

DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

To advance to degree candidacy, doctoral students are required to pass a comprehensive examination. D.M.A. students may satisfy the comprehensive examination requirement during their final semester. For all other doctoral students, the comprehensive examination must be successfully completed at least seven months before the date of graduation:

- For graduation in May: Nov. 1.
- For graduation in July: Dec. 1.
- For graduation in December: May 1.

The following requirements must have been met before students can take the comprehensive examination(s):

1. Assignment of a supervisory committee, if required.
2. Successful completion of the qualifying examination, if required.
3. Filing and approval of the program of study and completion of the majority of coursework required for the degree.
4. If required by the academic unit, satisfactory demonstration of foreign language proficiency through accepted coursework or other evidence specified by the student's supervisory committee.
5. Completion of residency.

The comprehensive examination may be written, oral, or both. In consultation with the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, programs determine if the exam is scheduled on demand or is set on a calendar basis. In most cases the examination committee is also the dissertation/supervisory committee; in other cases the dissertation committee is formed after successful completion of the comprehensive examination. If an oral examination is required as part of the comprehensive examination, all members of the examining committee are required to attend the entire exam. Synchronous modes of communication or committee substitutes are allowed if approved by the unit graduate officer, in consultation with the chair of the student's examining committee, when physical presence conflicts with a major commitment.

The examination will be arranged and supervised by the advisor or other department official. It will generally terminate within one month after it starts, but longer or shorter periods may be required in specific disciplines. Upon satisfactory completion of the examination, the student's advisor sends a report of the results of the examination, with the signatures of all members of the examining committee, to the School of Graduate Studies and the Registrar.

Programs are required to use objective scoring criteria (e.g., rubric) and establish criteria for passing/failing the exam provided to the students in advance. Program criteria should be on file with the School of Graduate Studies. If failure is reported, the examining committee will either recommend termination of status as a doctoral student or suggest additional work or other remedial measures. Furthermore, a student who has failed may not take a second examination for at least 12 weeks. Failure of a second comprehensive examination shall automatically preclude candidacy at this institution.