

**SIKKIM UNIVERSITY****RULES ON DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

Sikkim University offers research programmes in different subjects and in inter-disciplinary areas leading to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. A candidate shall ordinarily work in the University Departments, but he may also be permitted to work in research institutes recognized by the University. The HoD/IC shall constitute a Departmental Research Committee (DRC) consisting of all faculty members of the department who are eligible to guide PhD students. If the number of eligible teachers is less than three, additional members may be drawn from within the School to constitute the DRC the purpose of which is to oversee the selection, progress and award of a candidate working towards PhD from Sikkim University. The rules regarding eligibility, entrance examination, interview, registration, supervision, submission and evaluation of thesis, viva-voce, defense of thesis etc. shall be as follows:

**1. Eligibility**

For admission to PhD programme, applicants fulfilling the following criteria shall be treated as eligible:

a) Persons having passed Master Degree Examination with at least 55% marks or equivalent Grade Point Average (GPA). 5% relaxation of marks is permissible for students belonging to ST/SC/OBC category.

Or

b) Persons working in national laboratories - institutes/government/private organization nominated/sponsored by respective employer. These persons should have a postgraduate degree and holding the rank of Assistant Director or above

Or

c) Persons with exceptional abilities who passed graduate degree examination with 55% of marks and with 15 years' experience after graduation in related fields. In such cases exceptional abilities will be decided by the concerned DRC.

Or

d) A fellow/associate member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants or Institute of Cost Accountants of India provided that the candidate possesses a first class Bachelor's Degree with three years' course and at least 5 years' professional experience.

Or

e) A graduate in any discipline who has developed any new and innovative technique of national importance or designed and fabricated special instruments or apparatus which are accepted by

competent judges at national/international fora to be of valuable contribution to innovative technology.

Or

f) Persons having MPhil degree with at least 55% marks or equivalent CGPA for General and 50% marks or equivalent CGPA for SC/ST/OBC candidates.

Or

g) Persons with B.Tech degree with a first class and at least 5 years' professional experience.

Application for research in inter-disciplinary areas and from applicants belonging to a different discipline other than the subject in which the research is proposed to be done shall be considered by the DRC, whose decision shall be final and binding.

## **2. Procedure for Conduct of Entrance Examination**

Entrance Examination is compulsory for all categories of applicants and will be normally conducted once in a year.

## **3. The Written Examination**

The written examination of 90 minutes will be conducted by the CoE and answers are evaluated against 50 marks. The DRC will decide what and how many questions to ask and will be responsible for evaluation of answer scripts.

## **4. Interview**

The interview will be evaluated against a total of 50 marks. The purpose of interview is basically to know how keen a candidate is to pursue research in a given area(s) proposed by him/her. The interview committee will comprise at least three members including the HoD/IC and where HoD/IC is not available the concerned Dean shall be present. If a department has less than three eligible members for constituting the interview committee it may request someone from within the School.

The members of the DRC consisting of faculty members who are eligible to guide students for PhD and under whom seats are available will set the questions accordingly and evaluate the answer scripts. If any member of the DRC happens to be a relative of any candidate he shall not be a member of the committee to evaluate the written examination scripts even if he/she is otherwise eligible to guide.

## **5. Admission**

A merit list of candidates based on their performance in the Written Examination as well as Interview shall be drawn and notified by the Head of Department immediately after the evaluation process is completed and a list of selected candidates shall be uploaded in the University website and also forwarded to (i) Dean, (ii) Registrar, (iii) Controller of Examinations, and (iv) Finance Officer. Such candidates shall be required to be provisionally registered on payment of prescribed fee within the stipulated date mentioned in the notification.

While granting admission to candidates, the Department will pay due attention to the reservation policy of the Government of India.

Employed candidates, if admitted, must produce the evidence to show that they have been granted leave for at least one semester for humanities and social science departments and two years for laboratory-based departments.

Foreign candidates shall be admitted against supernumerary seats up to 10%. Since it is usually not possible for them to come and appear in the written examination cum interview admission may be granted to them if the DRC finds their testimonials in satisfactory order. If the percentage of eligible candidates is more than 10 a merit list may be prepared on the basis of their academic background. Granting admission to candidates belonging to Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Myanmar, and Pakistan may be avoided unless specifically recommended by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations, Government of India under exchange programmes. They may first be issued Provisional Admission Certificate. The final admission may be granted to them only if they produce valid student visa for the period of study, a certificate indicating that they do not contain any infectious diseases, and the source of funding.

In case of discontinuation after admission for a period of 6 months and above upto a maximum of 2 years, the candidate will be de-registered from the programme. However, this will not apply to those students who work in University recognized research Institutes.

## **6. Course Work**

A one-semester course work of 12 credits is mandatory after joining the programme. The distribution of these credits will be as under:

- i. 4 credits for a compulsory paper on Research Methodology which may include quantitative techniques and knowledge of computer use.
- ii. 4 credits will be assigned to a paper on recent advances in the area of research in which the candidates are admitted.
- iii. 4 credits will be assigned to a non-lecture based paper in which the candidates review the literature and write a research proposal in the area of their research interest, and give a seminar at the end of the semester. There will be no sessional tests and no attendance requirement for this paper. They will be awarded marks out of 50 for the research proposal and 50 for the presentation and defense. At

least one external member from within the School and two faculty members of the concerned department will constitute the evaluation committee for this paper.

The evaluation of the course work will be done by the concerned members of the faculty of the department. The faculty members should try and develop critical thinking and communicating in academic language among the students during the course work.

In order to be eligible for registration a student must score an 'A' or 6.0 SGPA in the coursework.

A candidate failing to secure 'A' or 6.0 SGPA in the course work may be given one additional chance to appear in the examination within one month from the date of the result of the course work provided they apply for repetition of their examination and pay the same examination fees as they paid for the course work examination. If they are not still successful to obtain marks required to be eligible for registration they will not be permitted to register themselves for the degree and they will be given a certificate showing the actual grade or SGPA secured by them.

Only candidates who have done MPhil from a recognized university and who have already done the course work will be exempted from doing the course work.

Only those who are eligible for registration shall be declared as regular scholars and shall be eligible to draw fellowships/scholarships etc. as may be granted by the University.

## **7. Allotment of Supervisor**

Allotment of the Supervisor shall be done by the respective departments as per the following guidelines:

- (i) The allotment of the Supervisor for a selected candidate shall be decided by the Departmental Research Committee (DRC) depending on the number of seats available under a faculty member, the area of specialization of such members and the research interest of the candidates as indicated during the interview.
- (ii) The allotment of Supervisor shall NOT be left to the individual candidate or Supervisor.
- (iii) The Head of Department shall ensure the allotment of Supervisor within one month from the date of declaration of the course work results.
- (iv) If any candidate wishes to have a Joint Supervisor the same may be approved by the DRC together with the allocation of the Supervisor. The Joint Supervisor shall ordinarily be someone from outside the Department and having specialization in the area of research proposed by the candidate. The eligibility of a person for Joint Supervisors shall be the same as the eligibility for Supervisorship.
- (v) If any selected candidate is not satisfied with the Supervisor allotted to him he may write to the HoD giving specific reasons as to why he wants to change his Supervisor. If the DRC is satisfied with the reasons cited by the candidate it may

allot another faculty member as his Supervisor. Such option shall be available to a candidate only once in the entire programme.

- (vi) The DRC may allot another Supervisor to a candidate at any stage of his research if his original Supervisor resigns from the University or his service is terminated or he is suspended from service by the University or he proceeds on long leave. Such a decision of the DRC will have to be endorsed by the Board of Studies, School Board and the Academic Council subsequently.
- (vii) At any given time a Supervisor shall not have more than the prescribed number of registered PhD candidates working under his supervision as per UGC rules except in exceptional circumstances where he is allotted by the DRC more candidates than the prescribed number on account of resignation, suspension, termination or long leave of the Supervisor.
- (viii) An Assistant Professor with PhD, in order to be eligible for supervising PhD thesis, must have at least three year's postdoctoral research/teaching experience in any University or Research Institute or Post-Graduate College. A Professor or an Associate Professor can start supervising doctoral research immediately after his/her joining the University.
- (ix) A supervisor may continue as Supervisor of a doctoral research scholar till six months after the retirement.

## **8. Monitoring of Progress**

- (i) Progress of research of every candidate shall be closely monitored by the Supervisor. Any dereliction on the part of the candidate noticed by the Supervisor even after repeated cautioning by him will be reported to the DRC for further necessary action on the matter. If the DRC is convinced that a candidate is ignoring his research activity without any valid reason it may first issue a letter of warning to the candidate and he may be kept under observation for three months. If there is no improvement in his behaviour the DRC may recommend for disqualification of the candidate for continuation as a registered candidate of the department and his fellowships etc may be terminated accordingly.
- (ii) All registered candidates shall be required to submit to the Head of Department through their Supervisors elaborate progress reports every three months. If a candidate fails to submit two quarterly reports consecutively without any valid reasons endorsed by his Supervisor, his registration may be cancelled by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the DRC.

## **9. Submission of Thesis**

- (i) The submission of a PhD thesis may be permitted after 2 years from the date of registration and within 5 years from the date of admission. Under rare circumstances, the Vice-Chancellor may allow one more year to a candidate to

- submit his thesis but the UGC Non-NET fellowship cannot be given to any candidate after completion of 4 years.
- (ii) A PhD candidate must publish at least one research paper in a refereed journal before the submission of the thesis and produce evidence of the same in the form of acceptance letter or reprint at the time of submission of thesis.
  - (iii) At least two months before the date of submission of the PhD thesis, a candidate shall give a pre-submission seminar to be arranged by the HoD on the request of the candidate and recommendation of the Supervisor.
  - (iv) The candidate may revise his thesis suitably in the light of the discussion during the seminar and submit his thesis within 2 months from the date of admission.
  - (v) In case of genuine difficulty, the DRC, on the written recommendation of the Supervisor and HoD, may consider extension of time up to a maximum period of two semesters from the due date of submission of his thesis. If a candidate fails to submit his thesis within the extended date his registration shall stand cancelled and he may apply afresh for admission to a research degree programme.
  - (vi) The thesis shall be submitted in type-written and hard bound form along with a soft copy in CD/DVD. The number of CD/DVD copies to be submitted is four.
  - (vii) The final thesis should be submitted along with the following documents:
    - a. A declaration from the candidate that the thesis is work of his own and has not been submitted to any other university for any degree.
    - b. No due certificate from the Librarian.
    - c. No due certificate from the Finance Department.
    - d. No due certificate from the Warden of the hostel concerned if applicable.
  - (viii) The thesis shall have the following specifications:
    - a) The paper used for printing shall be of A4 size.
    - b) Printing shall be in Times New Roman, 12', double space, and on one side of the paper.
    - c) A margin of one-and-a half inches shall be on the left hand side and one inch in other three sides.
    - d) The shin of the thesis shall indicate, from top to bottom, the degree for which the thesis is submitted, the family name of the candidate and the year of submission.
    - e) The cover page shall have the title of the thesis at the top followed by name of the candidate, name of the Department, name of the School, a line stating "Submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy", month and year of submission. The University shall provide a sample copy of the title page.
  - (x) The thesis shall be written in English except when it is related to any other modern Indian or foreign languages.
  - (xi) All theses shall be subjected to mandatory plagiarism test, as plagiarism is a serious crime today. If a thesis fails the plagiarism test the same shall be returned to the candidate with the plagiarism test report for the needful action at his end. If he does not resubmit the same within three months from the date on which his thesis is returned the thesis shall be treated as withdrawn by the candidate and no further action shall be taken towards its evaluation by the examiners.

## **10. Appointment of Examiners**

- (i) The Supervisor shall submit a panel of five examiners with expertise in the concerned field and at least at the level of Associate Professors to the Vice-Chancellor through the concerned Dean of the School. He will provide complete and up to date postal address along with PIN, email ID and mobile number.
- (ii) The thesis shall be sent to three experts, including the Supervisor. If the Supervisor happens to be related to the candidate the panel of examiners shall be submitted by the HoD and if the HoD also happens to be the Supervisor the same shall be submitted by the Dean. If such a situation, all the three examiners shall be external examiners.
- (iii) The examiners shall ordinarily be selected from within the country. Where a Supervisor considers it desirable to send one copy of the thesis abroad a separate panel of foreign examiners may be submitted by him and the cost of international speed post may be borne by the candidate.
- (iv) The committee for evaluation of the public defence of the thesis shall be appointed by the Dean in consultation with the HoD and the Supervisor. The meeting of the committee will be convened by the HoD and chaired by the Chairman of the DRC.

## **11. Evaluation**

1. After the panel of examiners is approved, the Controller of Examinations (CoE) shall contact the examiners approved by the Vice-Chancellor from the panel of examiners within seven days through email/phone call.
2. If an examiner does not accept the examinership, the CoE shall contact the next examiner on the panel without losing any time.
3. The CoE shall forward to the examiners who accept his request a copy of the thesis, evaluation form, remuneration form and a pre-stamped and self-addressed envelope within a week from the date of the receipt of their acceptance.
4. The examiners shall be requested to send their reports to the CoE within 45 days from the date of receipt of the thesis and send a reminder through sms/email one week before the deadline. If an examiner fails to submit his report within the deadline, the CoE shall send him a final reminder extending the time by another 15 days. If an examiner is still not able to send the report the CoE shall invite the next examiner from the approved panel to evaluate the thesis.
5. In case one of the examiners gives unfavourable report the CoE shall send the thesis to another examiner from the approved panel of examiners. If such an examiner also gives unfavourable report, the candidate shall be declared to have failed.
6. If one of the examiners recommends the award of the degree subject to revision of the entire or part of the thesis along the suggestions made by him the candidate shall revise his thesis in consultation with his supervisor and submit the same within a period of six months from the date of communication by the CoE. The thesis then shall be sent to the examiner who has sought revision for his final approval.

## **12. Viva Voce and Defense of the Thesis**

1. The favourable reports received from the examiners shall be immediately forwarded by the CoE to the Dean, who, after confirming that the reports are favourable, shall arrange the viva voce and the defense of the thesis at the earliest date. The Dean shall constitute and notify the viva voce committee consisting of the internal examiner, one of the external examiners, and one senior faculty member from an allied department. The committee shall submit its report to the CoE, through the HoD, on the same day.
2. The date, time and the place for the viva voce and defense of thesis shall be notified by the HoD at least seven days in advance. Such a notice shall be circulated to all the allied departments and also uploaded in the University's website.
3. In case of successful defense, the CoE shall submit all the reports, including that of viva voce, to the Vice-Chancellor for his approval of the result and subsequent notification of the same by the CoE. If the defense is not satisfactory the committee would record the reasons for the same and suggest an appropriate date for repeat viva voce after 30 days from the date of the first viva voce.

## **13. Depository with UGC**

Following the successful completion of the evaluation process and notification of the award, the University shall submit a soft copy of the PhD thesis to the UGC within a period of thirty days, for hosting the same in INFLIBENT. The University shall also upload the thesis in its D-Space Repository and one hard copy shall be sent to the Central Library.

## **14. Award of Degree**

1. The result shall be officially declared by the CoE within seven days from the date of approval by the Vice-Chancellor. The result shall mention the name of the candidate, registration number and date, title of the thesis, degree, name of the Supervisor, name of the Department and name of the School. The notification shall also be uploaded in the University website.
2. The University shall issue a provisional certificate to the effect that the degree has been awarded in accordance with the Regulations issued by the UGC as per the Notification of June 2009.
3. Formal award of the degree shall be made on the day of next Convocation of the University.

## **15. Removal of Difficulty**

In case of any difficulty in interpretation of the above guidelines the Vice-Chancellor shall have the powers to interpret them as he deems correct and take appropriate action accordingly.