarship
   Expected Outcome: 100% of students will (a) present research on average at least once per year over a 4-year period to an external regional, national, or international conference and twice per year to local venues AND (b) have submitted at least two papers before the dissertation research papers, one as first author.

3. Demonstrate the ability to plan and defend a research line of enquiry.
   Expected Outcome: 100% of students will pass their plan of study meeting.

4. Develop and demonstrate a focused and deep knowledge of content and theory in concentration, tools and cognate areas.
   Expected Outcome: 100% of students will pass their comprehensive examinations.

5. Integrate knowledge and theoretical application of research design to propose a dissertation proposal.
   Expected Outcome: 100% of students will pass their dissertation proposal.

6. Independently conduct research and, in addition to submitting earlier papers, write up at least 2 more papers as first author that constitute their dissertation, give a public presentation of the dissertation and defend their dissertation.
   Expected Outcome: 100% of students will successfully defend their dissertation proposal.

The PhD graduate will:

1. Graduates will use their training to enhance the discipline of rehabilitation science.
   Expected Outcome: 100% of graduates will obtain either an academic position, post-doctoral fellowship, industry, or clinical research position relating to rehabilitation science.

Research Faculty

Our faculty members pursue a variety of research areas, most of which are well-funded by internal and external sources, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), Department of Veterans Affairs, American Physical Therapy Association, and the Foundation for Physical Therapy Research.

Examples of ongoing research include:

- Neuromotor Performance and Rehabilitation
- Musculoskeletal Performance and Rehabilitation
- Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation
- Rehabilitation Engineering and Robotics
- Rehabilitation Epidemiology

Applicants are encouraged to review the faculty research interests at https://pt.umaryland.edu/Research/

Admissions

Criteria

- Evidence of academic accomplishment. The minimum academic standard is a B average, or GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in a program resulting in the award of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university, or an equivalent degree and standing from a comparable foreign institution.
- Minimum of bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline, field of study or profession (e.g., biology, engineering, exercise physiology, exercise science, kinesiology, medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy).
- Previous course work in biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, and statistics.
- Official TOEFL or Duolingo scores are required when a student's first language is not English. TOEFL minimum required score is 80. Duolingo minimum required score is 115.
- Personal statement (1 page).
- Three letters of reference.

Procedure

The department seeks individuals who will bring their scholarship, motivation, and commitment to the program. Applicants must have a complete application on file in the Admissions Office to be reviewed for admission. Applications are due on December 1st of each year for enrollment in the following fall semester if seeking graduate assistantship. Otherwise, applications are accepted on a rolling basis up to April 1st for fall semester admission. Prior to applying, applicants are encouraged to contact one or more potential PTRS graduate faculty advisor(s) with expertise in the applicant's area of interest to discuss research interests and ensure that the faculty is accepting PhD students. See Faculty Research for a list of faculty and research interests. All applications must include:

- Completed online application: https://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/Admissions/PhD-Program-Applicants/
- Clear statement of research interests and career goals (1 page). This statement is very important for the admissions committee to determine whether our program is a good match with the

applicant's interests and goals and vice versa. Within this statement, applicants must include career interests and goals, reasons for pursuing a PhD in Physical Rehabilitation Science, specific research interests and how these match the interests of identified faculty member(s), and any additional knowledge, skillset, and/or experiences that are relevant to PhD training.
- Curriculum vitae
- Official transcripts from all schools attended.
- Three letters of reference written by individuals familiar with the candidate's academic and work experiences, and who can speak to the applicant's ability to conduct research at a graduate level.
- Official TOEFL or Duolingo scores are required when a student's first language is not English. TOEFL information is available at http://www.ets.org/toefl. Our institution code is 5848 and our department code is 48.
- International applicants must provide two official native-language transcripts (or mark sheets) and two official transcripts translated into English from each college or university attended. Documents must list subjects and grades. Students whose universities issue only one set of official records must provide certified, notarized (raised seal), copies of those records.

Equal Opportunity: The University of Maryland, Baltimore is an equal opportunity institution with respect to both education and employment. The university's policies, programs, and activities are in conformance with pertinent federal and state laws and regulations on nondiscrimination regarding race, color, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, and handicap.

Tuition and Fees

Link to graduate school tuition and fees can be found **Here**

Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are available and awarded on a yearly basis. Each assistantship includes a stipend, tuition remission for up to 10 credits in the fall and spring semesters (20 per year) and benefits. Students making satisfactory progress are typically supported for the duration of their graduate studies up to five years. The stipends are in line with NIH guidelines, and accordingly, students are expected to spend 20 hours per week on research, teaching, or a combination of the two in addition to full-time studies for their PhD. Generally, assistantships are awarded Sept 1 each year. Refer to the Graduate Assistant Handbook for more information.

Physical Rehabilitation Science Curriculum

Pre-doctoral trainees in Physical Rehabilitation Science (PRS) are provided with an in-depth regimen of coursework that articulates with independent study preparation and a programmed sequence of research that culminates in a final dissertation. The PRS PhD curriculum has two objectives that provide:

1. A sound foundation in the intellectual tools required for all physical rehabilitation scientists in the areas of statistics, research design, and laboratory methods and techniques.
2. Advanced research training in Rehabilitation Research.

A student will study with a primary advisor based on the student's prior knowledge of that advisor's research focus and the advisor's capacity and interest in advising the student. A secondary or co-advisor may also be appointed for content expertise. If working as a graduate assistant, students must register for 7 credits of ABGA 900 or 901 in addition to course credits. Full time students must register for at least 9 credits each semester to maintain full time status and tuition remission eligibility, which may include ABGA credits. Note that 10 billable course credits in the fall and spring semesters are eligible for tuition remission. ABGA 900 credits do not count towards billable course credits, which means that a student may register for 10 course credits plus 7 ABGA credits in the fall and spring semester. Refer to https://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/Costs-and-Aid/Graduate-Assistants/ and the Graduate Assistant Handbook for more information. Once courses are selected each semester, an email with the course name and number must be emailed to the PhD program coordinator and director so that registration may be unlocked. Students must then follow the course registration procedures as outlined on https://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/current-students/Registration-Information/. Courses are chosen in consultation with the advisor(s) and must include the following:

Interdisciplinary Science Core - (10 credit minimum)
The Science Core is designed to provide an interdisciplinary foundation for further study in an area of one's choice.

- Foundations of Rehabilitation Science I -PTRS 688 (3 credits)
- Foundations of Rehabilitation Science II –PTRS 688 (3 credits)
- Research Seminar PTRS 788- 4 semesters (1 credit each)

Tools Core - (15 credit minimum)
The Tools Core provides the research skills needed in the field of rehabilitation science, as well as direct preparation for an academic career. A minimum of 6 credits of statistics are required, but there is flexibility in which statistics courses one can take, which is why they appear as course examples below.

- Theoretical Foundations of Teaching and Learning in the Health Professions – HPE 610 (3 credits)
- Research Ethics – CIPP 907 (1 credit)
- Introduction to Clinical and Translational Research – PREV 616 (2 credits)
- Statistics (6 credits) - Statistics and tools courses are offered at UMB, UMD, and UMBC. Refer to course catalogues for full course listings and descriptions.
  E.g., Quantitative Research Methods I (statistics) – EDMS 645 (3 credits)
  General Linear Models I (statistics) – EDMS 646 (at UMD) (3 credits)
  General Linear Models II (statistics)– EDMS 651 (at UMD) (3 credits)
  Fundamentals of Biostatistics – GPILS 630 (3 credits)
  Qualitative Methods in Social Research - SOCY 619 (at UMBC) (3 credits)

Electives

- Applied Technology for Human Movement Analysis I – PTRS 615 (2 credits)
- Applied Technology for Human Movement Analysis II – PTRS 616 (2 credits)
- Grant Writing in Rehabilitation Science Practicum – PTRS 722 (2 credits)

Concentration/Cognate Area – (23 credit minimum) Students must complete a minimum of 23 credits in their concentration specialty area of Neuromotor Control and Rehabilitation and Cognate areas that may include Musculoskeletal Performance, Rehabilitation Engineering and Robotics, or Rehabilitation Epidemiology.

Potential courses include:

- Advanced Biomechanics – PTRS 765 (3 credits)
- Principles of Epidemiology - PREV 600 (3 credits)
- Muscle Cell Biology & Development - GPLS 715 (3 credits)
- Cell & Systems Physiology Motor Behavior - GPLS 645 (3 credits)
- Disorders of the Nervous System - NACS 728
- Nociception of Pain - GPLS 642
- Independent Study (with a graduate faculty instructor) - PTRS 798
- Other cognate/concentration courses offered within the University System of Maryland

Doctoral Dissertation Research – minimum of 12 credits

Criteria for the review of student progress and performance

- **Maintenance of satisfactory GPA:** All PhD students are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA average (4.0 maximum). Students earning a letter grade of B- or lower in a required course must meet with their advisor to determine an appropriate response that *must include* retaking the course and requiring a minimum grade of "B". In such cases, the student transcript will include both the original letter and the grade for the retake of the course. If a letter grade of B- or below is obtained in an elective course, students must meet with their advisor and determine an appropriate response, which *may include* retaking the course. Two semesters of below 3.0 will typically be cause for dismissal.

- **Performance in the laboratory:** Students must learn laboratory skills, techniques, and theory, as well as laboratory maintenance and management functions. These abilities are seen as crucial to a successful career in research and are monitored by the advisor.

- **Student Research:** From the beginning of the PhD program, the student is expected to engage in the research process at all levels, including data collection, data reduction and analysis, research design, and preparing manuscripts for publication. Aspects of this criterion are monitored by the student's advisor(s) and include research proposals, quality of data collection and analysis, number of primary and secondary manuscript and abstract submissions, number of submissions published, and other products in which the development involved the student's effort and provide evidence of continuous scholarship.

- **Progress on the Plan of Study:** Maintenance or amendment of this timeline is monitored by the advisor and the Plan of Study Committee. Minor amendments such as course switches are approved by the advisor, while more extensive amendments or those that affect academic

progression must be approved by the Plan of Study Committee.

- **Research Agenda:** Prior to the dissertation phase of the program, the student engages in his/her own research to develop preliminary information leading to proposing a hypothesis or identifying a dissertation question. The advisor will ensure that the student's research is focused and aimed at accomplishing this objective.

- **Comprehensive Exam and Dissertation Proposal:** The advisor and student work together to ensure that the student maintains the appropriate timeframe for completion of the comprehensive examination as well as the dissertation proposal.

- **Dissertation Phase:** The advisor and student work together to ensure that the student maintains the appropriate timeframe for completion of the dissertation research and defense. It is recognized that there is often a need to modify timeframes due to the nuances of conducting research and the frequent need to conduct additional experiments or analyses. The dissertation committee is charged with ensuring the quality of the student's dissertation, while the advisor/s and student are charged with ensuring the maintenance of the timeline.

Ph.D. Progression Benchmarks/Advancement Criteria

Students are required to successfully complete all the following before graduation from the PhD program:

1. Maintain a minimum of a weighted B average in all PhD coursework. Students will meet all passing requirements and maintain or exceed a weighted B average in all coursework.
2. Provide evidence of continuous scholarship. Students will (a) present research *on average* at least once per year over a 4-year period to an external regional, national or international conference and twice per year to local venues AND (b) have submitted at least two papers before the dissertation research papers, one as first author.
3. Demonstrate the ability to plan and defend a research line of enquiry. Students will pass their plan of study meeting.
4. Develop and demonstrate a focused and deep knowledge of content and theory in concentration area, tools and cognate areas. Students will pass their comprehensive examinations.
5. Integrate knowledge and theoretical application of research design to propose a dissertation proposal. Students will pass their dissertation proposal meeting.
6. Independently conduct research and, in addition to submitting earlier papers, write up at least two more papers as first author that constitute their dissertation, give a public presentation of the dissertation, and defend their dissertation. Students will successfully defend their dissertation proposal.

By the end of Year 1 (or the equivalent completion of 20 credits)

1. Write at least two abstracts for presentations with at least one submitted to a national/international conference based on research in which the student has contributed. Contribute to the design and presentation of the poster.

2. Participate in data collection, reduction, and analysis of at least one research project led by their mentor.
3. Determine a research path with goals and hypotheses. It is recognized that this plan (goals/hypotheses) may change but the student must demonstrate the capacity to identify and defend an acceptable research project during the “Plan of Study” meeting.
4. Determine a “Plan of Study” with the advisor and secondary/co-advisors.
5. Complete any optional workshops that are designed to complement formal coursework.

    E.g. ORD Scientific Writing Seminar Series

By the end of Year 2 (or the equivalent completion of 40 credits)

1. Write at least two abstracts for presentations with at least one submitted to a national/international conference.
2. Contribute to the writing of at least one research paper for publication.
3. Complete required and elective courses based on the "Plan of Study."
4. Pass the comprehensive examination

By the end of Year 3 (or the equivalent completion of 50 credits, including dissertation credits)

1. Write at least two abstracts for presentations with at least one submitted to a national/international conference.
2. Contribute to the writing of at least one additional research paper for publication with a goal of being first author.
3. Complete any remaining required and elective courses based on the "Plan of Study."
4. Approximately 3-6 months after passing the Comprehensive Exams, write, defend, and pass a dissertation proposal in NIH NRSA grant format.
5. Write and submit a grant for pre-doctoral funding where feasible.

By the end of Year 4 (or the equivalent completion of 60 credits, including dissertation credits)

1. Write at least two abstracts for presentations with at least one submitted to a national/international conference.
2. Write up two-three papers (as first author) as part of the dissertation research. It is expected that at least one of these papers is submitted for publication before graduating. Note that these papers are specific to the dissertation research and are in addition to the 2 papers published prior to dissertation research.
3. Successfully defend and submit the dissertation.

PhD Program Milestones

Plan of Study

A formal evaluation of the PRS student begins with the plan of study meeting at the end of the first year.

The following represent guidelines formulated by Graduate Faculty of the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science regarding the Plan of Study meeting for PhD Students. Deviations from below may occur and are viewed on a case-by-case basis.

1. The plan of study meeting will occur at the end of year 1 (**or the equivalent completion of 20 credits)**.
2. The meeting should include the student's academic advisor(s), Program Director, at least two other members of the PRS Graduate Faculty, and at least one external member. Minimum number is 5. There is no maximum number.
3. Before the meeting, the student contacts his/her primary advisor(s) to plan and go over the PRS Annual Doctoral Student Report.
4. The meeting itself is run by the student's advisor.
5. In the meeting, the student gives a presentation (about 30 minutes) reviewing their progress and emphasizing the future plan as far as possible. Committee members are free to make comments and ask the student and/or advisors questions. The idea is to ensure a good plan of study for each student based on their needs and interests as well as the departmental requirements.
6. Presentation will include:
    a. Review of PRS Annual Doctoral Student Report form including documentation and discussion of benchmarks.
    b. A presentation of the student's intended research path with goals and hypotheses. It is recognized that this plan (goals/hypotheses) may change but the student must demonstrate the capacity to identify and defend an acceptable research project.
    c. The plan of study.
7. The plan of study committee will discuss, evaluate, and agree on plan of action with the student for the next year. Committee decision will be one of the following:
    a. Student passes and plan is approved. The *PRS Doctoral Degree Plan of Study Approval Form* is signed by committee members and student proceeds with plan. Approved form and plan of study PDF is emailed to the PRS PhD program director and coordinator.
    b. Student fails and must revise and re-convene with the committee within six months. If the repeat is passed, the approved form and plan of study PDF is emailed to the PRS PhD program director and coordinator. If student fails the repeat, they will be dismissed from the PhD program.

Comprehensive Examinations and Advancement to Candidacy

Advancement to candidacy occurs once a student successfully proposes their dissertation. The prerequisite for defending the dissertation proposal and defense is successful completion of the comprehensive examination. The following guidelines are established for the timetable and format of the comprehensive examinations and advancement to candidacy for PRS PhD Degree. These guidelines provide consistency within the program while at the same time recognizing the need for individual variation across different areas of sub-specialty/cognate, advisors, and students.

1. Students in the PhD program may sit for examinations after they have completed the Foundation of Rehabilitation Science Core Courses and a minimum of 40 credits of their total coursework. The scheduling of the examination is initially set at the student's plan of study

meeting. It may be postponed if the student/advisor believes this is necessary.

2. The composition of the candidacy examination will consist of a minimum of four faculty: the primary advisor, co-advisor or secondary advisors (if present), and other graduate faculty. At least two of the faculty must be from PTRS (minimum 1) and/or the Graduate Faculty of the PRS Program. At least one must be from outside PTRS and/or the Graduate Faculty of the PRS Program. The latter person should be selected by the student and academic advisor and, typically, would be someone who has had a role in teaching the student.

3. The written examination will be comprised of four separate sessions (4 hours each) to be completed within one week with a closed-book format. Two sessions will be devoted to a comprehensive understanding of specific areas of the research concentration. The remaining sessions are typically devoted to interdisciplinary knowledge, cognate areas, and tools knowledge. For these two sessions, the students will have knowledge of the specific questions 48 hours in advance.

4. An oral discussion will follow the written examination to provide any clarification of responses or additional information that the committee deems necessary. The oral exam should be no more than 2 weeks after the end of the written examinations. Any exceptions to these procedures should be submitted to the program director for approval. Students will receive general feedback from the advisor on written answers prior to the oral discussion meeting.

5. A decision on passing will be made immediately after the oral discussion meeting based on a consensus of the committee. Students who pass will have committee members sign the *Comprehensive Exam Approval Form*, which will be sent to the program director and coordinator for filing. Students who fail the comprehensive examination may retake the entire examination within 6 months. Students who do not reach an acceptable standard in part of the examination (contingent pass) will be offered a chance to remediate within 6 months in a format agreed upon by the committee.

Failure to pass the contingency or re-take will result in dismissal from the program.

6. Approximately 3-6 months after passing the comprehensive exam, the student must submit a dissertation proposal and successfully present an oral defense of the proposal before a dissertation committee. Only then will they be advanced to candidacy at which point the student submits an *Admission to Candidacy* form to the PhD Program Coordinator, who will then submit it to the Graduate School.

Dissertation Proposal Procedures

Planning for the dissertation proposal takes place immediately after the comprehensive examinations have been passed although planning can take place earlier. This proposal is designed to ensure that what a student is planning to do for their dissertation is acceptable to the student's Dissertation Committee. The dissertation committee composition is dictated by the Graduate School (see Graduate School catalog) located at http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/policies/. The minimum number of faculty is five but more

are allowed. At least three must be regular graduate faculty. The dissertation proposal is not guided by the Graduate School and the PRS procedures are as follows.

1. The proposal should be written in NIH National Research Service Award (NRSA) Fellowship format.
2. The 2-hour proposal meeting consists of a presentation by the student of about 45 minutes followed by a question and answer session with the committee members. In some cases, the student may wish to have questions and answers interspersed with the presentation.
3. After the question-and-answer session is over the student leaves the room while the committee discusses the proposal. One of the following decisions will be rendered by the committee:
    a. a Pass (with minimal corrections)
    b. a Pass (with contingencies that need to be resolved within 6 months)
    c. Fail with re-take within 6 months.*

    The student is then recalled to the room and the decision rendered. If some revision is required, the committee decides on what this will be and who will review the revisions.

    *Failure to pass the contingency or the repeat will result in dismissal from the PhD program.

The PRS Doctoral Degree Dissertation Proposal Approval Form should be completed and returned per instructions listed on the form.

Dissertation Defense Procedures

See the Graduate School's Dissertation Defense Procedures

The PRS dissertation typically is composed of an introduction, a review of literature, at least two empirical papers written in the style of their intended journal for submission and a summary discussion with future directions. Some students may have three empirical papers. The review of literature may also be in paper format. Procedures for defending the dissertation are outlined in detail in the Graduate School catalog located at http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/policies/. Students are recommended to read these policies carefully. The following is a brief outline.

1. Six months prior to the dissertation defense, the *PRS Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Examination Approval Form* must be submitted to the PhD program coordinator, who will then submit it to the Graduate School.
2. All committee members must receive a final copy of the dissertation at least 1 month prior to the proposed examination date. When the proposal is ready, the primary advisor and two designated readers must read through and agree that the proposal is ready for defense at least 15 days before the planned examination date. The *Certification of Completion of Dissertation Defense* is then submitted to the Graduate School.
3. The *Announcement of Dissertation Defense* must be submitted to the Graduate School at least 2 weeks prior to the proposed examination date.
4. The defense consists of a public presentation of the dissertation (for one hour) followed by a private defense of the dissertation with the dissertation committee asking the student questions

(typically around two hours). Only other members of the graduate faculty can attend the private defense, but they are not allowed to ask questions. These events can be separated but most choose to have them flow from one to the other.

5. At the end of the private defense, everyone, but the committee, leaves the room. The committee makes one of the following decisions:

    a. a Pass (with minimal corrections)
    b. a Pass (with contingencies that need to be resolved within 6 months)
    c. Fail with re-take within 6 months*

6. Student is then invited back in the room to hear the committee's decision.

    *Failure to pass the contingency or the repeat will result in dismissal from the PhD program.

The *Report of the Examination Committee form* signed by all committee members must be returned by the Graduate School representative to the graduate school office by no later than 2 working days following the examination. The candidate's Program Director and Coordinator must be provided a copy of the report.

Participation in Commencement Ceremonies

The Department will post students for graduation in summer, fall, or spring. Only the spring graduation has commencement ceremonies. No student may participate in pre-commencement or commencement exercises until all coursework and benchmarks, including the Dissertation Defense has been satisfactorily completed and graduation confirmed by the Graduate School.

Full time vs Part time Enrollment Status

Students may be full-time or part-time but only full-time students are eligible to be considered for funding through the university, school or department sources. Part-time students fund themselves and must enroll for at least one credit per semester. Part-time students may enroll in all three semesters. Generally full-time students are preferred and will, typically, finish their Ph.D. earlier than those who are part-time. Students who wish to be part-time from the start should contact their preferred advisor before applying since some faculty may not wish to have a part-time student. Part-time students are encouraged to become full-time, if possible, during their dissertation phase.

If a full-time student needs to adopt part-time status partway through their program, they should discuss this need with their advisor. If approved, any graduate assistant funding will be withdrawn. Any student (part-time or full-time) will be under the standard graduate school rules of completing the degree within 9 years after starting and acquiring candidacy within 5 years after starting, assuming all benchmarks are met.

Withdrawals/Financial Responsibility after 5 years in the PhD Program

Students who wish to leave the PhD program at any time during the academic year are required to file a letter of resignation with the Program Director. In addition, an *Application for Withdrawal form* bearing the proper signatures must be filed with the Registrar's Office. The student must satisfy the authorities that she/he has no outstanding obligations to the school and must return their student identification card. Students who have not completed their Ph.D. requirements after 5 years of funding will be required to finance themselves. Part-time enrollment status is an option.

Policy Related to Graduate Student Leave and Travel Request

Graduate assistants are not covered by the University of Maryland's vacation or leave policies applicable to faculty or staff. However, in addition to UMB holidays, the PRS program allows the advisor to provide the graduate assistant with up to two weeks of leave each calendar year (January 1 – December 31), and a limited amount of time for absence due to unexpected sickness, family or any other emergency. Graduate Assistants will observe the UMB Holiday Schedule. Leave time for graduate assistants is granted on an equitable and nondiscriminatory basis. Any graduate assistant leave approved by the advisor must be used by the graduate assistant during the calendar year for which it was approved. Leave does not carry-over from one year to the next. PhD students are to submit the *Leave Request Form* to their advisor for approval first and then give signed request form to PhD Program Coordinator.

Policy on Academic Performance and Satisfactory Progress

The PRS doctoral program follows all policies as outlined by the Graduate School at the University of Maryland.

Purpose: Satisfactory academic performance and progress within the University of Maryland Baltimore's Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) programs is a shared responsibility of the University of Maryland Baltimore Graduate School (UMBGS), the Doctoral Programs, and graduate students. This policy specifies the elements of satisfactory academic performance and progress for students in UMBGS PhD programs.

Please see the details as outlined in: Academic Performance and Satisfactory Progress in University of Maryland Baltimore PhD Programs. Information on UMBGS policy and procedures for appeal of probation or academic dismissal are also available at that site.