

## **Dept. of Physics**

### **Satisfactory Progress Policy – PhD-Physics**

*Effective for students who started PhD-Physics prior to Summer 2024.*

*This policy will no longer be active after September 1, 2026.*

The criteria and guidelines for satisfactory progress are outlined below:

General guidelines relevant for all students are:

- Enroll each semester according to the Graduate School minimum enrollment requirements (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1208>) and the department's enrollment requirements (see current handbook).
- Maintain an overall graduate GPA of 3.0 or above (Graduate School requirement: <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203>).

In the pre-dissertator stage:

- Pass each of the four sections of the Qualifying Exam at the Ph.D. level (nominally 60% or above) within the four officially allowed consecutive attempts (see current handbook), as required for continuation in the Ph.D. program.
- Make progress on completing relevant coursework in a timely fashion. This includes core coursework, minor coursework, and satisfying Graduate School credit requirements (further details are described below under coursework and minor requirements in the current handbook).
- Make progress in acquiring a faculty research advisor and joining a research group in a timely fashion, preferably by the beginning of the summer following the first year in the program.
- Make satisfactory progress in research as judged by the faculty advisor.
- A typical timeline is for students to take and pass the Preliminary Exam in the third year of the Ph.D. program, though this can vary significantly by subfield.

In the dissertator stage:

- Make satisfactory progress in research as judged by the faculty advisor by earning a P (Progress) or S (Satisfactory) in 990 research each semester.
- Successfully complete and defend the doctoral thesis within five years of passing the Preliminary Exam.

Satisfactory progress is important for staying on track and completing the degree in a timely manner. Graduate students who do not achieve satisfactory progress are considered not in good standing and may not be allowed to continue in the Ph.D. program.