

Division Regulations for Research Students of the PhD Program at The Porter School of Environment and Earth Sciences

Appendix to the university regulations for research students (The numbers of the corresponding sections in the university regulations appear in parentheses)

The Regular Track

1. Terms of Admission for Stage A Student:

- 1.1.** Students who received an M.A. degree from a recognized institution of higher education—university in Israel or abroad—with a minimum grade average of 85, or an M.Sc. degree from a recognized institution of higher education—university in Israel or abroad—with a minimum grade average of 80, or a "Doctor of Medicine" (MD) degree with a minimum grade average of "good" (80) at least, can be admitted, if their thesis received a grade of at least 85, and if they obtained the consent of a TAU faculty member authorized to guide research students, to serve as supervisor. An emeritus TAU faculty member may serve as supervisor only if another TAU faculty member joins him/her, unless the school committee approves him/her as sole supervisor (38.1) (52).
- 1.2.** Students who satisfy the conditions of Section 1.1 above, but are not Porter School graduates, may be provisionally accepted as candidates in the Regular Track. Candidates must complete at least 12 semester hours of supplementary studies (with a minimum grade of 85 in each course) and possibly additional requirements, as recommended by the supervisor/s and decided by the Research Students committee, within one academic year from the date of acceptance, unless the committee has approved a longer period (up to a maximum of two academic years from the date of acceptance). Once the candidate has complied with all the above conditions, the provisional status will be removed, and the candidate will be accepted as a Stage A research student. The supplementary studies will not be included in the number of hours required for the completion of the doctorate.

1.3. In cases of extraordinary educational or research achievements, the Research Students committee may recommend a deviation from the minimum grades stated in section 1.1 (38.2).

2. Terms of Admission for M.A./ M.Sc. graduates in the non-thesis track:

Students who obtained M.A./M.Sc. degrees in the non-thesis track from a recognized institution of higher education—university in Israel or abroad—with grade averages as mentioned in Section 1.1 above, may be Provisionally Accepted as candidates in the Regular Track of the PhD program.

Candidates who are not Porter School graduates should comply with the conditions mentioned in Section 1.2 above. All non-thesis track candidates must prepare a qualification project equivalent to an M.A./ M.Sc. thesis (within a maximum of two academic years from the date of acceptance). The candidates will have to pass an exam by an examining committee, whose members should be at the rank of Senior Lecturer or higher, and must obtain a grade of at least 85 from **each one** of the examining committee members.

Once the student has complied with all these conditions, the provisional status will be removed, and the candidate will be accepted as a Stage A research student (39.1-2).

3. Requirements for Stage A Students:

Stage A research students must fulfill—within one year, and in special cases, with the committee's approval, within two years—the following requirements:

- 3.1.** Complete the studies and further training, as assigned by the school committee according to the curriculum detailed in Section 8, with a grade of 80 or higher in each of the courses (40.1).
- 3.2.** Submit a Research Proposal signed by the supervisor/s after completing the assigned studies and training (40.2).
- 3.3.** Pass an oral exam after submitting the research proposal. The exam will be conducted before a committee of examiners comprising the supervisor(s) and two additional academic staff members at the rank of Senior Lecturer or higher in the regular track. At least one of the examiners will be from another academic institution. The suggested committee members will be submitted for approval to the school committee by the supervisor, together with the research proposal, including both Hebrew and English abstracts, at least one month in advance. After

the approval, letters of appointment will be sent to the members of the examiners' committee. The examiners' committee will determine the student's competence to conduct independent research, and will also review the research proposal, and recommend courses that the student should be required to take, if deemed necessary. These courses should be completed within two years after acceptance to Stage B.

- 3.4.** Once the student has fulfilled the study and training requirements, successfully passed the exam, and obtained the approval of the school's Research Students committee, as well as the approval of the university's committee, he/she will be accepted as a Stage B research student.

The Direct Track

4. Terms of Admission as Research Student Candidate in the direct track

Acceptance to the direct track is possible for students who comply with the following criteria:

- 4.1.** B.A. graduates with a course grade average of at least 95 or BSc. graduates with a course grade average of at least 90 (44.1).
- 4.2.** B.A. and BSc graduates in a double major study program with a course grade average above 90 from both programs; for B.A. graduates, the required course grade average in the program related to the research field of the school must be at least 95.
- 4.3.** M.Sc./MA students who have completed at least 15–16 course hours in their first year of studies with a course grade average above 90, provided that their BA course grade average was at least 90, or their BSc course grade average was at least 85.
- 4.4.** In special cases, the Research Students committee can recommend a deviation from the minimum grades stated above and may consider admitting students to the direct track even with a B.A. course grade average lower than 90 or a BSc course grade average lower than 85, provided that in the first year of their graduate studies in the school they have completed 60% of their course load, including two seminars and at least three non-seminar courses, with a course grade average of at least 95.
- 4.5.** Admission to the direct track requires the written consent of a TAU faculty member authorized to guide research students, to serve as supervisor. An emeritus faculty

member may serve as supervisor only if another TAU faculty member joins him/her, unless the school committee approves him/her as a sole supervisor.

5. Discretion in the direct track

The committee is entitled to recommend or reject an application for admission to the direct track, at its discretion.

6. Requirements for provisional admittance to the Direct Track

Candidates accepted to the direct Ph.D. track must complete:

6.1. Program courses:

Candidates in the direct track, in accordance with Sections 4.1 - 4.4, must complete a quota of 28 credit hours (out of 36 credit hours), including courses and seminar courses from M.Sc./M.A. studies as approved by the school committee, within two years at the most (46). Within these 28 hours it will be possible to take up to three elective courses from the third year of the B.A./BSc program, which are recognized for the M.A./M.Sc. degree.

6.2. Qualification Exam: Candidates in the direct track who were accepted after the first year of M.Sc./M.A. studies and have completed the studies as detailed in section 6.1, will be required to pass an oral "Qualification Exam" within **one year** of acceptance to the direct track, to prove their knowledge in their field of specialization and their competence to conduct independent research.

The exam will be conducted by a "Qualification Exam" committee that will consist of the supervisor(s) and two additional academic staff members, at least one of whom will be from outside the university, at the rank of senior lecturer or higher in the regular track.

Suggested candidates for the "Qualification Exam" committee will be submitted to the school committee by the supervisor at least one month in advance, along with a short (3 pages) report of the student's research. The school committee will select the examiners, after which appointment letters will be sent to the selected members of the "Qualification Exam" committee. The purpose of the exam is to determine the student's knowledge and competence to conduct independent research (47).

Following the successful completion of the "Qualification Exam", the student will become a Stage A research student. If the student did not pass the "Qualification Exam", his/her studies within the direct track will be considered part of his/her master's degree studies (48).

6.3. Research proposal: Candidates in the direct track must submit a research proposal, signed by the supervisor, within two years from the date of their acceptance as provisional research students in the direct track.

6.4. Exam: Candidates in the direct track must pass an oral exam after the submission of their research proposal in order to be accepted to Stage B, just like students in the regular track—see Section 3.3.

If a candidate submits the research proposal within a year from the date of acceptance as a provisional research student, the school committee will be able to approve combining the two exams—the "qualification exam" and the exam for admission to stage B (Section 6.4) — into one exam.

7. . Awarding a master's degree during the direct track

A direct track student will be awarded a master's degree as part of the direct PhD track after meeting the following criteria:

- Completion of studies in the direct track (courses and seminars) amounting to 28 hours out of the 36 hours that the student is required to complete.
- Approval of the research proposal and admission as a Stage B research student.
- Publication of a scientific article or presentation at an international conference.
- Approval of the M.Sc./MA teaching committee of the school.

Regular and Direct Tracks

8. Student Obligations during Studies

8.1. Course participation: Every student must participate in at least 8 semester hours of advanced courses offered by the school, from among the graduate (M.Sc./M.A level) courses student must complete all course requirements and **receive a minimum grade of 80 in each course**, within two years from the date of admission to the first stage (at least half of them, 4 semester hours, before the transition to Stage B). One of the

courses (2–3 hours) can be an elective course from the third year of the Bachelor degree which is recognized for the master's degree. The student will coordinate with his/her supervisor what courses to take and must obtain the approval of the chair of the school committee. Students in the direct track will complete the 28 semester hours of courses required within the framework of the M.Sc./MA within two years from the date of admission to the direct track (64).

- 8.2.** The student must register and actively participate in four departmental seminars (colloquium) that will **not** be included in the quota of courses for the PhD degree. One of the seminars may be considered one credit point out of the 28 hours of study required in the direct track. Departmental seminars must be completed by the end of the second year after admission to Stage B.
- 8.3.** The student must participate in a safety training course once a year and a first aid course in the first year of his/her studies as determined by the faculty.
- 8.4.** The student must successfully pass an academic "English scientific writing" course (or receive an exemption). The course does not grant academic credit.
- 8.5.** Stage B students will be required to submit an annual "Progress Report" on their research signed by the supervisor/s. The "Progress Report" will be submitted for approval to the school committee. Each student must present his/her work at an "Annual Doctoral School Conference" once during his/her studies.

9. Break from studies

In special cases, the school committee may, upon a justified request of the student and upon the recommendation of the supervisor, allow a PhD student to take a break from his/her studies for a period of up to one year (74).

10. Duration of studies and research

As a rule, a PhD student must submit the doctoral thesis within five years from the date of acceptance to Stage A. Any deviation from this time period requires the approval of the school committee (71).

11. Partial Publication

A student may, if approved by his/her supervisor, publish part of his/her ongoing research.

12. The doctoral thesis

12.1. Method of submission:

Upon completion of studies and research, the student will submit to the school committee the doctoral thesis, an abstract in Hebrew and in English, a Curriculum Vitae and a list of publications (if any). The supervisor will send his/her review to the school committee with his/her confirmation that the thesis is ready for review (75).

12.2. Language:

The thesis will be written in Hebrew or English, according to the student's request and with the approval of the supervisor (76).

12.3. Thesis Format:

The doctoral thesis may be submitted in a "Regular PhD Thesis" format or in a "PhD Thesis Composed of Articles" format, according to the rules and guidelines detailed in the Appendix.

12.4. Thesis Evaluation:

The school committee will appoint at least two expert reviewers, but preferably three, in the field of research of the PhD thesis, at the rank of Senior Lecturer or higher, in the regular faculty track, in addition to the supervisor(s), who will evaluate the PhD thesis. At least one of the reviewers appointed by the committee will be from another university in Israel or from another research university abroad. The reviews will be used by the committee in its decision concerning corrections or additions to the thesis and in particular, regarding the decision to recommend the awarding of the degree (77).

12.5. Thesis Seminar

The student will be required to give a lecture on the results of his/her research in the department seminar. The student will communicate the details of the lecture to the doctoral students' coordinator before the lecture.