

# SIKKIM UNIVERSITY

## RE – 9

### **Regulation for conduct of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) Programme [Approved by the Executive Council in its 35<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 11.09.2020 vide resolution No. EC 35.5.2]**

*(Under Ordinance OC-6)*

#### **1. Preamble:**

Sikkim University shall offer research programmes in different subjects and also in inter-disciplinary studies leading to the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy. The Departmental Council (DC) that shall consist of all regular faculty members who are eligible to guide research scholars at M.Phil level in a department and shall oversee the selection procedure of an M.Phil candidate.

#### **2. Eligibility Criteria for Admission:**

Applicants seeking admission in M.Phil programme of the university shall be a Post Graduate with at least 55 % marks in aggregate or its equivalent CGPA at the PG level in the relevant or its allied subject or an equivalent degree from a foreign educational institution accredited by an approved Assessment and Accreditation agency established or incorporated under a law in its home country or any other similarly authorized statutory authority in that country as may be on offer at the University as per its annual prospectus.

A relaxation of 5% marks from 55% to 50% or an equivalent relaxation of grade may be allowed for candidates belonging to ST/SC/OBC (non-creamy) / DA and any other category as may be notified by Govt. of India from time to time.

#### **3. Duration:**

- a. M.Phil programme shall be for a minimum duration of 18 months, including course work from the date of admission/commencement of session or as notified by Govt. of India from time to time.
- b. However, women and PWD candidates with at least 40% disability shall be given an additional one year over and above the normal extension of one semester permissible on the recommendations of the Departmental Council (DC) and approval of Board of Studies (BOS) and School Board (SB).
- c. In addition to above, women candidates shall be entitled to Maternity Leave/ CCL for up to 240 days once in the entire duration of M.Phil programme.

#### **4. Admission:**

Admission to M.Phil programme shall be in the beginning of each academic year and shall be done once in a year along with admission to other programmes of the University.

- a. All applicants for M.Phil programme shall appear in the written entrance test followed by an interview to be conducted by the concerned Department.

A weightage of 70% to the written test and 30% to the performance in the interview shall be given while preparing the merit list. *(2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment, 2018)*

A candidate who has qualified UGC-NET (including JRF), CSIR-NET (including JRF), SLET, GET, Teacher Fellow shall be given weightage of 10% on the maximum marks obtained in written test.

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- b. Only those candidates who would qualify in the written test shall be considered eligible to appear for personal interview.
- c. The merit list for admission shall be drawn taking into consideration the combined score of both the written tests and personal interview.
- d. In case of a tie, the score of the qualifying examination of the concerned candidates shall be considered.
- e. Colleges having PG programme may be considered eligible to offer M.Phil programme only if it satisfies the following:
  - i) It must have at least two eligible teachers with PhD in the concerned department.
  - ii) Post- Graduate departments in the college must have adequate infrastructure, research laboratories and Library.
  - iii) It must also have the necessary recognition from the affiliating university or body.
  - iv) Adherence to National / State level policies regarding reservation of seats for ST/SC/OBC (non-creamy)/DA or any other category as may be notified by Govt. of India from time to time.

## **5. Research Advisory Committee:**

- i) There shall be a Research Advisory Committee (RAC) for each scholar in the department with Research Supervisor as Convener. The Research Supervisor may co-opt a maximum of four eligible members from his/her department and other departments.
- ii) The Research Advisory Committee (RAC) shall have following responsibilities.
  - a. To review the research proposal and suggest suitable topic/title of research.
  - b. To guide the scholar to develop the study design, methodology and identification of the course.
  - c. To periodically review and assist in the progress of the research work of the scholar.
- iii) A Scholar shall make presentation once in six months on the progress of the work before the RAC.
- iv) In case the progress is unsatisfactory, the RAC shall record the reasons for the same and suggest corrective measures.
- v) If the scholar fails to implement the corrections, the RAC may recommend to the Departmental Council (DC) for cancellations of registration with specific reason (s) with a copy to the scholar.

## **6. Departmental Council:**

There shall be a Departmental Council (DC) consisting of all eligible regular faculty members of the department.

It functions as the administrative facilitator and takes decision in administrative matters, including allocation of Supervisor, change of Supervisor, extension of Fellowship, extension of date of submission of dissertation, cancellation of

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registration etc. pertaining to research scholar (s) and submit the proposal to Board of Studies (BoS) for further action.

## **7. Procedure for Conduct of the Entrance Test:**

The admission test for M.Phil programme shall be of 100 marks and shall be conducted in two parts – written test and interview/viva-voce.

### **A. The Written Test:**

Ordinarily, the written test shall be of 120 minutes duration for which the concerned departments shall set question papers which shall be evaluated against 70 marks and the DC shall decide on the type and number of questions to be put in the written test paper.

The qualifying mark for entrance examination is 50% [45% for SC/ST/OBC (non-creamy)/ DA or any other such category as may be notified by Govt. of India from time to time]. University will carry special admission drive to fill up the seats meant for above category within one month from the closure of admission, if seats are not filled up. (*1<sup>st</sup> Amendment, 2018*).

The syllabus of written test shall consist of questions consisting of 50% from research methodology and 50% from subject specific.

### **B. The Interview:**

- i. The personal interview shall be evaluated against a total of 30 marks.
- ii. Departmental Council (DC) shall conduct the interview of the qualified candidates in written with at least three members of which the HoD/IC of the concerned department shall be the Chairman.
- iii. In case of a department where HoD/IC shall not be available, the Dean of the concerned school shall preside over the proceedings of the interview panel.
- iv. In case, a particular department has less than three eligible members who could sit in the panel, the HoD/IC of the department shall inform the same to the Dean of the school who shall then nominate adequate member(s) from within the school to enable the department duly constitute the panel.
- v. Any regular faculty members with a Ph.D degree shall be eligible to act as members in such interview panels.

## **8. Admission process:**

A merit list of candidates based on their performance in the written test and interview shall be drawn by the HoD/IC of the department immediately after the evaluation is over. The merit list shall be sent to the Chairman of the Working Committee on Admission (WCA) for approval of the competent authority and uploading on University website.

- a. On the basis of the approved merit list, the selected candidates shall take provisional admission for M.Phil programme by paying the prescribed fee within the stipulated date.

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- b. While drawing merit list of candidates to be considered for provisional admission, the Department shall pay due attention to the reservation policy of the Government of India as may be on force on the date of such selection.
- c. Employed candidates, if selected for provisional registration, must produce written evidence to show that they have been granted leave for six months by their employer.
- d. A maximum of 10% of the available seats may be allotted to foreign candidates to be admitted against supernumerary seats. Since it is usually not possible for foreign students to come and appear in the written test cum interview, the selection of such applicants may be carried out only if the DC finds their testimonials satisfactory and compliant to the provisions of the university rules and regulations. In case, the number of such applicants found suitable for admission by the DC exceeds the 10.0% limit, the DC shall draw up a merit list of all such applicants on the basis of their academic records.
- e. Foreign nationals belonging to countries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Myanmar and Pakistan may be granted admission as per relevant guidelines of Government of India notified from time to time.

In case selected for admission, they shall be allowed to take admission only on production of student visa valid for the entire tenure of the course of study along with a certificate indicating that they are not suffering from any infectious diseases and that, the source of funding for their studies in the university is duly approved. They may, however, be issued Provisional Admission Certificate on request if they need it for facilitating procurement of the required student visa.

## **9. Course Work:**

A one-semester course work of 12 credits is mandatory for all entrants on joining the programme. The distribution of these credits shall be as under:

- i. Four (4) credits for Research Methodology. This is a compulsory course and may include quantitative techniques and knowledge of computer use.
- ii. Four (4) credits shall be assigned for a paper on recent advances in the area of research work to be undertaken by the new entrant.
- iii. Four (4) credits shall be assigned to a non-lecture based non taught paper in which the candidates shall review the literature and write a research proposal covering the area of their research interest and, shall have to give a seminar at the end of the semester. Neither any sessional tests shall be held nor there shall be any attendance requirement in this paper but for the other two papers 75% attendance is essential.

A maximum of 5% shortfall in attendance may be condoned by the concerned Dean on the recommendation of the HoD/IC of the concerned department against production of valid documents to establish the reason for shortage of attendance.

## **10. Coursework Evaluation:**

- a. The evaluation of the course work shall be done by the concerned faculty members in the Department. The selected scholars are expected to develop critical thinking and learn the skill to communicate in academic language during the course work and, this shall form the basis for such evaluation.

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- b. In order to be eligible for registration, a student must score at least 55% marks or its equivalent Grade/CGPA as the case may be in the course work.
- c. A candidate failing to secure 55% marks or its equivalent Grade/CGPA in the course work may be given one additional chance to repeat either Paper-I or Paper-II in the immediate relevant semester if they duly request in writing for availing such a chance to the office of the Controller of Examinations subject to the condition that such a request must have to be made within a calendar month counting from the date of declaration of the Course Work result and provided further that the applicant pays the requisite fee as may be fixed by the university from time to time.
- d. Unsuccessful students shall not be permitted to register themselves for the degree but they shall be provided with a certificate, if requested for, showing the actual grade or SGPA secured by them in the coursework.
- e. Only those students who would satisfy the stipulated registration requirements shall be allowed to register as regular scholars.
- f. Scholars admitted to M.Phil. programme shall be eligible to draw Fellowship/Scholarship etc. as may be relevant and notified by Govt. of India from time to time.

## **11. Registration Procedure**

A candidate who has successfully cleared the Course Work with required percentage/equivalent CGPA shall apply for registration for M.Phil to the Department concerned in the proforma as may be prescribed by the University along with a detailed research proposal. The detailed proposal must include the topic, literature review, statement of problem, objectives, research questions, and research methodology. The Department shall forward the research proposal to the School Board through the Board of Studies. The date on which the School Board accepts the proposal for registration shall be the effective date of registration of the scholar for the purpose.

However, the registration process shall have to be completed within a period of maximum two semesters (12 months) from the date of admission/commencement of classes failing which the candidate shall not be allowed to continue.

## **12. Allotment of Supervisor**

A supervisor shall be allotted by the Departmental Council (DC) for each of the candidates admitted strictly in adherence to the following:

- a. Any regular Professor of the University/College with at least five research publications in refereed journals and any regular Associate/Assistant Professor with a Ph.D degree and at least two research publications in refereed journals as notified by the competent authority from time to time to her/his credit and with at least one year of service left in University/College service shall be recognized as Research Supervisor. External Supervisors are not allowed. However, a joint supervisor/co-supervisor may be allowed in inter-disciplinary areas from other departments of the University or from other related institutions with the approval of the DC.

In areas/disciplines where there is no or only limited number of refereed journals/publications approved by Academic Council (AC) on the recommendation of DC through proper channel may grant relaxation from

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the aforesaid condition for recognition of a person as Research Supervisor with reasons for providing such relaxations recorded in writing.

- b. The allotment of such Supervisors shall not be left to the individual choice of the candidate or a faculty member.
- c. The Head/IC of Department will ensure that the process of allotting a supervisor is completed within a month from the date of declaration of the course work results.
- d. The DC may allot another Supervisor to a candidate at any stage of his/her research work if the original supervisor resigns from the University, gets terminated or suspended on disciplinary ground from the service of this university or proceeds on long leave. Such a decision of the DC will have to be endorsed by the Board of Studies and School Board subsequently.
- e. At any given time, a Supervisor shall not have more than the prescribed number of registered M. Phil scholars working under her/his supervision except under circumstances when DC shall be constrained to allot a Supervisor more candidates exceeding the prescribed limit for such purpose on account of sudden faculty shortage consequent upon the suspension, termination or proceeding on long leave by members of the faculty.
- f. A teacher on probation who is otherwise qualified to supervise an M. Phil research work shall be permitted to supervise M. Phil scholars.
- g. If the Supervisor avails lien/long leave, the Departmental Council (DC) shall appoint a co-supervisor from the same/allied departments in consultation with the Supervisor.
- h. If the Supervisor chooses not to continue in the service of the University, he/she may be allowed by DC to continue as Co-Supervisor for such candidate(s).
- i. The DC shall allocate Research Supervisor for a selected research scholar on the basis of specialization among the supervisors and research interest of the scholars expressed during the interview/viva-voce.
- j. A woman M.Phil scholar may be relocated due to marriage or otherwise on submission of NOC from the host university and her research data shall be transferred, provided it does not pertain to the project secured by the parent institution/supervisor from any funding agency and arise no conflict of interest. Provided further that compliance of all other conditions of M.Phil programme has been taken care of. The Scholar will give due credit to the parent guide and the institution for the part of research already done.
- k. Any eligible Supervisor/Co-supervisor shall not be allowed to guide her or his own close relatives as defined and understood as per provisions of the relevant Government of India rules in such matter.
- l. If any scholar makes a request to the HoD in writing for a change of the allotted Supervisor giving specific reasons, the DC, on the recommendation of the HoD, may replace the Supervisor, subject to DC being satisfied of the reasons so offered, with another supervisor from the members of the faculty. Such option shall, however, be available to a scholar only once during the entire programme.

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## **13. Monitoring of Work Progress:**

- a. The RAC shall regularly monitor the progress of the research work of the scholar. If the RAC finds, that the progress of the work of the Scholar is not satisfactory, a report to that effect shall be submitted to the School Board through the Departmental Council (DC) for appropriate action.
- b. A registered candidate shall be required to submit to the Head of Department an elaborate progress report of their work duly endorsed by the Supervisor and make oral presentation for 10-15 minutes in the concerned department in every six months. A candidate failing to submit two such consecutive reports in the scheduled time may be deregistered by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the DC.
- c. Any dereliction on the part of the candidate that may be noticed by the Supervisor, if ignored even after repeated cautioning, shall be reported to the DC for further necessary action. Provided if the DC is convinced that the concerned candidate is ignoring his research activity without any valid reason, it shall issue the candidate a warning and keep him under observation for three months. At the close of three months since issuance of the warning, the DC shall review the candidate's performance during the period under watch. In case, the DC still remains unsatisfied with the performance of the candidate during the period under watch, it may recommend deregistration of the candidate. In case the recommendation is duly accepted by the authorities, the fellowship of the candidate shall forthwith stand terminated.

## **14. Pre-submission seminar**

When the supervisor is of the opinion that the dissertation is in the final stage of completion, the scholar shall give a pre-submission seminar on her/his research findings.

The pre-submission seminar shall be arranged by the Head of the Department on a written request from the candidate duly recommended by the Supervisor. The candidate may suitably revise the thesis prior to its final submission in the light of the discussions held during the seminar.

## **15. Modification of title**

If there is a need for modification of the research topic/title, the scholar shall submit an application to that effect to the DC through RAC at least six months before the date of submission of the dissertation.

## **16. Submission of Dissertation:**

- a. A scholar shall be allowed to submit M.Phil dissertation ordinarily after completion of 18 months from the date of admission/commencement of session and on presentation of at least one research paper in a conference/seminar. The dissertation shall be submitted to the office of the Controller of Examinations.
- b. In exceptional circumstances, the School Board (SB) on the recommendation of the Departmental Council (DC) and Board of Study (BoS), may extend the date for submission of her/his dissertation for a maximum period of one semester (six months). If the candidate fails to submit her/his thesis within the extended period, her/his registration shall stand cancelled automatically.

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Application for extension duly forwarded by the Supervisor shall reach DC at least six months before the expiry of due date for dissertation submission.

UGC non-NET fellowship shall not be paid to such a candidate beyond 18 months counting from the date of admission/commencement of classes.

- c. Failing to submit the dissertation on time (including the extended time, if any) shall result in automatic deregistration of the candidate and s/he, in such case, shall no more remain eligible for award of the degree. To pursue the degree, such candidate shall have to seek fresh admission.
- d. Three copies of hard bound; neatly type-written dissertation shall be submitted along with soft copy of the same.
- e. The final dissertation shall be submitted along with the following documents:
  - i. A declaration from the candidate that the dissertation is a work of his own and that it has not been submitted earlier to this or any other university for any degree.
  - ii. A plagiarism test certificate duly signed by the candidate and countersigned by the Supervisor
  - iii. Copy of the Registration Certificate
  - iv. No due certificate from the Librarian.
  - v. No due certificate from the Finance Department.
  - vi. No due certificate from the Warden of the hostel concerned, if applicable.
  - vii. Clearance from academic section regarding closure of Fellowship (NET-JRF/MANF/NFOB/NFST/NFSC etc.).
- f. The hard bound type copy of the thesis shall have to conform to the following specifications:
  - i. It has to be typed in A4 size paper.
  - ii. Type font used shall be Times New Roman, 12 point and text printing shall be double spaced, and only on one side of the paper.
  - iii. Left margin shall be one-and-a half inches while right, top and bottom margins shall only be of one inch.
  - iv. The spine of the thesis shall indicate, from top to bottom, M. Phil, Family Name of the candidate and the year of submission.
  - v. 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 Master of Philosophy", month and year of submission.
  - vi. The thesis shall be written in English except when it is related to a language other than English.
- g. The dissertation shall also incorporate in it a duly certified plagiarism test report. In case the extent of plagiarism is above the prescribed level of 10%, excluding quotes, references and genuine terms, law, standard symbols and standards equations, the said dissertation will not be accepted for evaluation.

In case, a dissertation fails the plagiarism test, it shall be returned to the candidate for needful action at the end of the candidate. In such cases, the candidate shall be allowed to resubmit the dissertation after making necessary changes in it within a period of three months from the date of such return. In case, the candidate fails to resubmit the dissertation within the stipulated timeframe, the thesis would be deemed as withdrawn and no further action shall be taken for getting the dissertation evaluated.

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- h. The dissertation shall contain a declaration from the candidates and his supervisor stating that it contains bonafide research contents of the student and that this has not been submitted for another degree elsewhere or in this University.
- i. Candidate may initially submit the soft bound copy of the dissertation. After approval or incorporation of the suggestions made by the examiners, the final version in hard bound in quadruple shall be submitted to the Controller of Examinations.

## **17. Appointment of Examiners:**

- a. The Supervisor shall, in the prescribed format, submit a panel of three external examiners having expertise in the relevant field of work to the Vice-Chancellor through the concerned Dean of the School.
- b. The examiners so empanelled must be at least at the level of Assistant Professors having a PhD degree. The Supervisor shall provide complete and up to date postal addresses of all the proposed examiners giving in full their PIN code, email ID and cell phone number.
- c. An M. Phil thesis shall be evaluated by two examiners including the Supervisor. In such cases where the Supervisor is related to the candidate, the panel of examiners shall be submitted by the HoD. In case, the HoD and the Supervisor happen to be the same person, the examiners list shall be submitted by the Dean of the concerned school. In such cases, both the examiners shall have to be external experts and the Supervisors report shall not count for the purpose of evaluation.
- d. The examiners empanelled shall have to be selected from within the country.

## **18. Evaluation:**

- a. The office of the Controller of Examinations shall establish contact and seek acceptance of the relevant examiners from the empanelled list as shall be approved by the Vice-Chancellor within a fortnight counting from the date submission of the thesis.
- b. In case, an examiner declines to accept the examinership offer, the next member in the empanelled list of the examiners shall be approached.
- c. Once the Examiner accepts the examinership, the office of the CoE shall forward the dissertation along with other necessary supporting papers such as the evaluation form, remuneration form etc., to the examiner within a week from the date of receipt of the acceptance.
- d. The examiner shall be requested to send hardcopy of the report complete in all aspect to the office of the CoE within 30 days counting from the date of receipt of the thesis. A reminder may be sent to the examiner from the office of the CoE a week prior to the expiry of the deadline.
- e. If an examiner fails to submit the report within the deadline, the CoE shall send him a final reminder extending the time by another 15 days. If any examiner is still fails to send the report, the CoE shall invite the next examiner from the approved panel to evaluate the thesis.
- f. In case, the external examiner gives an unfavourable report, the CoE shall send the dissertation to another examiner from the approved panel of

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examiners and if the report of this second examiner also remains unfavourable, the candidate shall be deemed to have failed.

- g. The dissertation shall be evaluated against 12 credits or 300 marks of which 100 marks shall come from the viva-voce.
- h. Each of the examiners shall evaluate the dissertation against a total of 100 marks and a minimum of 50% must have to be scored from each of the examiners in order to qualify for defending the dissertation in viva-voce.
- i. In order to be eligible to be awarded the degree, the aggregate score of the candidate must stand at least at 50.0% of the total score, i.e. 150 marks.

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

- a. Once the reports received from both the examiners are found favourable, the office of the CoE shall inform the concerned HoD to initiate steps for conducting the viva voce in consultation with the concerned Supervisor.

The CoE shall send examiner's report to the concerned HoD for sharing with the Supervisor at least 15 days prior to the date of viva-voce so that scholar gets enough time for preparation. In the absence of Supervisor, the Co-Supervisor shall act as the Chairman for the conduct of Viva-Voce examination.

- b. The evaluation Committee to be entrusted with the responsibility to conduct the viva-voce shall consist of the concerned Supervisor as the Chairman, the external examiner and one faculty member from the School to be nominated by the Dean. The HoD of the concerned department shall request the Dean to nominate a member in the committee under intimation to the office of the CoE.
- c. Office of the CoE shall take at least three feasible dates from the external examiner on which the examiner can take part in the viva-voce proceeding and pass on the information to the HoD concerned for the needful at his end.
- d. The HoD, in consultation with the Chairman and nominated member of the committee, shall finalise the actual date for holding the viva voce.
- e. The evaluation committee shall submit, through the HoD concerned, its report to the office of the CoE on the same day the viva-voce was held.
- f. The day, date, time and the place for holding the viva voce shall be notified by the concerned department at least seven days in advance. Such a notice shall be circulated to all the departments under the School and shall also be uploaded in the University's website.
- g. In case of successful defense, the office of the CoE shall compile the final result and submit the same along with all attendant reports including that of viva voce to the Vice-Chancellor for approval of the same. Once approved the office of the CoE shall formally notify the result.
- h. If the defense is not satisfactory the committee would record the reasons for the same and suggest an appropriate date for a repeat viva voce after 30 days from the date of the first viva voce subject to the condition that the date so fixed must not exceed a period of two months at the most.

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## **20. Depository with the University:**

Post successful completion of the evaluation process and notification of the award, the University shall upload the thesis in its D-Space Repository and one hard copy shall be sent to the Central Library of the University for record and referential use.

## **21. Award of Degree:**

- a. The result shall be officially notified by the CoE within seven days from the approval of the Vice-Chancellor. The result notification shall clearly mention the date of such notification, the name of the candidate, registration number of the candidate and the date of registration, title of the dissertation, degree awarded, name of the Supervisor, name of the Joint Supervisor(s) if any, name of the Department and name of the School. The notification shall also be uploaded in the University website.
- b. Formal award of the degree shall only be made on the day the university holds its next Convocation.

## **22. Removal of Difficulties**

Notwithstanding anything contained as at above, the Vice-Chancellor shall have the power to remove any difficulty faced in the implementation of the above regulations.