



**Policy Title: PhD Candidacy Examination  
(Proposal Defence)**

Effective Date: 2024-04-02  
Next Review Date: 2029-09-01

<b>Parent Policy</b>	None
<b>Policy Administrator</b>	Associate Provost, Research & Graduate Studies
<b>Approving Body</b>	Senate
<b>Approval History</b>	2024-04-02; Senate Motion #2023/24 – 024

**Purpose:**

The objectives of this policy are:

- To outline the expectations of candidacy exams
- To outline grading requirements for candidacy exams

**Scope of this Policy:**

Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) PhD students

**Policy Statement:**

The candidacy exam (oral defense of the dissertation proposal) is completed within 30 months of entering the program, following the policy procedures. The Committee as defined in the policy entitled “Supervisor and Supervisory Committee (PhD)” grades the exam as:

- Unconditional Pass
- Conditional Pass – could require completing a course or re-writing the proposal.
- Failure – with opportunity to re-write the exam, or immediate dismissal from the program.

The grades referred to above are not included in the student’s official transcript.

If a grade of “Failure” is received, the doctoral student will have the choice to revise the proposal and repeat the proposal defense within 3 months of receiving the failing grade. If the doctoral student fails the second attempt at the proposal/oral defense they will be immediately dismissed from the program.

**Definitions:**

**Candidacy Exam** (also referred to as the proposal defence) is an oral presentation by a doctoral student for the purpose of evaluating the student’s research proposal, knowledge of the research field and their readiness to proceed with PhD dissertation research.

**Procedures:** Please see Procedures for A 2-16 PhD Candidacy Examination (Proposal Defence)

**Child Policies:** None

**Other Related Policies:** A 2-17 PhD Comprehensive Examination; A 2-24 Supervisor and Supervisory Committee (PhD)