



Date: May 12, 2020

To: Deans, Department Chairs, Head Graduate Advisors, Graduate Student Affairs Officers
From: Lisa García Bedolla, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate Division
Subject: One-Year Extension of Normative Time, Flexibility in Conduct of Milestone Exams and Continuation of Filing Fee Status

Dear Colleagues,

In light of the unprecedented disruptions experienced by the campus community, the Graduate Division and Graduate Council have approved a blanket one-year extension of normative time (currently extended by one semester), allowed milestone exams, listed below, to be conducted via video conferencing software and supported a continuation of filing fee status from Spring 2020 to Fall 2020.

Extension of Normative Time

Graduate Student Affairs Officers can request a one-year extension of normative time through the Graduate Division Exceptions eForm. This is best done near the end of a student's career, when impacts of expiring normative time may become relevant for some students.

International students should consult the [Berkeley International Office](#) regarding any changes to their degree plans.

Conduct of Milestone Exams

Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Paul Alivisatos, Berkeley Division Chair Oliver O'Reilly, Graduate Council Chair John Battles, and Vice Provost and Dean Lisa García Bedolla have all endorsed an exception to the campus ban on proctoring exams via Zoom for milestone exams in graduate programs through Fall 2020. In addition to qualifying exams, other types of milestone exams can be conducted using Zoom or similar video conferencing software.

These include:

- Comprehensive exams in master's degree programs,
- The defense of position or field papers required in certain programs, and
- Preliminary exams.

[cont.]

Exams need to be scheduled with enough advance notice so that students can seek accommodations through the Disabled Students' Program if needed. For each unique test and circumstance, we advise you to arrange for an exam location that is not excessively private or to use a virtual background to obscure personal effects, if possible. Read this [Best Practices for Zoom Qualifying Exams](#) page for recommendations on exam conduct and committee members' responsibilities.

Continuation of Filing Fee Status

The Graduate Division will allow students on Filing Fee in Spring 2020 to continue on filing fee status in Fall 2020. To request a continuation of filing fee status, Graduate Student Affairs Officers should request a "Second Use of Filing Fee" exception through the Graduate Division Exceptions eForm. Students who continue their filing fee status in Fall 2020 will be billed for this second usage.

These academic updates and accommodations can be found on the Graduate Division's [COVID-19 information page](#).

Warmly,

Lisa García Bedolla

Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate Division