

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME

Department of
Humanities and Social Sciences

Procedures and Requirements

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KANPUR

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Web site: <http://www.iitk.ac.in/hss>

1. INTRODUCTION

Postgraduate (PG) programmes at IIT Kanpur are governed by the PG Manual (<http://www.iitk.ac.in/doaa/pgmanual-05Jan2015.pdf>). On all matters pertaining to the academic programme of a postgraduate student or change of rules, Senate Post Graduate Committee (SPGC) collects the views of Departmental Post Graduate Committees (DPGCs) of the respective departments and sends its opinion to the Academic Senate for approval. The latter uses its discretionary power to either accept or reject the opinion. Thus, DPGCs play an important role in the PG programmes of IITK.

HSS Department has approved Ph.D. programmes in five of its six disciplines: Economics, English (including Linguistics), Philosophy, Psychology and Sociology. Fine Arts is expected to finalise its PhD programme soon.

2. CONSTITUTION OF DPGC

The term of DPGC is for one year: 1st September of a calendar year till 31st of August of the following year. DPGC, HSS consists of the following nine members:

- six Discipline Representatives whose names are forwarded by the respective Conveners of the Disciplines to the HoD
- two Student Representatives whose names are communicated to the HoD by the Student Gymkhana, and
- HoD as an ex-officio member.

DPGC Convener is chosen from among the six Discipline Representatives by the HoD in consultation with the latter. It is mandatory that the outgoing DPGC Convener continues on the current DPGC for one more year to provide continuity. The name of the Convener is forwarded to DOAA for the formation of SPGC whose term begins on 1st October and ends on 31st September in the following calendar year.

If DPGC Convener goes on leave he/she appoints an Acting Convener from among the DPGC members, and informs beforehand all its members, SUGC Chairman, HoD, HSS faculty members and PG students.

3. FUNCTIONS OF DPGC CONVENER

DPGC Convener has the following functions.

3.1 Courses

DPGC convener prepares the list of PG courses to be offered in any given semester. He/she invites the lists from the respective discipline representatives. The consolidated list is then passed on to the HoD.

3.2 Admission

- (i) DPGC Convener plays a crucial role in PG admissions. HSS Office receives PhD applications which are classified according to the six Disciplines and handed over to the respective Discipline Conveners for shortlisting. DPGC Convener finalises the shortlisted candidates in a DPGC Meeting. Normally, all candidates satisfying the minimum requirement criteria (high Second Class marks in MA/MSc/MTech or MPhil and UGC (NET/JRF) qualification or reasonable GATE score) are invited for the admission test (written and oral). In the same meeting DPGC also takes note of the available seats in HSS category-wise, eg Gen, SC, ST & OBC as informed by DOAA to all DPGC Conveners across departments at IITK.

- (ii) DPGC Convener forms Admission Boards for all HSS Disciplines who plan to invite applicants for admission, consisting of 3-4 faculty members from the respective Disciplines, DPGC Convener, HoD, and one faculty member from outside the Department to serve as the external expert on the Boards. Convener sends the lists of Boards to DOAA for approval.

- (iii) DPGC Convener also fixes the time slots for the written tests in consultation with the respective DPGC members and the interview slots across various Disciplines. HSS Office then prepares the invitation letters to be sent to all invited applicants. DPGC Convener also informs concerned Halls of Residences for the lodging and boarding of all these candidates for a period of 2-3 days depending upon the arrival and departure of the applicants.

- (iv) The details of the Convener along with his/her telephone number and/or mobile numbers are uploaded on the Department's web page for the prospective candidates. Details of the Admission Test including schedules and syllabus of various Disciplines are also uploaded on HSS webpage.
- (v) Two senior PG students are appointed as Guides for the candidates on the day of the admission test. They are expected to help the candidates with whatever help they may require during the admission period.
- (vi) Successful applicants are decided by the Boards after the admission test on the day of the admission test. All Board members are required to sign on the forms prepared by HSS Office as per the guidelines of DOAA. HSS Office then prepares the letters of "offer of admission" to be sent to all these applicants duly signed by the DPGC Convener. This information is also passed on to DOAA/SPGC.

3.3 Welcoming New Ph.D. Students

When the newly admitted students reach IITK, the Counselling Service of the Institute arranges a meeting of the new students with DPGC Conveners of respective Departments as a part of the Orientation Programme. Convener and HoD welcome the new students and apprise them of the doctoral programme in HSS.

3.4 Selection of Courses/Credits

New Students

In HSS Department, Programme Advisors of Disciplines (respective members of the Disciplines on DPGC) guide new Ph.D. students on selection of courses (9 credits per course) and research units that a student should credit in a semester. Normally, the total number of credits that a student is required to register for in the first 2 semesters is 72 credits. Therefore, the normal load of a PhD student is 36 credits per semester which can be either 4 courses or 3 courses and one course equivalent of research credits in each of the first 2 semesters.

Registration for research credits requires “selection and appointment” of a Supervisor. Hence, if a student wishes to credit 3 courses and 9 credits worth of research units, he/she will require a Supervisor. The student can either select a Supervisor on his own or request DPGC to appoint a Supervisor provided the Supervisor agrees to this. [A student can credit 4 courses in the first semester, and 2 courses in the second semester along with 18 credits of research units.]

Old Students

Normally, PG students register for 36 research credits in a regular semester after completion of their course work. In a summer semester, a student is expected to register for 9 or 18 research credits.

DPGC Convener verifies the registration details of all Ph.D. students before sending the registration forms to SPGC for approval.

Summer -Term Registration

A student is required to register in the summer term for up to a maximum of half the normal semester load and earn credit towards units requirements, provided they get a pass/satisfactory grade in course/thesis credits for which they register and are not on leave for more than one week.

3.5 New Course

If a faculty member or a group of faculty members wish to propose a new course, they will have to prepare the course content and the list of readings (journals, books etc.) and submit the course outline in the required format to DPGC Convener. Convener then e-circulates the course among faculty members of the Institute with a request to provide their feedback to the concerned faculty and DPGC Convener within three weeks. After completion of this period DPGC Convener sends the proposal for approval to SPGC along with the comments received and changes made by the proposer(s) of the course.

3.6 DPGC Meeting

- (i) DPGC Convener decides on routine matters like leave applications without consulting the Committee members.
- (ii) DPGC meetings are usually called when DPGC members are required to be consulted on issues like PhD admission, discipline-wise allocation of new students, appeals of deficient students, changes in PG rules, and so on. Often DPGC meetings are called when SPGC requests Departments for their opinion on issues that SPGC plans to discuss in their upcoming meeting.
- (iii) DPGC Convener is responsible for writing minutes of meetings, modify them if necessary, and seek confirmation of minutes in the following meeting.
- (iv) DPGC convener is expected to attend all meetings of SPGC. In case Convener cannot attend a meeting, he/she may appoint a DPGC (faculty) member to replace him/her and inform SPGC Chairman beforehand.

3.7 Types and Duration of Leave

DPGC Convener can approve students' leaves up to 30 days. Beyond 30 days leave, DPGC acts only as a recommending body; the leave is to be approved by the SPGC. No student is allowed to go on leave without prior approval.

A student can apply for leave of various kinds as approved by the PG Manual. This includes *casual leave* (limited to 6 days in a regular semester and four in the summer semester), *medical leave* (up to a maximum of 8 days during a regular semester and 4 days during summer term but limited to 15 days in a regular semester and 8 days in summer) and *personal leave* (normally not more than 10 days at a time). Students can also apply for *academic leave* (leave for academic work such as library consultation, fieldwork, attending a national or international conference, etc.). The duration of academic leave required by a student is assessed by the thesis supervisor.

3.8 Attendance

All students are required to mark attendance through the Institute's biometric attendance system maintained in HSS Office or in core labs (with the permission of the HoD). If a student is found not marking his/her attendance, the Convener will seek an explanation for his/her absence. In case the explanation is not satisfactory the student may be treated as on "unauthorised leave" and can be penalised by deducting his/her fellowship for the number of days they are absent. Unauthorized leave beyond four weeks or non-registration in a semester without SPGC "approval" may lead to termination from the Ph.D. programme. The Convener, DPGC is expected to communicate to SPGC about all such cases.

3.9 Comprehensive Examination

The Board for the Comprehensive Exam of a doctoral student after the completion of his/her courses with a Minimum CPI of 7.0, is proposed by the thesis Supervisor (s) on behalf of the DPGC Convener, in consultation with the HoD. Normally, it comprises of 3-5 members: the thesis supervisor(s), at least two members of the Discipline and one faculty member from outside the Department/Discipline. Results of the comprehensive exam are communicated to SPGC on the prescribed form.

In case a student fails in his/her first attempt, the Comprehensive Board may recommend a second attempt after a few months or weeks. It may however, require constitution of another Comprehensive Board for the second attempt as the Board has a fixed tenure of 4 weeks. The Comprehensive Examination may have both a written part as well as an Oral part, or it can entirely be an Oral Examination.

3.10 State of the Art Seminar (SOTA) & Open Seminar

SOTA is arranged by the thesis Supervisor(s) within six months after the successful completion of the Comprehensive Exam. The supervisor (s) is required to circulate a notice about 10 days before the seminar – email notice

to acadstaff@iitk.ac.in as well as put up hardcopy notices on selected notice boards, and send a copy each to DOAA and SPGC Chairman. The Supervisor submits a report of the SOTA to SPGC, through DPGC Convener, on the prescribed form. A member of DPGC is required to be present during the seminar and sign the Report along with the Supervisor.

Before submission of a Ph.D. thesis, the Supervisor is expected to announce a date for the final seminar called the Open Seminar. The procedures are similar to SOTA.

3.11 Appointment of Thesis Supervisor

- (i) AS per the PG Manual, within 2 weeks of completion of course work, a student is expected to select and appoint a thesis Supervisor. In case a student is unable to do so, DPGC will appoint a thesis supervisor to him/her. No student is permitted to register for thesis units without a Supervisor.
- (ii) Students are allowed to replace the existing Supervisor with a new one, or add a Co-supervisor as per the provisions of the PG Manual. Both require the consent of all concerned – former Supervisor and the new Supervisor. In the case of a change of Supervisor, the student can submit his/her thesis only after six months from the date of change of Supervisor.

Information about appointment, addition or change of Supervisor should be communicated immediately to Chairman, SPGC. There is a prescribed form for appointment of Supervisor.

- (iii) If a student's supervisor proceeds on long leave for more than one year, DPGC Convener will appoint a supervisor or a co-supervisor in consultation with the supervisor and the student. In such a case the number of supervisors may be more than two if an external supervisor already exists. If a student's supervisor proceeds on leave for not more than one year, DPGC may appoint a programme coordinator to take care of various formalities.

The SOTA, Open seminar, thesis submission & defense etc. will get postponed till the supervisor's return. However, if the student has a co-supervisor, these things can be taken care of.

If all research work and related analysis is complete except writing of the thesis, and the supervisor proposes to go on leave, DPGC may appoint a programme coordinator, to take care of the formalities, such as providing the list of examiners, conducting the oral examination, etc. In case a supervisor resigns/retires or otherwise ceases to be a faculty member of the institute, DPGC will appoint a new supervisor or co-supervisor.

3.12 *Open Seminar and appointment of thesis board*

Before the submission of the thesis a Ph.D. student is supposed to give an Open Seminar. There is no board for Open Seminar but the thesis supervisor brings out notices for the seminar through email to acadstaff, and printed notices to be put on the prominent notice boards. The thesis supervisor communicates the result of the Open Seminar to SPGC through DPGC, on a prescribed form whether the seminar was satisfactory or not. Then, within six months (extendable to nine months with the permission of the Chairman, SPGC) the student must submit a synopsis and the thesis (7 copies of the thesis and soft copies of the synopsis and the thesis). If the thesis is not submitted within this time frame, then the student has to give another Open Seminar and the thesis supervisor must organize the Open Seminar as per the rules.

The thesis board is proposed by the thesis supervisor(s), in consultation with the HoD and Convener, DPGC, with 4-5 foreign examiners and 4-5 Indian examiners.

3.13 *Recommending students' requests for financial assistance to appropriate authorities such as HoD, DOAA, DORA, to attend conferences, workshops etc. on the basis of recommendation of the thesis supervisor.*

3.14 *Keeping record of students' performance and process cases of deficiency and termination.*

A student has to maintain a CPI of 7.0 to continue in the programme. However, if a student has a CPI above 6.5 but less than 7.0 in the first semester, she may be allowed to continue in the programme based on DPGC's recommendation. In HSS Department feedback of the respective discipline plays an important role in making recommendations to SPGC. As per the PG Manual, a student is terminated if she accumulates 8Xs in thesis units or 6Xs in two consecutive semesters.

3.15 *Course evaluation*

At the end of every semester DPGC convener arranges for centralized evaluation of all PG courses by students taking courses in that semester.

3.16 *Any other matter*

As DPGC plays an important role in running the Ph.D. programme and mentoring and monitoring of Ph.D. students any issue pertaining to PG programme not covered above is also the responsibility of DPGC. HoD may consult DPGC on any matter related to PG students and courses.

4. DOCTORAL COMMITTEES

Each Ph.D. student admitted to the candidacy must have a Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC) to help, mentor and monitor the student. Thus, separate DACs will be formed for each student. The Committee will be proposed by the Thesis Supervisor and will consist of three members: the supervisor, one faculty member from the same discipline, and one faculty member from another discipline or department. In case of two supervisors, however, the Committee may consist of the two supervisors and a member from another discipline or department so that the number of committee members is restricted to three. The members of DAC will be part of the comprehensive examination board. Therefore, thesis supervisor(s) while proposing the comprehensive board for a student will also simultaneously propose a DAC, which will be approved by the DPGC, and the Convener, DPGC will inform SPGC about the formation of this Committee. DAC should attend the state-of-the-art seminar (SOTA) of the student. As per the PGRC guidelines, DACs will meet their respective doctoral students once a semester, preferably between IInd and Vth week of the semester. A student will be required to make a presentation before the

Committee and brief the Committee about progress made in the previous semester, and also propose a plan for the current semester. DAC will prepare a report after evaluating the progress of the student and his/her study plan, and pass it on to SPGC/DOAA for his/her file

5. FORMS

All forms pertaining to admissions, leave, appointment of supervisor, reports of various seminars etc. can be obtained from:

<http://www.iitk.ac.in/doaa/DOAA/spgcforms.htm>.