

Guidelines for Use of Annual Reviews

This document provides guidance on how to use the Graduate School template for annual academic progress reviews for doctoral and MFA students (available at: grad.uconn.edu/faculty-staff-resources/managing-graduate-programs/annual-academic-evaluations/). The template is designed to be customizable. Each department/program **should develop a version of the form** that collects the information that the department/program believes is most relevant/useful (for its students and faculty).

Considerations for using annual progress reviews

Each program/department should also **develop a process** for using an annual review form and provide detailed information (to both faculty and staff) about that process. The following are suggestions/considerations for development of a clear and transparent process:

- Explicitly state if reviews will be required or will be optional. If required, make clear what (if any) consequences will follow if the form is not submitted.
- Clearly state which students must do reviews. Examples include all graduate students, all PhD students, or all PhD students beyond a certain stage (e.g., in third year or beyond).
- Clearly specify what the how the review will (and will not) be used. For example, will it be formative or summative, or both? Will it be used to determine TA support, summer funding, fellowship awards, etc., or to assess normal progress vs. academic probation or dismissal?
- Clearly state deadlines for submission, for both students and advisors, and the time period that the review is intended to cover. (Note: The deadline might depend on how information from the review will be used.)
- Provide both students and faculty with clear (step-by-step) instructions on how to complete and submit reviews.
- Send out notices in advance of deadlines (with the forms, information about deadlines, and instructions) and then follow-up with reminders.
- State what faculty will participate in review. For example, will the review just involve the major professor, or will there be some role for other faculty, such as the DGS, department head, or a departmental committee?
- Upon completion by all parties, give a written copy of the review to the student, and put a copy in the student's file.
- Give students an opportunity to discuss the review in-person with their advisor.
- Provide an opportunity for revision after one-on-one discussions, to correct any errors or misunderstandings and to clarify expectations.
- Determine a process for resolving disputes between a student and advisor regarding a review.
- Programs might also consider developing a "Frequently Asked Questions" sheet to answer any questions about the review form.
- Once developed (and perhaps tested), a broad outline of the annual review process should be documented in the Graduate Handbook (or equivalent)