Doctoral Student Milestones Agreement (with M.S. transfer)

Ph.D. in Geological Sciences,
Department of Earth, Environmental, and Resource Science (DEERS)

Student's name_____

UTEP ID_____

UTEP email_____

ORCID iD_____

First semester in program: _____. Estimated graduation semester: _____.

Entering background

Do you have prior graduate coursework you intend to apply to the Ph.D.? ☐ Yes

If yes, how many semester credit hours (SCH) will you request to transfer (30 max)? 30 SCH

Have you earned a master's degree in a related field to your Ph.D.? ☐ Yes

If yes, did you complete a thesis as part of that degree? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Welcome and purpose

Welcome to the Ph.D. program in Geological Sciences. The purpose of this agreement is to help you succeed. It maps the milestones that mark your path to the degree and about when to reach them, so you and your advisor can plan with confidence. You will read it, review it with your advisor, sign it, and submit it to the Graduate School in your first semester. The milestones here and the general rules below will help you stay on track and graduate with the experiences and skills you need.

Three individuals who will support you

- **Your faculty advisor (research mentor).** Chairs your dissertation committee, mentors your research, and meets with you at least once each semester to review your research progress, degree plan, coursework, and milestones.
- **The Graduate Program Director and Graduate Program Manager.** Oversees program requirements, milestones, approvals, and paperwork, and is your contact for questions about policies and deadlines.

Milestones

Milestone and key steps	Recommended target	Latest deadline
Preliminary items • Complete the DEERS orientation • Complete the required Graduate School and UTEP orientation • Register for an ORCID iD • Submit this signed Milestones Agreement to the Graduate School • Submit any prior graduate coursework for transfer-credit approval	Within the first month	End of 1st semester
Identify your faculty advisor	Within the first month	End of 1st semester

Milestone and key steps	Recommended target	Latest deadline
(research mentor)		
Form your PhD Committee *Five members: your advisor (chair), three DEERS faculty, one external member. Please note that your PhD Committee may change for various reasons.*	Within the first month	End of 1st semester
Comprehensive Examination I • Written examination • Oral examination • Two attempts permitted	End of 1st semester	End of 2nd semester
Comprehensive Examination II (dissertation proposal defense) • Distribute your advisor-approved proposal to all committee members at least 14 calendar days before this exam • Oral defense of the proposal before your committee • Pass requires advisor approval plus a 3-of-5 committee majority	End of 3rd semester	End of 3rd semester
Advance to doctoral candidacy *File the Application for Candidacy with the Graduate School*	End of 3rd semester	End of 3rd semester
Completion of required coursework *27 SCH of graduate coursework:* *30 SCH from previous M.S.* *24 SCH remaining*	End of 3rd semester (57 SCH)	Before enrolling in Dissertation I
Enroll in Dissertation I (GEOL 6398) *Then enroll in Dissertation II (GEOL 6399) each term until graduation*	4th semester (after 57 SCH)	—
Dissertation and final defense • Complete the Graduate School format check • Run the UTEP originality report • Submit the draft and originality report to your committee at least 14 calendar days before the defense • Advertise the defense at least one week beforehand	6th semester (3rd year)	8th semester (Year 4)
Final dissertation submission • Submit all required documents to the Graduate School • Submit to ProQuest	Same term as the defense	Graduate School deadline
Complete Survey of Earned	Within 4 weeks of the defense	—

Milestone and key steps	Recommended target	Latest deadline
Doctorates		
Complete Exit interview	Within 4 weeks of the defense	—

Annual requirement

Annual IDP and committee review.

- Update your Individual Development Plan (IDP) each Spring, to meet the Graduate School timeline
- Update your CV
- Meet with your committee to review progress and goals
- File the signed IDP with the program and the Graduate School

General rules

To remain in good standing, maintain your grades and your progress on milestones. Your advisor and the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Program Manager are here to help you meet both. If you fall behind on either, work with them on a plan to get back on track. In addition to your program milestones, a few University rules apply throughout your program.

- **Full-time enrollment.** Enroll full-time (9 SCH each fall and spring semester) until you pass the Comprehensive Examinations, then 3 SCH (GEOL 6398 once; GEOL 6399 until graduation).
- **Program GPA.** Maintain a 3.0 program grade point average. If it dips below 3.0, you will be placed on academic probation and need to raise your GPA over your next nine credit hours.
- **Progress on milestones.** Keep reaching the milestones above. If you get behind, work with your advisor to develop a plan to maintain your status and catch up.
- **Time to degree.** Complete all requirements within eight years.
- **Employment.** To hold a graduate assistantship you must be enrolled full-time (9 SCH, or 3 SCH of dissertation) and maintain a 3.0 GPA. State funding support is generally limited to four years.
- **Tuition remission.** Tuition remission is available for up to 66 SCH.

Review your full requirements

This agreement summarizes key milestones. It is important that you understand these milestones and also the other policies in the DEERS Graduate Program Handbook and the UTEP Academic Catalog. Please review these documents before signing this Milestones Agreement.

Acknowledgments

Initial each statement below.

_____ (initial) I have read the Ph.D. in Geological Sciences information in the DEERS Graduate Program Handbook.

_____ (initial) I have read this Milestones Agreement and reviewed it with my advisor.

Student signature_____ **Date**_____