

Quantified Time Lost Due to Systematic DGS Failures and Neglect (2020–2025)

PHYS 335 issue1 (2020.12)

- No reply to my email asking for meeting information, leaving me without critical details about the course.
- Failed to provide any information or expectations about the class during the meeting, making it impossible for me to understand the scope or requirements of the project.
- Claimed that I was enrolled in the class and asked me to submit a proposal, but showed no awareness of my actual enrollment status or progress in the class.

Effect:

- I was completely lost in this class despite reaching out for clarification at a very early stage, which demonstrates her lack of communication and awareness regarding the students' academic needs.
- This created a sense of isolation and confusion, as I had to navigate the class without any clear expectations or guidance.
- The lack of direction severely hindered my ability to make meaningful progress on the PHYS 335 project, delaying my overall academic trajectory.

Additional Notes:

- This incident reflects a broader pattern of negligence and mismanagement, where she failed to respond to basic student needs or ensure proper oversight of academic progress.
- The confusion and lack of expectations also negatively impacted my collaboration with peers and instructors involved in the project, as I was unable to align my efforts with the course requirements.

Delayed Time:

- As a year-long project, this fault on her side caused a six-month delay in my ability to work towards the intended outcome of the PHYS 335 class.
- **Delayed Time: 0.5 years.**

PHYS 335 issue2 (2021.9)

- Failed to register me for the class, leaving me without formal enrollment or recognition throughout the course.
- Ignored my situation and provided no support in addressing the significant delay in the submission of my project report.
- Offered zero assistance in facilitating communication with course administrator, even when cc'ed on emails that explicitly requested her intervention.
- Completely neglected my case throughout this year-long class, failing to provide any oversight, advice, or follow-up.

Effect:

- My advisor at the time, Tian Zhong, continuously blamed me for this issue, repeatedly bringing it up during 2021.6–2022.4.
- This contributed directly to the early and escalating breakdown of my working relationship with him, ultimately culminating in my forced removal from his lab in 2022.
- Her lack of involvement not only delayed the resolution of this matter but also exacerbated tensions between me and my advisor, creating an environment of misunderstanding and conflict.

Additional Notes:

- The complete lack of registration and follow-up reflects a systemic failure in her duties as DGS, as students rely on her to facilitate enrollment, resolve academic delays, and mediate with advisors when necessary.
- The fallout from this issue extended beyond the PHYS 335 class, as it negatively impacted my standing with my advisor and created a hostile and unproductive working environment.

Delayed Time:

- Wasted three months (2021.5.24–2021.9.5) after the deadline, during which the year-long project was already completed but unresolved due to her inaction.
- **Delayed Time: 0.25 years**

Personal Accident (2021.3–6)

- My condition was first noticed by her colleagues, who directed me to her for support, believing she was the appropriate person to help.
- Despite this referral, her responses were superficial, indifferent, and lacked any sense of urgency or professionalism.
- Responded with plain words and generic sympathy, without providing concrete help, follow-up, or meaningful check-ins about what I was going through.
- Demonstrated consistent negligence and incompetence, leaving the issue unresolved and me without support during a critical time.

Effect:

- The lack of meaningful support extended the period of depression and emotional distress, which significantly impacted my ability to focus and work efficiently.
- This neglect not only prolonged my struggle but also eroded trust in her ability to provide support in her role as DGS.
- The repercussions lasted through most of 2021 (March to December), during which I operated at 50% efficiency or lower, struggling with the side effects of this prolonged period of emotional and psychological strain.

Delayed Time:

- The compounded inefficiency over 10 months equates to approximately 5 months of lost progress.
- **Delayed Time: 0.4 years.**

Excluding me from important notification (2022.2.7)

- On February 7, 2022, she sent a department-wide email regarding “thesis committee members,” promising follow-up emails within six months. However, I never received any of the follow-up emails or further communications from her, not just within that timeframe but throughout the entirety of the following five years.
- The lack of communication about forming a thesis committee is a clear deviation from her responsibilities as DGS. This omission had catastrophic consequences for my academic progress, as forming a thesis committee is a foundational step for all PhD students.
- The exclusion of crucial notifications regarding thesis committee formation directly prevented me from completing the fifth-year check-in form, a critical institutional requirement. This omission is not merely an oversight; it reflects serious unprofessional conduct with potential implications of exclusion or discrimination.
- Similar exclusions from important email notifications have occurred multiple times throughout my program, creating a pattern of negligence and unprofessionalism.
- Despite her clear failure to fulfill her duties, she blamed me for the resulting delays, showing no accountability for her own role in this issue.

Effect:

- Her complete failure to include me in critical communications directly caused my thesis committee to remain unformed for years. This resulted in zero progress on committee-related milestones, leaving me unable to submit the fifth-year check-in form.
- This lack of progress is entirely attributable to her failure to provide necessary guidance, communication, and follow-up, as well as her unprofessional behavior in excluding me from vital information.

Delayed Time:

- This negligence directly delayed my academic progress for **three years** (from my second year to my fifth year), as the absence of a thesis committee prevented me from advancing in my PhD milestones.
- **Delayed Time: 3 years.**

Advice meeting (2022.4.1)

- Despite openly sharing my academic progress, challenges, and long-term career goals, which had been clearly defined since the start of my PhD program in June 2020, she failed to provide any meaningful suggestions, feedback, or guidance.
- My concerns were dismissed outright, and I was not taken seriously throughout the meeting. Her indifference made it clear that she did not view my academic goals or progress as a priority.
- She completely ignored the deteriorating state of my academic progress, which was already severely affected by prior disruptions, and failed to discuss any actionable steps to address my situation.
- Made no effort to investigate the details of my case or understand my perspective, choosing instead to uncritically believe and rely on vague or unfounded explanations from other parties without any validation or follow-up.
- Imposed her personal assumptions about what was “appropriate” for me without consulting me, obtaining my confirmation, or aligning her actions with my academic and career objectives. This approach was not only dismissive but also fundamentally at odds with her professional responsibilities as DGS.

Effect:

- My PhD program began with a clear career goal, defined in June 2020, that was central to my academic journey and aspirations. However, her persistent neglect, lack of support, and unprofessional conduct left this goal entirely unaddressed. I was forced to navigate my career direction independently, with no guidance or institutional support, despite her role explicitly requiring her to advise and assist students in achieving their academic and professional objectives.
- This failure to engage or provide meaningful input significantly hindered my ability to progress towards my goals, forcing me to spend years finding my own path while overcoming additional barriers caused by her mismanagement.
- Her behavior fundamentally contradicted her professional obligations, as she neglected her role as an academic advisor, prioritizing control and superficial actions over genuine support and understanding.

Delayed Time:

- From June 2020 to February 2023, I was left without any effective guidance or actionable advice, causing a significant delay of **2.6 years** in making progress towards my clearly defined career goal. This represents a profound loss of time and opportunity during critical stages of my PhD program.
- **Delayed Time: 2.6 years.**

Advice Meeting (2022.4.1) (continued)

- Despite being fully aware of my challenging situation, she failed to provide any resources or suggestions that could have been genuinely helpful.
- While I was clearly overwhelmed and struggling, she focused on promoting options she personally favored, pressuring me to accept them despite my objections and clear protest.
- My peers, who lacked her institutional authority, offered far more practical and constructive suggestions than she did. Her lack of meaningful input, despite her privileged position to access institutional resources, further highlighted her negligence.
- She entirely ignored the clear dysfunction in my TA tasks at the time, choosing not to check in or address these issues. Instead, she added punitive measures and blame, which severely impacted my mental health at an already fragile point.
- She left my case completely unattended. Not only did she fail to provide any meaningful support in this critical situation, but she also actively concealed my circumstances from other representatives, resulting in a persistent bad impression of me among other PSD representatives for years.

Effect:

- Despite being the first person I turned to during this crisis, I received no solid or effective help from her. Instead, she imposed her personal preferences for support without considering their appropriateness or relevance to my specific needs.
- This frustrating and dismissive interaction set off a chain reaction, creating profound negative effects over the next four years. These effects manifested in multiple aspects, including ongoing struggles with TA tasks, delayed coursework progress, and significant hindrances to my research focus and productivity.

Delayed Time:

- Time wasted without access to proper resources or information for finding a new advisor: **0.5 years.**
- Time-intensive introductory course assignments over four years significantly hindered my research progress: **1.5 years.**
- Negative effects on focus and coursework due to compounded stress and mismanagement: **1 year.**
- **Delayed Time: 3 years.**

Forcefully register (2022.6.23) writing session (2022.10.13)

- I was forcefully registered for the AEPP and writing class without any prior communication or consultation. The registration was only communicated to me at the last minute, leaving no room for discussion or adjustment. This was not support but rather a continued exercise of personal control over me.
- Without any investigation into my situation or regard for my well-being, she engaged in discussions and coordination with the other side (the ELI) while completely ignoring my perspective. For instance, she determined that the early session was preferable without consulting me about my availability, demonstrating a pattern of neglect and disregard for my input. I was left entirely at the mercy of their decisions.
- The justification for this decision was framed as providing a "good experience," but the course itself was ill-suited for a third-year physics PhD student. It was clear from the outset that the writing class would not address any actual communication issues I may have faced, nor was it aligned with the core academic challenges I was encountering at the time.
- Her actions demonstrated zero care or thoughtfulness about my situation. Instead, she applied her personal will to force this decision upon me without understanding or considering my needs, goals, or current state of mind.

Effect

- What was described as a "good experience" turned into a significant source of pain and trauma, with lasting effects that hindered my academic progress for years.
- Rather than providing any meaningful help, she added more burdens at a critical time when I was already struggling with unresolved issues from the initial accident.
- This decision shattered my mental peace, exacerbated existing injuries, and compounded my difficulties. These additional burdens were entirely avoidable had there been proper communication or care.

Delayed Time

- The trauma and stress caused by this experience resulted in countless hours of wasted time and mental anguish, significantly delaying my ability to recover and make progress.
- The forced registration in a writing class, which was never mandatory or necessary for me, contributed to ten months (June 2022–March 2023) of wasted time. Given the emotional toll and helplessness I experienced, this period had a multiplied negative impact on my progress.
- **Delayed Time: 2.5 years.**

Forcefully put to probation (2022.10.1)

- I was forcefully placed on probation and required to complete a series of punitive tasks, all without any prior communication, consultation, or investigation into my circumstances.
- This decision was imposed unilaterally, disregarding my input, perspective, or well-being, and was framed under the guise of “concern for students” while in reality trampling on my life and mental health.
- The probation measures were not only unnecessary but were also applied arbitrarily and without justification, further compounding the challenges I was already facing due to previous delays and mismanagement.

Effect

- Completing the additional tasks required under probation consumed an extraordinary amount of time and effort, leaving little room to focus on meaningful academic progress.
- The psychological toll of this probation was devastating. I was subjected to continuous unrecognition, accusations, and pressure, despite my consistent efforts to meet expectations and produce work of acceptable quality. This created a profound sense of futility—when good work only results in more punishment, it undermines the very motivation to strive for excellence.
- For nearly two years, I was unable to register for classes, leaving me further isolated and disconnected from the academic environment. This period was marked by an overwhelming sense of helplessness and struggle as I attempted to regain focus and push forward my research progress.
- The cumulative impact of these overwhelming experiences significantly damaged my ability to perform consistently. The probation period left a lasting mark on my academic record, preventing me from achieving my full potential and hindering my long-term progress.

Delayed Time

- The time lost due to being on probation and the resulting disruptions extended over a period of **two years**, during which my academic progress and mental well-being were severely compromised.
- **Delayed Time: 2.5 years.**

Ignore request (2022.9.30) Course requirement (2024.6.5)

- Repeatedly ignored my words, emails, and requests, while insisting on her own assumptions and decisions without consulting me.
- Refused to reply to my explicit request to meet or talk, avoiding any meaningful discussion about my academic progress or challenges.
- Showed a consistent lack of interest or care for my academic progress, never initiating discussions or providing guidance despite clear indications that I was struggling.
- When I initially shared my academic goals and progress with her, her response was dismissive and deeply disappointing, providing no actionable advice or acknowledgment of my efforts.
- Treated me in a controlling and disrespectful manner, continuously applying pressure and imposing decisions without consultation. This pattern of public insult and disregard for my input has persisted for years.
- Rather than offering support, she exerted pressure and control, completely neglecting her responsibilities to check in on my academic status or well-being. Her actions made me extremely uncomfortable sharing any progress with her, further isolating me academically.
- Consistently avoided accountability for her actions, retreating from the consequences of her failures while ignoring my requests for resolution or support. This negligence left me to manage all aspects of my academic progress independently, despite the significant hindrances caused by her behavior.

Effect

- My academic progress was left entirely unattended for an extended period. I had to navigate every milestone on my own, despite the obstacles and delays caused by her mismanagement.
- She only addressed critical requirements, such as course requirements or the fifth-year check-in form, at the very last minute, without any prior discussion or guidance. This lack of planning and communication severely hindered my ability to meet institutional expectations.
- Her primary focus seemed to lie in punishing or nitpicking students rather than providing meaningful support or mentorship, creating a hostile and obstructive academic environment.

Delayed Time

- From the breakup of my advisor relationship on **2022.9.30** to **2024.12.23**, I experienced over two years and three months of academic stagnation due to her neglect and lack of guidance.
- This period (and arguably my entire five years in the program) was characterized by being unattended and unsupported, with no opportunity to form a thesis committee or begin the fifth-year check-in process.
- **Delayed Time: 2.25 years.**

urgent (2023.12.11)

- Without any prior communication with me, she publicly blamed me in a manner that lacked both professionalism and respect. This pattern of public reprimand and criticism has persisted for years, contributing to a toxic and demoralizing environment.
- At that specific time, I was making significant progress on a research project, reaching a productive and promising phase. However, upon receiving her message, the weight of all past traumatic experiences struck me again. The realization that the person responsible for so much harm was still actively affecting me left me overwhelmed and emotionally destabilized.
- Her behavior has become a recurring source of trauma and distress for me. It is not just her actions, but the power dynamic and her recognition by others that amplify my sense of helplessness. I felt trapped, unable to protest or confide, and constantly questioning whether it was my fault. Processing these complex emotions drained a substantial amount of my energy and mental strength.
- This incident disrupted my ability to focus entirely, and my research progress came to a standstill. My advisor can confirm that this event marked the abrupt end of a period of peak productivity, causing a long-term interruption to my work.

Effect

- The interruption of my research progress at such a critical and productive phase was profoundly damaging. The psychological toll of this incident not only halted my work but also caused significant perturbations in my relationship with my advisor, which persisted for nearly a year.
- This event reinforced a cycle of fear and mistrust, further complicating my ability to recover and refocus on my academic goals.

Delayed Time

- The disruption caused by this incident resulted in a delay from **December 2023 to September 2024** as I struggled to regain my footing and repair the damage to my progress and professional relationships.
- **Delayed Time: 0.8 years.**

Painful meeting (2024.10.9)

- The meeting, which was intended to address TA tasks, devolved into a deeply unprofessional encounter. Despite my visibly distressed state—I was already crying, irritated, and overwhelmed—she constantly interrupted my words, made dismissive and bothersome comments, and failed to provide any relevant or constructive information regarding the meeting's agenda.
- Stuart was present, but even his presence did not deter her from displaying a pattern of unprofessional behavior. She turned the meeting into a platform for blaming and nitpicking, focusing on criticizing me rather than addressing the actual purpose of the discussion.
- She consistently looked down on me, using the meeting to assert control and push her personal agenda. Her actions seemed less about resolving TA-related matters and more about manipulating the situation to align with her preferences, all while disregarding the toll it took on my well-being.
- At one point, she outright denied actions she had previously taken and attempted to shift blame onto me. This behavior was particularly disheartening, as it contradicted prior instances where she had acknowledged and even thanked me for the same efforts she now criticized.

Effect

- This meeting exacerbated the emotional distress I was already experiencing, leaving a profound and lasting impact on my mental health. The unresolved frustration and pain from this encounter contributed to recurring nightmares and persistent feelings of hate and anger, which affected my ability to focus and maintain a healthy state of mind.
- The psychological toll of this interaction created a significant barrier to my academic progress, as the emotional aftermath continued to haunt me long after the meeting.

Delayed Time

- The emotional and mental strain caused by this incident disrupted my focus and productivity for at least **six months**, during which I struggled to regain my composure and academic momentum.
- **Delayed Time: 0.5 years.**

Overall Experience with DGS (2020 -2025)

Over the past five years, Zosia's actions have been characterized by a persistent pattern of applying pressure and punishment without effective communication, prior investigation, or a clear understanding of my academic situation. She demonstrated little to no knowledge about my studies, yet consistently asked intrusive and uncomfortable questions. She imposed measures she personally deemed helpful in a forceful and arbitrary manner, often without my consent, while disregarding my input and concerns. These measures frequently manifested as public insults, excessive demands, and punitive actions, leaving me feeling ignored, controlled, and humiliated.

When I faced critical moments of difficulty, Zosia chose to remain silent, standing by and watching without offering support. Her sporadic "check-ins" appeared performative rather than genuine, often coinciding with external oversight. When under scrutiny, she pretended to fulfill her responsibilities; otherwise, she ignored my situation entirely and continued her unprofessional and harmful behaviors. These are not subjective impressions but are backed by documented evidence of her actions over the years.

My real needs and aspirations were repeatedly ignored and dismissed. I was forced to complete numerous additional tasks that were neither mandatory nor aligned with my academic goals, simply to satisfy her desire for control and her tendency to impose punitive measures on students. At the same time, I had to independently pursue my career goals, which required immense effort and perseverance over several years. This involved overcoming barriers created by her mismanagement, extracting precious time from an overwhelming schedule, and managing the mental toll of a hostile academic environment, all while navigating through misinformation and misleading advice provided by her.

Zosia's imposition of arbitrary requirements and excessive workloads further exacerbated my struggles. For example:

- In Autumn 2022, I was forcefully assigned to teach two lab sections, including night sessions, while simultaneously managing my required classes, a writing course imposed without my consent, and the tasks listed in the probation letter. None of these were requested by me or suited to my needs.
- In August 2024, I was denied the opportunity to enroll in advanced courses under the justification that I had not held discussion sessions, despite my overloaded schedule being entirely a result of her decisions.

Even as I look forward to receiving fellowship support in Winter 2025, this marks the first institutional support I have received from the department in five years. By now, the most challenging and critical times have already passed. During those years, I endured relentless punishment, excessive workloads, public humiliation, and blame, with no regard for my well-being. If I had not demonstrated exceptional resilience, I would not have survived such an experience. Indeed, there were moments when I felt dangerously close to the edge.

All of these listed actions and their profound effects can be directly traced back to Zosia. Despite the extraordinary and severe consequences of her actions, she repeatedly retreated from accountability, denied her role in creating these issues, and consistently blamed me for outcomes that were the result of her own failings. Her persistent unprofessionalism not only worsened my academic challenges but also deepened the systemic problems within the program.

Other Effects

My concrete research work in Tian's lab, spanning from Summer 2019 to Winter 2022, remained largely unrecognized. Despite investing significant time and effort during this period, I was ultimately pushed to leave the lab in an unprofessional and harsh manner. This contributed to **2.25 years** of wasted time dedicated to lab work with no tangible outcomes, as well as an additional **1 year** required for mental recovery from the trauma and distress caused by this experience. Importantly, this is not an isolated personal incident, as similar patterns were observed in other members of the group, reflecting systemic issues within the lab environment.

The cumulative wasted time caused by Zosia's mismanagement and misconduct can be broken down as follows:

0.5 years (PHYS 335 Issue 1) + **0.25 years** (PHYS 335 Issue 2) + **0.4 years** (Personal Accident) + **3 years** (Advice Meeting) + **2.5 years** (Forceful Registration) + **2.25 years** (Ignored Requests & Course Requirement) + **0.8 years** (Urgent) + **2 years** (Forceful Probation) + **0.5 years** (Painful Meeting) + **3 years** (Exclusion from Important Notifications)

= 15.2 years

In addition to the above, my time in Tian's lab contributed another **3.25 years** of wasted effort and recovery.

Total Wasted Time: 15.2 years + 3.25 years = 18.45 years.

Reflection

The enormity of this number—**18.45 years of cumulative wasted time**—might seem unbelievable, but it reflects the compounded effects of systemic failures, mismanagement, and unprofessional conduct. It underscores the extraordinary challenges I have faced, challenges that nearly derailed my academic journey entirely.

The fact that I can stand here today, sharing my experiences and continuing to pursue my PhD, is nothing short of a miracle. These years were not just "lost time"; they represent profound emotional, academic, and professional setbacks that required exceptional resilience to overcome.