



សាកលវិទ្យាល័យ កម្ពុជា
University of Cambodia
 N°: 14003 UC.D

**DECISION
 ON REVISION OF THE POLICY ON
 THE STRUCTURE OF DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAMMES**

Colleges
 Arts & Humanities
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 Management
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 Technology
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 Research &
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 Training

Centers
 Center for ASEAN &
 East Asian
 Studies
 Center for
 English Studies
 Center for
 International
 Studies

**Asia
 Leadership
 Center**

- Based on Anukret No. 51 អនក្រឹត្យ dated on 20 June 2003 on the recognition of the University of Cambodia by Royal Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia;
- Based on UC Mission, Vision, and Internal Rules of the University;
- Based on the need for reform to ensure the quality maintenance and improvement of the University of Cambodia;
- Based on decision to establish of working group for writing legal policy, term of references and rule of procedures on 4 October 2010;

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBODIA HAS
 APPROVED THE REVISION OF THE POLICY ON THE STRUCTURE OF
 DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAMMES, AS FOLLOWS:**

I. Policy on the Structure of Doctoral Degree Programmes

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University of Cambodia's Doctor of Philosophy degree is a Research Doctoral degree, awarded only for evidence of scholarly achievement based on a programme of coursework followed by an innovative piece of research and the resulting dissertation.
- 1.2 Accordingly, the University of Cambodia has rigorous criteria for the selection of potential Doctoral students (see *Policy on Admission to Graduate Degree Programmes*).
- 1.3 Once accepted, a Doctoral student is expected to perform well in their studies, with the capacity to work independently and productively.
 - i. This will be monitored by the Doctoral Students Academic Committee (see *Policy on Doctoral Students Academic Committee*).

- 1.4 The quality of a candidate's work is judged on a variety of factors, culminating in an Intermediate Exam and then research for a Dissertation which makes a significant original contribution to knowledge in the candidate's chosen field.

2. Overall Organisation

- 2.1 A Doctoral Degree by research has two components:
- i. Coursework, totalling 27 credits;
 - ii. Research work and dissertation writing, totalling 33 credits
- 2.2 Full-time doctoral students are required to complete their studies within six years; and part-time students within eight years.
- i. After registration, their work will be overseen by the Doctoral Students Academic Committee.
 - ii. In consultation with the student, the Doctoral Students Academic Committee will nominate a Supervisory Committee comprising a primary supervisor and two or more associate supervisors, who will be directly responsible for monitoring and reporting the student's progress, especially during the preparation of the dissertation writing (see Section 4.4).
- 2.3 Students have the right to change the thesis topic, or to add or change one or more members of the Supervisory Committee, subject to the approval of the Doctoral Students Academic Committee.
- 2.4 Students who were in good standing at another accredited university may transfer up to all 27 credits of coursework (*i.e.* they are 'all-but-dissertation' [ABD]), provided that they are continuing in the same field and they sit and pass the appropriate Intermediate Exam; however the grades from these courses do not count towards of the GPA of their programme of study at the University of Cambodia (*see Policy on Credit Transfer: Graduate Students*).
- i. Students who have a satisfactory ABD from another university and who have started on the dissertation component of their Doctoral programme may transfer to do their dissertations at the University of Cambodia subject to an interview and other assessments (for example an Intermediate Exam) as deemed necessary.

3. Coursework

- 3.1 Coursework comprises the following:
- i. Supplementary courses (9 credits) taken at the beginning of the training:
 - FDN704: Ethical Leadership (3 credits)
 - Two other courses related to the student's general field of study (6 credits)
 - ii. Doctorate courses (9 credits), taken in the first or second year:
 - FDN701: Research Methodology (3 credits)
 - FDN702: Statistics for Research (3 credits)
 - FDN703: Research Paper Writing (3 credits)



- iii. Oriented courses (9 credits):
 - These are three related to the student's general field of study
 - iv. The courses taken are as advised by the Doctoral Students Academic Committee after taking into consideration the student's background and the inputs of the relevant College.
- 3.2 Some of these credits may be earned through courses taken by independent study (see *Policy on Graduate Independent Studies*).
- i. Alternatively, some classes may be run with Master's students, in which case Doctoral students may be required to do extra work (see *Policy on 'Layering'*).
- 3.3 Each course is assessed: students need to pass each with a minimum mark of 70%.
- i. Grading uses a standard scheme to derive a final grade (Table I).

Table I

Letter Grade	Grade Point	Score	Definitions
A	4.00	95-100	Excellent
B+	3.50	89-94	Very good
B	3.00	83-88	Good
C+	2.50	77-82	Fairly good
C	2.00	71-76	Fair*
F	0.00	≤70	Fail

* Note that a Doctoral student can only count the grade points for a maximum of three such courses.

- ii. Students must be aware that attendance is an important component of the final scores for each course taught through formal classes: moreover, students who fail to maintain a minimum level of attendance are barred from taking the final exam (see *Policy on Attendance and Leave of Absence during Term-Time: Graduate Students*).
- 3.4 Once a Doctoral student has completed all coursework with a minimum overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0, they qualify for sitting the Intermediate Exam.
- i. A student is allowed a maximum of three courses with a grade 'C'.
 - ii. Further courses with this grade, together with all courses at lower grades, count as grade 'F' with a Grade Point of 0.
 - iii. Failure to attain a GPA of 3.0 after completing the 27 credits means that the student will be dropped from the programme.



- 3.5 The Intermediate Exam aims to ascertain the candidate's familiarity with, and their understanding of, the chosen field(s) of study.
- i. A foreign language exam is not required.
 - ii. The Intermediate Exam is a written exam, being two 3-hour sessions – morning and afternoon – on a single day.
 - iii. It comprises four compulsory questions in the candidate's chosen field or discipline, which are designed to test the student's integrative and analytical skills.
 - iv. The student's answers to the questions in the Intermediate Exam will be reviewed in a subsequent oral exam by the Doctoral Students Academic Committee.
 - v. A student who fails the Intermediate Exam may repeat it once at the discretion of the Doctoral Students Academic Committee. A student who fails the exam a second time is dropped from the program and loses registered graduate student status.
 - vi. After passing the Intermediate Exam, a student is eligible, at the discretion of the Doctoral Students Academic Committee, to receive a certificate indicating that all requirements of the Doctorate except for the dissertation (all-but-dissertation or ABD) have been completed.
 - vii. A Doctoral student must satisfactorily complete all course-work and then pass an Intermediate Exam within three years for full-time students and four years for part-time students after first joining a degree programme.
 - viii. Candidates who fail to complete all requirements in the specified time are automatically dropped from the program. Reinstatement for a limited period of time is possible only upon submission of a petition to the Doctoral Students Academic Committee chair, with the support of the Dean of the respective field of study, providing a specific degree plan and new limited time line to completion of all degree requirements.

4. The Dissertation

4.1 This comprises the following components:

- i. Research proposal defense (3 credits);
- ii. National or international publication of research articles (6 credits)
- iii. Presentations at fora and other meetings (3 credits)
- iv. Personal workshops (3 credits)
- v. Thesis (18 credits)

4.2 The Doctoral dissertation is a scholarly presentation of an original contribution to knowledge resulting from independent research. Typically, it is based on a period of research after the successful completion of the Intermediate Exam, followed by of the writing of the dissertation itself.

- i. The subject matter of a dissertation should not include proprietary or classified information, since the results and their interpretation will be available to the general public.



- ii. The planning, conduct and reporting of this research must meet the minimal expectations set by the Research Ethics Committee (see *Policy on Research I, II and III*).
- 4.3 The student should first identify an area of interest, a possible topic for research and potential supervisors.
- i. Students are encouraged to plan ahead whilst still doing course-work, including approaching potential supervisors (although making no commitments to the latter).
 - ii. They should provide a brief statement of their interests to the Doctoral Students Academic Committee, with any supporting documentation for the latter's inputs.
- 4.4 The initiation, research and production of a dissertation are under the oversight of a three-member supervisory panel, nominated on the advice of the Doctoral Students Academic Committee.
- i. This is headed by a primary supervisor.
 - ii. Two other members serve as associate (or co-) supervisors.
 - iii. These other members may be either internal teaching faculty or external local or international teaching faculty.
 - iv. One supervisor cannot supervise more than nine students.
- 4.5 Thereafter the student can then prepare a Research Proposal of the proposed topic for in-depth study under the guidance of the supervisory panel (see *Policy on Research Proposal Guidelines*).
- 4.6 This will be reviewed by a Research Proposal Defense Committee comprising the three-member supervisory panel together with two other members having research experience in areas related to the student's thesis topic.
- i. This is chaired by the primary supervisor.
 - ii. Approval is required for the student to proceed further.
 - iii. If approval is denied, the student must submit a revised or new proposal within three months for consideration.
 - iv. If this second submission is not approved, the student drops from the programme.
- 4.7 Once approved, the student proceeds to the collection and analysis of data related to the topic under study.
- 4.8 In doing so, they are required to respect the following basic principles:
- i. Make an activity plan with agreement from supervisor panel, and abide by it in order to meet various deadlines.
 - ii. Be conscientious and honest in carrying out what they have proposed to do, with regard to the collecting of the data and its analysis and presentation (see *Policy on Academic Honesty*).
 - iii. Keep accurate records of their data and the sources for review by others as necessary (see *Policy on Research I, II and III*).



- iv. Anticipate the guidelines set for the organisation and presentation of their dissertation (see *Policy on Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines*).
 - v. Not plagiarise (see *Policy on Academic Honesty*).
- 4.9 If the student has to register for a total of more than 18 credits in order to complete an adequate dissertation, these extra credits cannot be counted towards the 60-credit minimum needed to meet the University's graduation requirements.
- i. Note that, in addition to completing the dissertation, the student must also fulfill requirements (ii) – (iv) in Section 4.1, above.
- 4.10 Once the student thinks that enough data have been collected and analysed, they should start to complete writing everything up:
- i. They should already have been pro-active in writing up the Methodology and portions of the Results (as well as thinking about the Discussion).
- 4.11 They must then make a presentation to the Thesis Rehearsal Defense Committee.
- i. This comprises seven members, at least two of who are from recognised external HEIs, with backgrounds in the same field as the thesis topic.
 - ii. The rehearsal will be conducted in public.
 - iii. Conditional approval is required for the student to proceed further.
 - iv. If this is denied, the student must present a revised version within three months for consideration.
 - v. If this second presentation is also not conditionally approved, then the student drops from the programme.
- 4.12 The student must then make necessary changes to the thesis based on the feedback received in order for the approval of the supervisory panel.
- 4.13 Once the dissertation has been completed, four copies must be submitted to the Doctoral Students Academic Committee, for onward transmission to MoEYS with other documents as appropriate.
- i. This will include proposals for the members of an Independent Thesis Review and Assessment Committee.
 - ii. This will comprise an internal assessor from the University of Cambodia, together with two other external assessors.
- 4.14 The Final Thesis Assessment Committee comprises seven members: the chair, a minutes-taker, the three members of the Independent Thesis Review and Assessment Committee, the primary supervisor, and one member who is not a co-supervisor or associate supervisor and who is not a relative, friend, or close colleague of the candidate. Membership of this committee shall be decided by MoEYS based on the proposal of the Doctoral Students Academic Committee.
- 4.15 Based on a majority decision regarding the outcome of the defense, the candidate may be considered to satisfy one of the following criteria:
- *Pass*;
 - *Provisional Pass with Minor Rewrite*;
 - *Provisional Pass with Major Rewrite*; or



- *Fail.*

4.16 Based on the feedback from the above, the Doctoral Students Academic Committee shall submit a report on the final thesis defense and the thesis within one month to MoEYS to review and decide the outcome.

4.17 In the case of a major or minor rewrite, the candidate must submit a revised version of the dissertation, with appropriate documentation of the changes made (or why changes were not made) by an agreed deadline: where necessary, a second defense may be called for.

i. Members of re-defense committee shall be the same as the members of Final Thesis Defense Committee.

ii. In the case of absence of any member, the Doctoral Students Academic Committee will propose a replacement to MoEYS.

4.18 Students who fail the dissertation defense a second time are dropped from the program and lose their status as registered graduate students.

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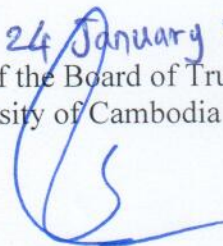


II. All UC Administration, Staff, Faculty, and related offices are required to read and implement this policy to promote the University of Cambodia as a centre for academic excellence.

III. Any prior decision in contradiction with this one shall be annulled.

IV. This decision comes into effect from the date of signing.

Phnom Penh, 24 January 2014
On behalf of the Board of Trustees and
The University of Cambodia President



CC:

- As stated in II
- University Archive