

UBCO School of Health and Exercise Sciences: Notice of Doctoral Comprehensive Examinations

<i>Student Name:</i>	<i>Student #:</i>	<i>Date Initiated:</i>
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In addition to approval of a dissertation proposal, successful completion of comprehensive examinations is required for a doctoral student to advance to candidacy. It is the policy of the College of Graduate Studies (CoGS) that candidacy must be achieved within 36 months of entering the program (barring a leave of absence); however, it is the stance of CoGS and the School that you should aim to complete these requirements within 24 months. Failure to achieve candidacy within 36 months means you must withdraw from the program unless granted an extension by the Dean of CoGS (8.7). In the event of an extension, you will be given a classification of “unsatisfactory progress” on the Annual Progress Report (8.1) and will be ineligible for any internal awards funded through CoGS (e.g., [Graduate Dean’s Thesis Fellowship](#)) during your final year.

For the comprehensive examinations, the student will meet with their Supervisory Committee at least three months prior to the proposed date of the written examination in order to agree upon expectations, the members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee (CEC), as well as the examination format, structure, and content. Each examiner will provide a list of no more than 15 readings (research articles or book chapters); however, this list serves only as a starting point because the student is expected to read additional material to ensure that they are “scientifically conversational” in each assigned content area. The CEC will set and assess the examination in a manner compatible with the [policies of the College of Graduate Studies](#). Students are encouraged to speak with the examination committee if they require clarification on procedures or content area.

The following guidelines describe the minimum expected format of the comprehensive examinations:

- The CEC is comprised of 3 examiners, one of whom must be external to the School. It is not necessary that they are external to UBC nor is it necessary to have them approved by CoGS. If a member of the Supervisory Committee is external to the School and serves as an examiner on the CEC, they would satisfy the requirement of an external examiner. In many cases, the CEC will be comprised of the external expert* and the two members of the Supervisory Committee who are not the direct supervisor(s). A supervisor may serve as an examiner but they will do so in lieu of a member of the Supervisory Committee who is internal to the School; i.e., **the number of examiners will not exceed 3**. *NB: *the external examiner on the CEC cannot serve as the external examiner for the dissertation defence.*
- The examinations involve a written and oral component, both of which are set and assessed by the CEC. The student must pass the written component in order to advance to the oral component, which must also be passed to successfully complete the comprehensive examinations. **Of note, only one failing grade is permitted across the two components.** That is, if the student fails the written examination, they will be given one additional opportunity to pass that component and, if successful, one opportunity to pass the oral examination. If the student passes the written component on the first attempt, they will have two opportunities to pass the oral examination. In the event of two failing grades, the student must withdraw from the PhD program. Under certain circumstances, the student may be eligible to transfer from the PhD program to the MSc degree program, provided that eligibility criteria are met, and the student, supervisor, graduate program, and the College of Graduate Studies are in agreement.”

- The written component is comprised of 3-6 questions (1-2 per examiner), which are grouped into 3 content areas relevant to the student's general area of study. This is an assessment of the student's mastery of a breadth of areas related to their program of study, including, but not limited to: theory, methods, controversies and recent advancements in the field.
- The written component is a formal closed-book examination of two 4-hour periods in a single day. The School's Graduate Program Administrator will make room bookings for both the written and oral examinations.
- The oral component will occur within 3-14 days of successful completion of the written component and not exceed 2 hours in duration. **The supervisor will arrange a neutral chair for the oral examination** in addition to the CEC committee. The neutral chair *does not* need to be external to the School.

Conditions for a Retake Examination.

- If the student fails either the written or the oral component of their exam, they will be required to complete a retake exam. The format of the retake exam will closely mirror the original examination structure, with an emphasis on addressing the deficiencies identified by the CEC. The CEC is expected to remain the same as per the College of Graduate Studies policy on program requirements (8.6). The re-examination will be scheduled no sooner than 1 month following receipt of detailed feedback regarding their initial examination attempt. However, the specific time frame will be determined based on the nature of the deficiencies and must be completed along with all other requirements for candidacy prior to 36 months of study to comply with the College of Graduate Studies policy on advancement to Candidacy (8.7). If, for any reason, this timeframe is not feasible, the student must submit a [Request for Extension to time allowed for advancement to candidacy](#), which will be reviewed by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.
- To initiate the scheduling of a retake examination, both you and the CEC must submit a new [comprehensive examination scheduling form](#) with signatures from all parties at least two weeks prior to the retake examination. Should you have any concerns regarding the conditions of your retake examination please contact the graduate program at hes.grad@ubc.ca.

If the comprehensive examinations will differ from above, please provide details on the proposed items that will be required in addition to the minimum requirements stated. These additions to the standard format must be approved by the School's *Graduate Committee* at least 8 weeks before the proposed date of the written examination.

Should accommodations for comprehensive examinations be required it is the student's responsibility to contact the [Disability Resource Centre \(DRC\)](#) **no less than 6 weeks** prior to your exam if you are already DRC-registered (Note registration intake appointments can take **2 to 4 weeks**, plan accordingly). Registration with the DRC is required in order to help accommodate the needs of each person individually. Further consultation in this regard can be done through [DRC - Graduate Accessibility Advisor](#). If you have been approved for accommodations by the DRC please indicate how the examination will differ from the standard examination (Graduate student or Supervisor may complete) based on the DRC plan. *Please note medical information is not required here, only exam accommodation and approval.*

Examination Scheduling

	Proposed Dates
Written Examination	
Oral Examination	

Please check this box to acknowledge the oral examination will be scheduled at a time that does not conflict with a regularly scheduled School event (e.g., unit or committee meeting, invited speaker seminar, etc.).

Comprehensive Examination Committee

Role	Name	Institution	Signature	Date
External examiner				
Examiner				
Examiner				
Neutral Chair (oral examination only)				

Signatures

By providing my signature below, I, the graduate student, am acknowledging that I agree with the format and timing of the examinations as well as the composition of the examination committee.

<i>Graduate Student Signature:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
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By providing our signatures below, we, the members of the Supervisory Committee, are acknowledging that we agree with the format and timing of the examinations as well as the composition of the examination committee.

Role	Name	Institution	Signature	Date
Supervisor				
Co-Supervisor (if applicable)				
Committee Member				
Committee Member				
Committee Member (if applicable)				

<i>Graduate Program Coordinator Signature:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
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Please email the completed and signed version of this form to the School’s Graduate Program Administrator (fhsd.graduateprogram@ubc.ca) as soon as the examination committee and the examination format have been finalized and all parties have agreed to tentative dates. The form should be sent at least 4 weeks before the proposed date of the written examination.