



Policy Title: PhD Comprehensive Examination

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

Parent Policy	None
Policy Administrator	Associate Provost, Research & Graduate Studies
Approving Body	Senate
Approval History	2024-04-02; Senate Motion #2023/24 – 025

Purpose:

The objectives of this policy are:

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

Scope of this Policy:

Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) PhD students

Policy Statement:

The written comprehensive exam is completed by the end of second year (24 months) in the program, following the procedures attached to this policy.

Examination Preparation:

The Comprehensive Examination Committee will be composed of the student's Supervisory Committee as defined in the policy entitled: "Supervisor and Supervisory Committee" in addition to one additional member from the respective School or Faculty as approved by the Office of Graduate Studies. Prior to the examination, the student who will be examined will prepare a reading list consisting of a broad range of readings that build on their course work and related to their substantive and methodological areas. The student will meet with the Comprehensive Examination Committee well before the examination and discuss the expectations, including subject areas to be included in the exam, and the date for when the reading list is to be submitted (minimum of two weeks prior to the exam).

Comprehensive Exam Assessment: Student has developed:

- strong analytical, problem-solving, and critical thinking abilities
- required breadth and in-depth knowledge of the discipline
- ability to communicate knowledge of the discipline
- other pertinent knowledge to the discipline

The committee grades the exam as:

- Unconditional Pass
- Conditional Pass– could require completing a course or re-writing a paper

- Failure – with opportunity to re-write the exam, or immediate withdrawal from the program.

Student must pass all components of the exam. The Conditional Pass is not recorded on the official transcript.

Definitions:

The **comprehensive exam** demonstrates a student's integrated knowledge of the discipline, research methodology, and their substantive area.

Procedures: Please see Procedures for A 2-17 PhD Comprehensive Examination

Child Policies: None

Other Related Policies: A 2-24 Supervisor and Supervisory Committee (PhD)