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Comprehensive Examination for Doctoral Students

The Comprehensive Examination is designed to test a student's preparation for research and is intended to be comprehensive. Successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination is a Faculty of Graduate Studies requirement for all Doctoral programs before a student is granted Ph.D. Candidacy Status. Each Program must make available to students a statement of examination procedures, requirements, and regulations. The examination will be held after completion of all required coursework, and is intended to test the student's understanding of the chosen field of study as a whole, and the student's preparation for the thesis research to follow. All changes in the comprehensive examination procedure made at the graduate program level in LFS will have to be approved by the LFS Graduate Policy Committee.

The Examination should be held within 18-24 months, but **no later than 36 months**, after the student begins his/her Doctoral program, when any necessary course work is completed. The methods adopted for examination and evaluation may vary according to the Program. Students must be provided with a statement outlining the examination procedures, requirements and regulations in their Program at the commencement of their degree program. The Graduate Advisor will ensure that the examination is conducted in an impartial and consistent manner according to the regulations of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Faculty of Land and Food Systems. Please contact your Graduate Program Advisor for details.

Examining Committee

The Examination Committee is normally composed of a Chair (Graduate Advisor or designate), two or three members of the Supervisory Committee, and two additional full-time professors not on the Supervisory Committee (**one of whom will be from another university Program**). All members must be informed of the examination date, purpose, scope and format, and be provided with copies of the Comprehensive Examination guidelines. The two additional members may wish to meet with the Supervisor and student immediately following their appointments to the Committee.

The Examining Committee in Food Science is composed of all faculty members in the Food Science Program plus one member from a second Program.

Responsibilities

The Supervisory Committee:

- Nominates two additional members for the examining Committee and submits these names to the Associate Dean for approval **at least 3 weeks** before the anticipated examination date.

The Supervisor:

- finalizes time, date, and place for the examination, books room and any audio-visual equipment required;
- ensures the Associate Dean received the completed "**Notice and Approval of Oral Examination**" form **at least 3 weeks** before the examination" and
- ensures the student and examiners receive documentation outlining Comprehensive Examination procedures followed in their Program.

Examination Format

Oral examinations are conducted in closed session, and normally last no more than 2.5 hours. The format of examination may vary according to the Program. It is important to make it clear to doctoral candidates and examiners what the expectations and procedures are for the doctoral comprehensive, and to maintain consistency within any given program. Please check with the individual Graduate Advisor for details regarding the examination format and procedures for your discipline.



Faculty of Land and Food Systems

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The Thesis Supervisor:

- briefly reviews the student's background; and confirms that program requirements have been fully met (residency, courses, proposal approved).

The Examination Chair:

- reviews the purpose of the examination;
- outlines examination procedures; and
- indicates the order of questioning.

The Student:

- Presents an oral at the beginning of the examination. The nature and length of this presentation differs between Programs.

The Examiners:

- Examine the student according procedures outlined by the Examination Chair.

Adjudication

The Committee:

In the absence of the student, evaluates the student's performance and renders one of the following by simple majority decision:

- **unconditional pass**;
- **conditional pass** - requirements are specified in writing by the examining Committee and are to be completed within **6 weeks** of the examination unless they involve requiring the student to successfully complete an additional course;
- **adjournment** - procedures for re-examination are specified in writing by the examining Committee (a student may be re-examined once, provided the student is within the first 36 months of his/her program at the time of the second examination); or
- **fail** - recommend withdrawal from the program.

The examination Chair informs the student of the results in the presence of the examining Committee.

The Chair also submits the Comprehensive Examination Report to the office of the Associate Dean, Graduate Programs. The Faculty of Graduate Studies will be notified in writing once the student has successfully completed the requirements for advancement to Candidacy.