

Each year, the faculty review every Ph.D. student's progress. Students in their first year of study are exempt from review.

Faculty advisors use the following criteria to assess student progress during the past academic year:

- Progress with regards to the benchmarks (see table below).
- Course work grades.
- GRA/TA performance.
- Committee formation.
- Regular committee meetings (at least one per year).
- Evidence of progress after advancement (committee meetings, writing, papers, professional activities).

Benchmark	Time	Action
1. Completion of required coursework	As soon as possible or not later than end of 2nd year of study depending on background.	Completion of required coursework is needed prior to the Comprehensive Portfolio Assessment
2. Successful completion of the Comprehensive Portfolio Assessment (CPA)	As soon as possible or not later than end of 1st or 2nd year of study depending on background.	Failure to pass CPA may result in discontinued funding and/or dismissal
3. Defense of Dissertation Proposal	End of 2 nd or 3 rd years depending on background.	Failure to defend during this time period will result in a negative review and the Department may terminate funding
4. Advancement to Candidacy. Completion of steps 1 – 3 represent the Department's requirements for Advancing to Candidacy	End of 2nd or 3rd years depending on background.	Failure to advance by the end of 3 rd or 4 th year will result in a negative review and will result in termination of funding and may result in dismissal.
5. Positive annual review	Annually	Negative review may result in termination of funding. Two successive reviews automatically results in termination from program
6. Completion of dissertation	Five years from entrance into program	Failure to complete within 5 years will result in termination of funding

Using the criteria above, faculty advisors assign each Ph.D. student an Annual Review mark of either:

S: Satisfactory.

S*: Conditional Satisfactory. The S* review is a temporary mark that will change to a permanent Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U) pending your progression through certain criteria within a given time frame. Upon successful and timely completion of the criteria, the S* becomes an S review. Upon unsuccessful completion, the S* becomes a U review.

U: Unsatisfactory. One Unsatisfactory review may result in the termination of funding. Two successive Unsatisfactory reviews automatically results in termination from the program. You may petition this Unsatisfactory review and/or termination in the program by contacting Dr. Sun, the Graduate Director.

You can find out your annual review mark as well as comments and conditions for an S* mark by logging into the "[Department of Geographical Sciences Ph.D. Student Reviews](#)" page on ELMS (www.elms.umd.edu), and clicking the gradebook. If you are having trouble logging into this page, contact Rachel.

One U mark may result in a cut to funding. Two U marks in a row results in dismissal from the program.

Contact your faculty advisor for any questions regarding your Annual Review Mark. You may appeal your review mark to the Graduate Director.