RE – 10

Regulation for conduct of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (MPhil) Programme

[Approved by the Executive Council in its 29th meeting held on 01.12.2017 vide resolution No. EC29.5.1 (ii)]

(Under Ordinance OC-6)

1. Preamble:

Sikkim University shall offer research programmes in different subjects and also in inter-disciplinary studies leading to the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy. The Departmental Research Committee (DRC) that shall consist of all faculty members who are eligible to guide research scholars at M. Phil level in a department shall oversee the selection procedure and also monitor the research progress of any duly enrolled M. Phil Scholar of the department.

2. Eligibility Criteria:

Applicants for admission in the M. Phil programme of the university must be a Post Graduate with at least 55.0% marks in aggregate or its equivalent CGPA at the PG level in the relevant or its allied subject as may be on offer by the university as per its annual prospectus. A 5.0% relaxation shall be applicable for students belonging to ST/SC/OBC category in terms of pass percentage and reservation as applicable under the relevant provisions of the state/central government rules shall apply.

3. Admission Procedure:

All eligible applicants of all categories seeking admission in the M. Phil programme must have to sit for a compulsory entrance test which shall be conducted by the university only once in a year normally in the month of June.

a. All admissions in M. Phil programmes offered at this university shall only be through an entrance test which shall be based on a written test and a personal interview.

a. Only those candidates who would qualify in the written test shall be considered eligible to appear for personal interview.

b. The merit list for admission shall, however, be drawn taking into consideration the combined score of both the written tests and personal interview.

c. In case of a tie, the score of the qualifying examination of the concerned candidates shall be considered.

4. Procedure for Conduct of the Entrance Examination:

a. The Written Examination:

i. Ordinarily, the written examination shall be of 90 minutes duration for which the concerned departments shall set the paper which shall be scaled evaluated against 50 marks and the DRC shall decide on the type and number of questions to be put in the written test paper.

b. The Interview:

i. The personal interview shall be evaluated against a total of 50 marks.

ii. There shall be an Interview Board constituted for conducting the interviews with not less than at least three (3) members of which, the HoD/IC of the concerned department shall be the Chairperson.

iii. In case of a department where HoD/IC shall not be available, the Dean of the concerned school shall preside over the proceedings of the interview panel.

iv. In case, a particular department has less than three eligible members who could sit in the panel, the HoD/IC of the department shall inform the same to the Dean of the school who shall than nominate adequate member(s) from within the school to enable the department duly constitute the panel.

v. Only faculty members having at least a M. Phil degree shall be eligible to act as member in such interview panels.

5. Admission:

A merit list of candidates based on their performance in the Written Examination as well as Interview shall be drawn and notified by the Head/In Charge of the Department immediately after the evaluation is over. Copy of this notification shall be endorsed to the (i) Dean, (ii) Registrar, (iii) Controller of Examinations and (iv) Finance Officer.

a. On the basis of this notification, the selected candidates shall have to provisionally register them by paying the prescribed fee within the stipulated date.

b. While drawing such list of candidates to be considered for provisional registration, the Department shall pay due attention to the reservation policy of the Government of India as may be on force on the date of such selection.

c. Employed candidates, if selected for provisional registration, must produce written evidence to show that they have been granted leave for three semesters by their employer.

d. A maximum of 10.0% of the available seats may be allotted to foreign candidates to be admitted against supernumerary seats. Since it is usually not possible for foreign students to come and appear in the written examination cum interview, the selection of such applicants may be carried out only if the DRC finds their testimonials satisfactory and compliant to the provisions of the university rules and regulations. In case, the number of such applicants found suitable for admission by the DRC exceeds the 10.0% limit, the DRC shall draw up a merit list of all such applicants on the basis of their academic records.

e. Granting admission to candidates belonging to Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Myanmar, and Pakistan may be avoided unless specifically recommended by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations, Government of India under exchange programmes. In case selected for admission, they shall be allowed to take admission only on production of student visa valid for the entire tenure of the course of study along with a certificate indicating that they are not suffering from any infectious diseases and that, the source of funding for their studies in the university is duly approved. They may, however, be issued Provisional Admission Certificate on request if they need it for facilitating procurement of the required student visa.

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6. Course Work:

A one-semester course work of 12 credits is mandatory for all entrants on joining the programme. The distribution of these credits shall be as under:

i. Four (4) credits for Research Methodology. This is a compulsory course and may include quantitative techniques and knowledge of computer use.

ii. Four (4) credits shall be assigned for a paper on recent advances in the area of research work to be undertaken by the new entrant.

iii. Four (4) credits shall be assigned to a non-lecture based non taught paper in which the candidates shall review the literature and write a research proposal covering the area of their research interest and, shall have to give a seminar at the end of the semester. Neither any sessional tests shall be held nor there shall be any attendance requirement in this paper but for the other two papers 75% attendance is essential.

7. Coursework Evaluation:

a. The evaluation of the course work shall be done by the concerned faculty members in the Department. The selected scholars are expected to develop critical thinking and learn the skill to communicate in academic language during the course work and, this shall form the basis for such evaluation.

b. In order to be eligible for registration a student must score at least a 6.0 CGPA or its equivalent as the case may be, failing which, the student shall have to drop out and/or seek readmission in the programme in a later academic session.

c. A candidate failing to secure 'A' or 6.0 SGPA in the course work may be given one additional chance to repeat either Paper I or Paper II provided they duly apply for providing them with such a chance subject to the condition that such request must be made within a calendar month of the date of declaration of the result and provided further that the applicant pays the requisite fee as may be fixed by the university from time to time.

d. Unsuccessful students shall not be permitted to register themselves for the degree but they shall be provided with a certificate, if requested for, showing the actual grade or SGPA secured by them in the coursework.

e. Only those students who would satisfy the stipulated registration requirements shall be allowed to register as regular scholars.

f. Registered scholars shall be eligible to draw fellowships/scholarships etc. as may be granted by the University.

8. Allotment of Supervisor

A supervisor shall be allotted by the department concerned for each of the candidates admitted strictly in adherence to the following:

a. Allotment of Supervisor for a selected candidate shall be done by the DRC. While deciding on such allotment, the DRC shall take into consideration the number of seats available under the concerned faculty member, his/her area of specialization and the research interest of the candidates as was indicated during the interview.

b. The allotment of such Supervisors shall not be left to the individual choice of the candidate or a faculty member.

c. The Head/IC of Department will ensure that the process of allotting a supervisor is completed within a month from the date of declaration of the course work results.

d. The DRC may allot another Supervisor to a candidate at any stage of his/her research work if the original supervisor resigns from the University, gets terminated or suspended on disciplinary ground from the service of this university or proceeds on long leave. Such a decision of the DRC will have to be endorsed by the Board of Studies and School Board subsequently.

e. At any given time, a Supervisor shall not have more than the prescribed number of registered M. Phil scholars working under her/his supervision except under circumstances when DRC shall be constrained to allot a Supervisor more candidates exceeding the prescribed limit for such purpose on account of sudden faculty shortage consequent upon the suspension, termination or proceeding on long leave by members of the faculty.

f. A teacher on probation who is otherwise qualified to supervise an M. Phil research work shall be permitted to supervise M. Phil scholars.

g. Only faculty members having at least an M. Phil degree from a recognized university shall be eligible to act as Supervisor of an M. Phil student.

9. Monitoring of Work Progress:

a. The Supervisor shall closely monitor the progress of research work undertaken by each of the candidates pursuing their degree under her/his supervision.

b. A registered candidate shall be required to submit to the Head of Department an elaborate progress report of their work duly endorsed by the Supervisor at the close of each trimester. A candidate failing to submit two such consecutive trimester reports may be deregistered by the Vice-Chancellor on recommendation of the DRC.

c. Any dereliction on the part of the candidate that may be noticed by the Supervisor, if ignored even after repeated cautioning, shall be reported to the DRC for further necessary action. Provided if the DRC is convinced that the concerned candidate is ignoring his research activity without any valid reason, it shall issue the candidate a warning and keep him under observation for three months. At the close of three months since issuance of the warning, the DRC shall review the candidate's performance during the period under watch. In case, the DRC still remains unsatisfied with the performance of the candidate during the period under watch, it may recommend deregistration of the candidate. In case the recommendation is duly accepted, the fellowship of the candidate shall forthwith stand terminated.

10. Submission of Thesis:

a. An M. Phil thesis shall have to be submitted to the office of the Controller of Examinations within 18 months counting from the date of admission.

b. In case of genuine difficulty, the DRC, on the written recommendation of the Supervisor and HoD/IC, may consider extension of time by a maximum period of one semester only and recommend approval of such extension from the Vice-Chancellor. The university, however, under no circumstances shall pay any fellowship to such candidate beyond 18 months.

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c. Failing to submit the thesis in time (including the extended time if any) shall result in automatic deregistration of the candidate and s/he, in such case, shall no more remain eligible for award of the degree. To pursue the degree, such candidate shall have to seek fresh admission.

d. At least a month before the scheduled submission date, the candidate shall be required to give a pre-submission seminar that shall be arranged by the Head of the Department on a written request from the candidate duly recommended by the Supervisor. The candidate may suitably revise the thesis prior to its final submission in the light of the discussions held during the seminar.

e. Three copies of hard bound; neatly type-written thesis shall be submitted along with identical number of soft copies of the same in CD/DVD.

f. The final thesis must have to be submitted along with the following documents:

   i. A declaration from the candidate that the thesis is a work of his own and that it has not been submitted earlier to this or any other university for any degree.
   ii. A plagiarism test certificate duly signed by the candidate and countersigned by the Supervisor
   iii. Copy of the Registration Certificate
   iv. No due certificate from the Librarian.
   v. No due certificate from the Finance Department.
   vi. No due certificate from the Warden of the hostel concerned, if applicable.

g. The hard bound type copy of the thesis shall have to conform to the following specifications:

   i. It has to be typed in A4 size paper.
   ii. Type font used shall be Times New Roman, 12 point and text printing shall be double spaced, and only on one side of the paper.
   iii. Left margin shall be one-and-a half inches while right, top and bottom margins shall only be of one inch.
   iv. The shin of the thesis shall indicate, from top to bottom, M. Phil, Family Name of the candidate and the year of submission.
   v. The cover page shall have the title of the thesis at the top followed by name of the candidate, name of the Department, name of the School, a line stating "Submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Philosophy", month and year of submission.
   vi. The thesis shall be written in English except when it is related to a language other than English.

h. All theses shall be subjected to mandatory plagiarism test as per norms. In case, a thesis fails the plagiarism test, it shall be returned to the candidate for needful action at the end of the candidate. In such cases, the candidate shall be allowed to resubmit the thesis after making necessary changes in it within a period of three months from the date of such return. In case, the candidate fails to resubmit the thesis within the stipulated timeframe, the thesis would be deemed as withdrawn and no further action shall be taken for getting the thesis evaluated.

11. Appointment of Examiners:

a. The Supervisor shall, in the prescribed format, submit a panel of three external examiners having expertise in the relevant field of work to the Vice-Chancellor through the concerned Dean of the School.

b. The examiners so empanelled must be at least at the level of Assistant Professors having a PhD degree. The Supervisor shall provide complete and up to date postal addresses of all the proposed examiners giving in full their PIN code, email ID and cell phone number.

c. An M. Phil thesis shall be evaluated by two examiners including the Supervisor. In such cases where the Supervisor is related to the candidate, the panel of examiners shall be submitted by the HoD. In case, the HoD and the Supervisor happen to be the same person, the examiners list shall be submitted by the Dean of the concerned school. In such cases, both the examiners shall have to be external experts and the Supervisors report shall not count for the purpose of evaluation.

d. The examiners empanelled shall have to be selected from within the country.

12. Evaluation:

a. The office of the Controller of Examinations shall establish contact and seek acceptance of the relevant examiners from the empanelled list as shall be approved by the Vice-Chancellor within a fortnight counting from the date submission of the thesis.

b. In case, an examiner declines to accept the examinership offer, the next member in the empanelled list of the examiners shall be approached.

c. Once the Examiner accepts the examinership, the office of the CoE shall forward the thesis along with other necessary supporting papers such as the evaluation form, remuneration form etc., to the examiner within a week from the date of receipt of the acceptance.

d. The examiner shall be requested to send hardcopy of the report complete in all aspect to the office of the CoE within 30 days counting from the date of receipt of the thesis. A reminder may be sent to the examiner from the office of the CoE a week prior to the expiry of the deadline.

e. If an examiner fails to submit the report within the deadline, the CoE shall send him a final reminder extending the time by another 15 days. If any examiner is still fails to send the report, the CoE shall invite the next examiner from the approved panel to evaluate the thesis.

f. In case, the external examiner gives an unfavourable report, the CoE shall send the thesis to another examiner from the approved panel of examiners and if the report of this second examiner also remains unfavourable, the candidate shall be deemed to have failed.

g. The thesis shall be evaluated against 12 credits or 300 marks of which 100 marks shall come from the viva-voce.

h. Each of the examiners shall evaluate the thesis against a total of 100 marks and a minimum of 50.0% must have to be scored from each of the examiners in order to qualify for defending the thesis in viva-voce.

i. In order to be eligible to be awarded the degree, the aggregate score of the candidate must stand at least at 50.0% of the total score, i.e. 150 marks.

13. Viva Voce and Defense of the Thesis

a. Once the reports received from both the examiners are found favourable, the office of the CoE shall inform the concerned HoD to initiate steps for conducting the viva voce in consultation with the concerned Supervisor.

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b. The evaluation Committee to be entrusted with the responsibility to conduct the viva-voce shall consist of the concerned Supervisor as the Chairman, the external examiner and one faculty member from the School to be nominated by the Dean. The HoD of the concerned department shall request the Dean to nominate a member in the committee under intimation to the office of the CoE.

c. Office of the CoE shall take at least three feasible dates from the external examiner on which the examiner can take part in the viva-voce proceeding and pass on the information to the HoD concerned for the needful at his end.

d. The HoD, in consultation with the Chairman and nominated member of the committee, shall finalise the actual date for holding the viva voce.

e. The evaluation committee shall submit, through the HoD concerned, its report to the office of the CoE on the same day the viva-voce was held.

f. The day, date, time and the place for holding the viva voce shall be notified by the concerned department at least seven days in advance. Such a notice shall be circulated to all the departments under the School and shall also be uploaded in the University's website.

g. In case of successful defense, the office of the CoE shall compile the final result and submit the same along with all attendant reports including that of viva voce to the Vice-Chancellor for approval of the same. Once approved the office of the CoE shall formally notify the result.

h. If the defense is not satisfactory the committee would record the reasons for the same and suggest an appropriate date for a repeat viva voce after 30 days from the date of the first viva voce subject to the condition that the date so fixed must not exceed a period of two months at the most.

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14. Depository with the University:

Post successful completion of the evaluation process and notification of the award, the University shall upload the thesis in its D-Space Repository and one hard copy shall be sent to the Central Library of the University for record and referential use.

15. Award of Degree:

a. The result shall be officially notified by the CoE within seven days from the approval of the Vice-Chancellor. The result notification shall clearly mention the date of such notification, the name of the candidate, registration number of the candidate and the date of registration, title of the thesis, degree awarded, name of the Supervisor, name of the Joint Supervisor(s) if any, name of the Department and name of the School. The notification shall also be uploaded in the University website.

b. Formal award of the degree shall only be made on the day the university holds its next Convocation.

16. Removal of Difficulties

Notwithstanding anything contained as at above, the Vice-Chancellor shall have the power to remove any difficulty faced in the implementation of the above regulations.