

**Simon Fraser University
School of Interactive Arts and Technology
Graduate Program**

**SIAT Satisfactory Progress Criteria
(Approved April 7, 2010)**

Making satisfactory progress

Ideally, you would be following the recommended study plan as listed in SIAT Graduate Student Expectations. If the deviation from the recommended study plan occurs, you should take steps to correct it as soon as possible. Your progress is measured in four areas:

1. **Coursework.** You are expected to perform well in the courses you take. If you are a new Master student it might surprise you that the requirements of the graduate courses are typically much higher than what you experienced as an undergraduate student. You have to be more self directed and autonomous. You have to dedicate enough time to your studies to succeed. Many graduate courses require extensive critical reading of research papers. If you are a slow reader, you will need to allow for more time. The same goes for writing. A typical course load for graduate students is two courses per term if you have other duties such as a teaching or research assistant positions. Do not plan to take more than three courses per term. You are required to maintain above 3.0 CGPA to remain in the program and you should balance it with your TA and RA work.
2. **Research progress.** SIAT program is a research program. This means that the substantial part of your studies is devoted to working on the research problem that culminates in the thesis. You are expected to steadily progress in your research, from identifying topic, distilling it into research question(s), selecting and applying research method(s), analyzing and interpreting results, and writing and defending the thesis. For PhD students the process has some strict milestones such as annotated bibliography, comprehensive exam, and research proposal.
3. **Research Assistantship.** If you undertake a position of a research assistant you are expected to perform your duties as a researcher. You will be evaluated based on the criteria common for research employees, which can include participating in the meetings with your RA supervisor, conducting research, following supervisor's instructions, fulfilling your duties in timely fashion, writing papers, etc. Make sure you understand what your RA supervisor's expectations are.
4. **Teaching Assistantship.** These positions are offered by the School and are governed by the collective agreement between the University and TSSU. The contract specifies the areas of evaluation so make sure you understand what is expected. Once you accept TA position you are expected to fulfill those requirements.

It is important that you seek feedback on your performance from your supervisor(s). Early feedback makes it easier to correct your performance before the progress evaluation. Be proactive. Regularly meet with your supervisor and ask for the feedback monthly.

Progress evaluation

Your progress is formally evaluated twice a year, the complete evaluation takes place at the end of the Spring semester and the partial evaluation is early in the Fall semester. It is essential that your progress is reviewed as satisfactory, as making unsatisfactory progress has a negative impact on your access to awards, appointments, and resources. After two unsatisfactory progress reviews you will be removed from the program. Should any of the following conditions occur your progress will automatically be deemed unsatisfactory and you have to satisfy the condition by the next review:

Master students:

- Senior supervisor not selected by end of semester 2
- Complete committee not selected by end of semester 3
- Topic notification form not submitted by the end of semester 3
- All the required courses not completed after student has been in the program for 4 regular teaching semesters¹.

PhD students:

- Senior supervisor not selected by end of semester 2
- Complete committee not selected by end of semester 3
- Topic notification form not submitted by the end of semester 3
- All the required courses not completed by the end of semester 6
- Annotated bibliography not approved by end of semester 8
- Comprehensive exam not passed by end of semester 10
- PhD proposal not presented 3 semesters after comprehensive exam or by the end of semester 12 (whichever is sooner)

If there is a serious reason why you did not meet the criteria above you can ask your senior supervisor to provide a written statement to the Graduate Program Committee that would explain the reasons and state the binding time for correcting the situation. The Graduate Program Committee is the final body accepting or rejecting such appeals. A lack of planning or performing other duties such as a teaching assistant, research assistant, internships, or other forms of employment are not eligible reasons. You have to plan accordingly to meet the progress requirements in the program.

Note: On Leave semesters do not count when determining progress.

¹ For students starting in the Fall semester this would be semester 5 of their studies.

Consequences of unsatisfactory progress

Students whose progress has been reviewed as unsatisfactory:

- Will not receive graduate fellowships or recommendation for the fellowships
- Will not receive matching travel grants
- Will be placed at the end of the priority list for allocating individual workspaces
- Will be placed at the end of the priority list for TA positions
- Will not be considered for Sessional Instructor positions

Note: Please note that after the second unsatisfactory progress review you will be removed from the program.