At the beginning of Spring Semester, all graduate students are evaluated by the Graduate Committee on the progress in their study toward a degree. The Graduate Committee also evaluates teaching performance at this time. Note that there are two issues being decided.

- Continuation in the program and
- Continued financial support in the form of a Teaching Assistantship.

It is possible that a student may be allowed to continue progressing towards their degree without funding, for instance without a teaching or research assistantship. A student may also be responsible for his or her tuition costs, especially if they have used up their tuition benefit, see:

http://gradschool.utah.edu/tbp/tuition-benefit-program-guidelines/

Decisions to continue or award Teaching Assistantships, and to continue in the program, are based on both teaching performances and on academic performance. Notification of renewals or nonrenewals are distributed by April 15. These letters also contain individualized academic performance expectations for each student for future years.

**Academic performance**

The academic requirements, specified throughout the Graduate Bulletin, are considered by the Graduate Committee in spring semester for students in the graduate program. Below is a list of common conditions which cause a student to be academically deficient within the Ph.D. program. If a student satisfies any of the conditions below, then the student is academically deficient unless there is a previous arrangement for deviation from the corresponding requirement.

- Failing a written qualifying exam on the same subject twice.
- Failure to have passed at least 2 written qualifying exams before their third year of study.
- Failure to have passed all written qualifying exams before January of the third year.
- Failure to have tentatively scheduled, by January in their third year, their oral qualifying exam. The exam does not have to be taken by this point, it should just be tentatively scheduled in that semester’s progress sheet.
- Failure to have passed oral or written qualifying exams by the time specified in their most recent letter of support.
- Failure to graduate by the date specified in their most recent letter of support.
- Failure to meet other individualized requirements specified in letters of support or other letters written by the Graduate Committee or Director of Graduate Studies.
- Failure to select an advisor by the end of their second year (the official policy is that students should have selected an advisor by the end of their first year).
- Failure to maintain a 3.0 grade point average (this is required by the Graduate School if the student wishes to continue to receive tuition benefit).
- Failure to conduct research at a level needed to complete a Ph.D. Also see the guidelines on the student/advisor relationship below.

Students who fall behind in any of these categories, or who fail to meet other requirements specified for their program, must promptly appeal to the Graduate Committee if they wish to continue in the
program(thesedeficienciesmaybepointedouttothestudentintheannualletterofsupportorinmost
casesevenearlier).

The content of this appeal should include a letter to the Graduate Committee explaining their plan to
correct the deficiency. It should also include a letter from the student’s advisor or academic mentor and
may include additional evidence. These appeals will be considered by the Graduate Committee on a
case by case basis. The Graduate Committee may accept the plan to correct the deficits, accept the plan
after revisions, or decide to dismiss the student or withdraw financial support. The student may also be
put on a schedule with more frequent evaluations by the Graduate Committee. Note that if a student
loses financial support in the form of a teaching assistantship, he or she may still be eligible for support
in the form of a research assistantship, typically from his or her advisor.

If a student is dismissed from the program in the middle of the academic year, the student will usually
be allowed to complete that academic year. In the case that the student is in the Ph.D. program, the
student will usually be allowed to obtain a Master’s Degree if the program requirements have been met.

If a student is not satisfied with a decision made after an appeal to the Graduate Committee, the
student may appeal to the decision to the department chair, and further as specified in Policy 6-400 of
the of the Student Code.

General guidelines on the student/advisor relationship

A student or advisor may terminate the student/advisor relationship because of dissatisfaction. If a
student wishes to terminate the student-advisor relationship, the student should notify the advisor, the
Director of Graduate Studies, and the Graduate Program Coordinator. However, in most cases it is
recommended that the student discuss the situation with the Director of Graduate Studies before
making this decision. If a faculty advisor is dissatisfied with the research effort of a student, the faculty
advisor should make every effort to communicate the concerns he or she may have at an early stage of
the dissatisfaction. If deficiencies persist, the faculty member should identify to the student in writing
the unsatisfactory aspects of the student’s research performance and allow the student a reasonable
time (typically at least 30 days) to correct the deficiencies. A copy of this letter should be sent to the
Graduate Committee. If the deficiencies are corrected, the faculty advisor should notify the student in
writing again with a copy of the letter sent to the Graduate Committee. If the deficiencies still persist,
the student should expect that the student/advisor relationship will be terminated. This may also lead
to termination of financial support or termination from the program if the student is unable to find a
new academic advisor.

Teaching assistant performance

University Policy 6-309 regulates the procedure of hiring and firing of Teaching Assistants, among other
academic staff, in cases of neglect of duties. The Course Coordinator and the Associate Chair are
supervisors of teaching assistants as employees of the University. They periodically evaluate teaching
assistants’ job performance, notify them of any deficiencies, and monitor improvement in job
fulfillment. The Graduate Committee decides continuation of Teaching Assistantships, or termination
from the program, based on reported teaching performances. Notifications of renewals or nonrenewals
are distributed by April 15th. Appeals of termination decisions must be made first in writing to the
Graduate Committee. Further appeals may be made as specified in University Policy 6-309.