



By-Laws of the Doctor of Philosophy Board

The Doctor of Philosophy Board is a standing committee of the Johns Hopkins University that reports to the Provost, and is responsible to the graduate faculty of schools granting the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree. It is composed of faculty from all schools granting the Ph.D. degree.

1) Duties and Responsibilities of the Doctor of Philosophy Board

- a) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall recommend to the President conferral of the Doctor of Philosophy degree on candidates approved by their respective schools, subject to completion of all University-wide requirements.
- b) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall coordinate and set University-wide policies with respect to the Doctor of Philosophy degree.
- c) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall offer final approval to new Ph.D. programs and to substantive changes in the existing Ph.D. programs (defined below), ensuring that University-wide Ph.D. degree requirements have been met. (Such programs and changes must first be approved by the schools.) It will also approve new Ph.D. programs in schools not currently granting the Ph.D.
- d) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall advise the Provost about University-wide issues pertaining to the Ph.D. degree, such as library repositories and interactions with accreditation boards. It will provide information about these activities to the divisional graduate boards and coordinate policy with the divisional graduate boards.
- e) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall perform periodic reviews of each Ph.D. program in the University and provide a report to the Provost after each review.
- f) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall report to the Provost and to the Ph.D.-granting schools on the status of the Johns Hopkins University Ph.D. programs. It will track changing academic philosophies and emerging technologies that affect Ph.D. studies.
- g) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall assure that administrative practices permit the effective reporting of data and outcomes necessary to monitor the health of Ph.D. programs, as well as data required by external agencies.
- h) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall not have jurisdiction over professional doctorates or any academic doctorates other than the Doctor of Philosophy. The Doctor of Science, Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Public Health, etc. will continue under the purview of their respective schools.

- i) There are three fundamental requirements for the Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University (dissertation, residency, oral examination). They cannot be changed without the unanimous consent of the faculty Board members, the Provost and the schools granting the Ph.D. In particular,
 - i. No change in the fundamental dissertation requirement can be made without the unanimous consent of the faculty Board members, the Provost and the schools granting the Ph.D.
 - ii. No change in the required two consecutive semesters of full-time study as a Ph.D. student can be made without the unanimous consent of the faculty Board members, the Provost and the schools granting the Ph.D.
 - iii. No change in the required oral examination of five faculty examiners (with the chair and at least one other member from outside of the candidate's home department) can be made without the unanimous consent of the faculty Board members, the Provost and the schools granting the Ph.D.

2) Faculty Membership of the Johns Hopkins University Doctor of Philosophy Board

- a) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall be composed of faculty with sufficient breadth of disciplinary expertise to represent the broad spectrum of Ph.D. programs across the University. Eleven members will be chosen as follows:
 - i. Three (3) faculty members from the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (KSAS): one each in Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences;
 - ii. One (1) faculty member from the Whiting School of Engineering (WSE);
 - iii. One (1) faculty member from the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS);
 - iv. One (1) faculty member from the School of Medicine (SOM);
 - v. Two (2) faculty members from the Bloomberg School of Public Health (BSPH): one from a lab sciences department and one from a non-lab sciences department;
 - vi. One (1) faculty member from the School of Nursing (SON);
 - vii. One (1) faculty member from the School of Education (SOE);
 - viii. One (1) voting chair from any of the above schools. The chair will serve as an additional voting member from his/her home school. The chair will not substitute for any member(s) designated above.
- b) Faculty shall be appointed for three-year terms (renewable), staggered to provide continuity. The Chair shall be appointed for a two-year term (renewable for one additional term).

- c) To be eligible for appointment, a faculty member must hold a regular, full-time appointment as a tenured or tenure-track professor or associate professor (or an equivalent position in schools that do not offer tenure).
- d) To be eligible for appointment, the Chair must be a tenured full professor, and cannot be a present administrative officer of the Provost's Office. The Chair must have served on the Doctor of Philosophy Board (in a current or previous appointment), for at least one academic year.
- e) Members shall be appointed by the Provost, upon advice from the schools. The schools will nominate their members according to their own procedures. For the Homewood schools, the recommendations shall come through a process determined by the Homewood Academic Council.
- f) It is recommended that at least one member from each school be a member of the divisional graduate board or academic council at the respective school overseeing issues relevant to the Ph.D. degree and, as possible, serve as a liaison with that committee for any relevant policy issues being discussed by the DPB.
- g) The Chair shall be appointed by the Provost.
- h) The Vice Provost of Graduate and Professional Education shall serve as a non-voting ex officio member of the Board.
- i) Additional members shall be included when other schools offer Ph.D. programs. All changes to the composition of the Board require the unanimous consent of the faculty Board members, the Ph.D. granting schools, and the Provost.

3) Student Representatives to the Johns Hopkins University Doctor of Philosophy Board

- a) Three doctoral students shall represent the interests of Ph.D. students across the University to the Doctor of Philosophy Board. Their affiliations shall be as follows:
 - i. One representative to rotate between the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (KSAS) and the Whiting School of Engineering (WSE);
 - ii. One representative to rotate between the School of Medicine (SOM) and the Bloomberg School of Public Health (BSPH);
 - iii. One representative to rotate among the School of Nursing (SON), Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), and the School of Education (SOE).
- b) Student representatives shall be appointed by the Provost for a one year term, upon advice from student representative bodies and school leadership.
- c) Student members shall not be present for discussion of Ph.D. conferral or specific student progress. Student members are allowed to vote on program reviews, new or substantially changed program approvals, and all university policies that do not involve the fundamental requirements.

4) Agenda, Subcommittees and Reporting

- a) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall be empowered to establish subcommittees as it deems necessary. Other faculty members may serve on these subcommittees by appointment of the Chair.
- b) Although development of agendas will be the joint responsibility of the Provost Office and chair of the Doctor of Philosophy Board, any member of the Doctor of Philosophy Board, including student members, is encouraged to contribute agenda items.
- c) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall send agendas of its meetings in advance to the Provost and the graduate deans, and to the graduate boards and academic councils of the relevant schools, any of whom may request that items be added.
- d) The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall submit its minutes to the Provost and graduate deans, and to the graduate boards and academic councils of the relevant schools, any of whom may request further discussion of important issues.
- e) The divisional graduate boards shall send minutes of their meetings to the Doctor of Philosophy Board, and in particular notify it of changes to school-specific requirements for the Ph.D., and seek its approval when they might affect compliance with the fundamental requirements of §1.

5) Mechanisms for Examining Ph.D. Programs, Certifying Ph.D. Candidates and Creating University-Wide Policies

- a) Each school granting the Ph.D. degree must have a mechanism to examine new Ph.D. programs or significant revisions to existing Ph.D. programs. (The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) defines a “significant revision” as a change of more than 1/3 of program goals and requirements since the original approval. The Doctor of Philosophy Board shall use the same standard.) After such examination, the results shall be submitted to the Doctor of Philosophy Board for final approval by a minimum of two-thirds vote of the Board, including student members. Approval of the first Ph.D. program in a school that has not previously offered the Ph.D. shall require a minimum of two-thirds vote of the Board, including student members.
- b) Each school must have a mechanism to certify that each Ph.D. candidate has fulfilled all requirements for the degree. The results of each school’s review of candidates will be submitted to the University registrar to confirm that all University requirements have been met. The result of the University registrar’s review of candidates will be provided to the Doctor of Philosophy Board for their final approval. Any individual cases of concern or need for exceptions will be reviewed by the Board. Final approval of all candidates will be by a minimum of two-thirds vote of the Board, excluding student members.
- c) Exceptions to University-wide requirements for individual students may be granted upon approval by a minimum of two-thirds of the faculty members of the Doctor of Philosophy Board. The fundamental requirements cannot be waived for any student without the unanimous consent of the faculty members of the Board. All requests for exceptions must first be approved by the appropriate divisional board.

- d) All University-wide policies relevant to the Ph.D. degree, except those affecting the fundamental requirements for conferral of Ph.D. candidates, shall require a minimum of two-thirds vote of the Board, including student members. Changes to the fundamental requirements will require the unanimous consent of the faculty Board members, the Ph.D. granting schools and the Provost.
- e) Existing University policies and fundamental requirements relevant to the Ph.D. degree should be reviewed by the Doctor of Philosophy Board at least every 3 years to ensure that they remain appropriate or to put forward any modifications.

6) **Ph.D. program review**

- a) Every Ph.D. program in the University shall be reviewed on a periodic basis by the Board, with the goal of continuous improvement of the quality of all Ph.D. programs in the University. The Board will review each program's key features and outcomes, as well as institutional data including admissions, demographic composition, time to degree, graduation rates, and student satisfaction data as part of the review. Reviews are typically performed every 6-7 years for each program or at an earlier frequency based on the recommendation of the Doctor of Philosophy Board, the Provost, or the relevant Dean.
- b) After the review is completed, the Board will draft a program review report that shall require a minimum of two-thirds vote of the Board for approval, including student members. The report will be sent to the Provost to be used as the basis of a communication about the program to the relevant Dean and Vice Dean, and to the relevant department chair and/or program director. Each report shall include a summary of noteworthy positive elements of the program as well as recommendations. The report will provide information regarding timing of the next review, for example, at the next periodic 6-7 year cycle. The report may also request the program to submit a report documenting progress made toward specific or all of the Board's recommendations one year later (or at an alternative interval).
- c) When necessary and at least once every 3 years, the Board will revisit its program review process and approach to determine if any modifications are needed.

7) **Voting**

- a) To propose a decision or action, a motion must be made by a Board member. A second motion must then also be made. After limited discussion, the Board will then vote on the motion. The Board members who brought the motions will be recorded in the minutes.
- b) Votes will be recorded in the minutes anonymously as the number of members who voted "Yes," "No," or "Abstain" on a motion.
- c) Members not in attendance may always vote in absentia, including by email.
- d) For issues requiring unanimous consent of the Board, all members of the Board eligible to vote on an issue must vote, whether in person or in absentia. For issues requiring a minimum of two-thirds approval, the two-thirds threshold also may be reached either through in-person voting members or those voting in absentia.

- e) If a member of the Board takes a planned leave of more than 6 months, the division they represent must send a replacement for the duration of the absence. For leaves of fewer than 6 months, the Board member may either send a voting designee or vote in absentia for votes requiring their participation as stipulated in (7d).

8) **Revisions to By-Laws**

Changes to the by-laws affecting the fundamental requirements and the voting and membership structure of the Board shall require the unanimous consent of the faculty Board members, the Ph.D. granting schools' Dean or Dean's designee, and the Provost. Other changes to the by-laws shall require a minimum of two-thirds vote of the Doctor of Philosophy Board, including the student members.

9) **Support**

The Doctor of Philosophy Board will be supported by an administrator in the Office of the Provost and, when necessary, by additional help from the offices of the graduate deans.