



Policy on Annual Academic and Professional Development Discussions for PhD Students and Their Faculty Advisors

Johns Hopkins University requires every PhD program to have a policy in place whereby PhD students and their advisors discuss, at least annually, (a) the student's academic progress, future requirements, and next steps; (b) the student's professional development goals and any next steps; (c) how the advisor can be helpful regarding each.

More specifically, every PhD program must have in place all of the following:

1. A requirement that a **form** be completed annually by each PhD student regarding the student's academic progress and their academic and professional development goals;
2. A requirement that the PhD faculty advisor provide (or contribute to as a committee member) written comments regarding the student's progress and goals (e.g., based on the student's completed form);
3. A requirement that there be a discussion between the advisor and PhD student, at least annually, regarding the content of the form; this must be in person, by phone, or virtual as a synchronous conversation and not by email;
4. A requirement that both the PhD student and advisor sign (or email from their box) their agreement that the form and its contents were discussed.
5. A process at the program level outlining the following:
 - a. who is responsible for ensuring that forms are distributed annually to students and faculty, by what date, and are completed by both advisor and student;
 - b. how completion of forms will be documented by the program. Programs may keep either the completed forms themselves or keep a verification, signed by the student and advisor, that the form was completed and discussed.

NOTE that several forms suitable for the above purpose are available on the Office of the Provost [website](#). JHU PhD programs also are welcome to create their own form or to use a different form created for this purpose, as long as the required elements (see below) are included. Many external organizations from a range of disciplines have created forms of this sort. At minimum, however, the form used must include sections for the student to complete on the following topics. There must also be space for advisor comments and feedback:

1. Academic and/or thesis research progress of the past year and specific academic and/or research goals for the upcoming year;
2. How the advisor can help the student achieve the student's academic or research goals for the coming year;
3. Short and long term professional goals and the types or range of professional sectors of possible interest;
4. Specific skills the student wants to develop, or professional areas about which the student wants to learn more;
5. How the advisor can help the student achieve, or connect the student to resources for, these professional goals.