

March 7, 2024

Dear TGS colleagues,

I am writing to provide a letter of support for a petition to extend a probationary period to May 15, 2024, submitted by my advisee Carl Colglazier so that he can complete his qualifying exams. Consistent with TGS policies on these matter, extraordinary circumstances beyond Carl's control provide the basis for this petition. Carl has discussed the circumstances as well as all aspects of his plan and timeline to complete the qualifying exam milestone with me throughout the probationary period. Below, I offer a little context for the petition and the circumstances that led to it, confirm the proposed timeline for completion and its feasibility, and indicate my endorsement of the length of the extension.

Since being placed on probation in September, 2023 (shortly after completing his first qualifying exam), Carl has made significant progress towards the completion of this milestone. He completed his second qualifying exam in late Fall quarter and ramped up work on his third and final exam during the Winter. As of earlier this week, Carl has completed a draft of this final, third exam and, consistent with the requirements of his graduate program, has scheduled a defense meeting with the examining committee for March 14, 2024. If the defense goes ahead as scheduled and is successful, the remaining requirements to complete the milestone would be any final revisions and re-review of materials requested by the committee. **I am thus happy to offer my full endorsement of Carl's petition to extend the probationary period until May 15, 2024 to complete the defense and any needed revisions of his last qualifying exam.**

Given the circumstances that provide the rationale for the petition, Carl's near-completion of the milestone is all the more remarkable. Carl experienced some personal health and wellness events in Fall quarter that prevented him from maintaining a consistent work schedule. Then, earlier this Winter, Carl had to travel home to attend to a family member's health emergency. Throughout both quarters, one of his qualifying exam committee members has been on leave, making it harder and slower than usual to schedule meetings, receive feedback, and sustain consistent progress. **The fact that Carl has navigated these challenging events—all of which have been beyond his control—motivates my support for the rationale behind this petition.**

As implied above, **the timeline proposed in Carl's petition is reasonable, well-justified, and feasible.** A two month extension beyond the March 14 exam defense date allows up to four weeks for initial revisions; up to one week for committee re-review; and then up to three additional weeks to convene additional meetings and/or resolve remaining concerns

if necessary. Given Carl's rate of progress during the previous two quarters as well as the support for this timeline we have received from the rest of his examining committee, I anticipate Carl will complete the milestone ahead of the proposed extended deadline.

To conclude: I endorse the length of Carl's proposed extension, the rationale behind the petition strikes me as justified and consistent with TGS policies; and the timeline for completing the remaining milestone requirements appears both reasonable and feasible. If the Winter quarter were just a few weeks longer, I suspect he might not have even been submitting the petition in the first place.

If you have any additional questions regarding this petition, please get in touch.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Aaron Shaw". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Aaron Shaw

Associate Professor
Communication Studies
Northwestern University