

# GCB Mid-Term Evaluation

## Mid-Term Evaluation Process

Goal is to document the doctoral candidate's in-depth knowledge of their research field and to discuss progress in the candidate's project. More simply stated, this is an opportunity for your PhD Thesis team to officially assess your preparedness for writing and submitting your thesis and for your oral defense. Likewise, and just as important, this is also an opportunity for you to self-assess your progress to date and your readiness, as well as to get valuable feedback and input to use as you complete the second half of your program. Specifically, to (1) test the candidate's knowledge of the research field, (2) evaluate the candidate's capacity to succeed with a PhD, (3) discuss and evaluate the progress of the research project and its feasibility for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, and (4) define the goals for the remaining period of doctoral studies.

### Timing

According to the GCB Promotion regulations, Art.7<sup>4</sup>, after two years\*, at the latest the doctoral candidate presents to their research data gathered to this point to their thesis committee. Simply stated, "Mid-term" indicates that this should take place halfway\* between registering with the GCB and graduating from the GCB.

\*1.5 to two years (18 to 24 months) after starting the GCB PhD program as determined by your application date (April 15, August 15, December 15). The defense can first be scheduled at the **earliest 1 year after the midterm has been completed**. Thus, ideally when planning a minimum PhD curriculum, the mid-term should take place after 1.5 years after registration in the GCB.

As a reminder, your thesis committee consists of your supervisor, co-advisor, and mentor. Your thesis committee evaluates the performance with a grade according to Article 9<sup>3</sup>. \*from GCB application date, e.g., April 15, December 15, or August 15

### Preparation

1. The candidate is expected to organize the talk and to schedule a date in agreement with the thesis committee. Candidates in PhD Specialization programs are expected to inform specialization program coordinators of the mid-term date in advance.
2. Prepare the presentation.
3. Download the mid-term evaluation protocol form from the [GCB Website, Mid-Term Evaluations page](#).
4. **Type\*** in the information already known, e.g.,
  - candidate name
  - matriculation number
  - supervisor name
  - place and date of the evaluation
  - title of presentation
  - examiners' names

Please note. You, your supervisor, and your mentor must be able to read this document. The GCB must be able to read the document to enter the information into your record. Please type. Do not hand-write.

### Mid-Term Evaluation

The Mid-Term evaluation can be used as an opportunity to prepare yourself for and practice for your oral thesis defense. The following is what will take place:

### Logistics

1. Present the pre-filled mid-term evaluation form to the examiners.
2. Give your talk and participate in the ensuing discussions according to the guidelines. Include an introduction in your talk. This introduction reviews developments in your research field. Present these developments within the context of your own work. Include an outline on the concept of your own research and description of the next steps.
3. Agree on your external co-referee and add the name, affiliation, and email address in the indicated place on the mid-term evaluation form. (Final approval can only be granted by the GCB Coordinator).
4. Your thesis committee enters their respective grades and sign the form.
5. Your mentor will then scan the completed, signed form, save the document as a pdf and email it, attention to the GCB Coordinator at [info.gcb@unibe.ch](mailto:info.gcb@unibe.ch).

### Procedure

1. Give a 40–45-minute talk in the presence of the thesis committee, chaired by the mentor. The talk should be presented in a formal setting, for example, in an Institute or Department Seminar room.
2. Your talk will be followed by a 15 - 60-minute (maximum) public discussion chaired by the mentor.
3. Following the public debate, a closed discussion between you and the thesis committee (only), will take place. This private dialogue is conducted about the topic provided on the mid-term evaluation form:
  - a. The candidate and the thesis committee thoroughly discuss the state of the candidate's research project, its strengths and weaknesses.
  - b. The candidate presents their outlook on the project, so that his/her conceptual understanding of the project can be assessed.
4. The closed discussion must also include explicit advice on the continuation of the project progress. Furthermore, the importance of the candidate being able to publish at least one original article as a first author, prior to scheduling the PhD defense, will be emphasized.



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## Mid-Term Evaluation Pro-Tips



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Information  
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### Pro Tips

Keep in mind. You and your thesis defense team will be asked to confirm the following (please bring the information with you to the closed discussion):

1. ECTS
  - a. Mandatory requirements, including passing the Scientific Integrity lecture have been met.
  - b. If you are in a PhD Specialization, you will submit a list of courses already taken and planned to fulfill specialization requirements.
2. External co-referee
  - a. Proposed External Co-referee candidates should be submitted on the Mid-Term Evaluation form in the indicated section:
  - b. In accordance with the GCB regulations, the members of the thesis committee should select and agree on a suitable, internationally recognized researcher for the external review of the candidate's PhD thesis. At the end of the second year, an external co-referee must be selected and approved by the members of the thesis committee.
  - c. Art. 13 ¶2 External examiners are independent research group leaders who have expertise in the research area of the doctoral candidate and have not published any research paper together with the doctoral candidate or the thesis supervisor during the last five years. An external examiner may be the same as the external co-referee of the written dissertation and is either present in person or connected via videoconference.
3. The external co-referee is formally contacted by the supervisor to confirm the acceptance of the role and the name is then forwarded to the GCB.



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July 2024