

The PhD Comprehensive Examination involves an in-depth review of three separate areas. Its purpose is to determine whether the student has sufficient mastery of these areas to continue in the graduate program.

One area focuses on two cognate topics chosen by the doctoral dissertation supervisor and two Kinesiology and Health Science (KAHS) graduate faculty members who are familiar with the topic areas. Cognate topics shall be chosen so as to contribute to the student's overall knowledge of their area of specialization, without being directly related to the dissertation proposal.

*Effective September 2015, the PhD Comprehensive Examination and Dissertation Proposal will be separated into two stages. The first stage will be the cognate topics and the second stage will be the dissertation grant proposal.*

### **Stage One: Cognate Topics**

**Cognate Topics** shall be chosen so as to contribute to the student's overall knowledge of their area of specialization, without being directly related to the dissertation proposal. Two cognate topics are determined by and must be approved by the doctoral dissertation supervisor and two KAHS faculty members who are familiar with the topic areas. Candidates must be provided with a minimal reading list from the members. The cognate topic papers are intended to be an outline for examining the candidate rather than a comprehensive review. The expectation is that the papers take no more than three weeks to complete.

**Examination** will normally occur within 4 terms of registration in the PhD program. Students who do not meet this deadline will be put on academic probation for term 5. Failure to meet requirement after term 5 will result in withdrawal from the program for failure to meet academic standards.

**Each Cognate Topic Paper** shall be submitted by the student (e.g. one on each cognate topic area), to each member of the examination committee at least 15 working days prior to the Cognate Topics Examination. Each paper shall be no less than 10 double-spaced pages (excluding references).

**Cognate Topics Examination Committee** will consist of the members that selected the topics plus one KAHS member at arm's length.

### **Responsibilities of the Examination Committee**

If any member is not in attendance the examination shall be postponed.

*Doctoral Dissertation Supervisor and two KAHS members who are familiar with topic areas*

- Approve cognate topics in consultation with the student;
- Provide adequate literature/reading lists and consultation;
- Read the written work submitted by the student prior to the examination;
- Take part in the questioning of the student at the examination;
- Vote on the outcome.

*KAHS (arm's length) member*

- Chair's examination to ensure that the examination is conducted according to the regulations and that all signatures are obtained;
- Read the written work submitted by the student prior to the examination and take part in the questioning of the student at the examination;
- Conduct the vote on the outcome (the Chair is a voting member), including eliciting a consensus on written comments about the examination;
- Record the examination result and return the completed examination form to the graduate program office.

**Format of Examination**

The duration of the examination shall be no more than two hours, and it shall follow standard dissertation defense procedure. It shall commence with a 15-20 minute presentation by the student, followed by at least two rounds of questioning by the examination committee. Questions focus on the cognate topics areas.

**Evaluation**

Each element of the examination is evaluated independently, with the results recorded on the examination form. Evaluation options are as follows:

1. Pass
2. Pass with revisions
3. Re-examine with revisions
4. Fail

**Cognate Topic Papers:** are intended primarily for examining the candidate.

**Revision** of a cognate topic paper(s) is necessary if members of the examining committee decide there is substantive weakness in either the paper or the question period that warrants the revision of the document.

**Re-examination** of one or both cognate topic paper(s) is required if there is gross error or omission in the paper or if the student does not display sufficient knowledge of the material. This normally involves submission of a revised written paper(s) to the examination committee prior to re-examination.

All members of the examining committee must sign the examination form.

In the case of "**Pass with revisions**"

- Required revisions must be specified in writing for the candidate and a copy of these specifications shall be provided to the graduate program office.
- The due date for submission of revised materials must be set and written on the examination form at the time of the examination. The date must be within 6 weeks of the examination date.
- The doctoral dissertation supervisor and two KAHS members (not arm's length KAHS member) must be presented with the revised cognate paper(s) for their approval before the set deadline date.
- The doctoral dissertation supervisor must notify the graduate program office in writing or by email when the revisions are completed to the satisfaction of the doctoral dissertation supervisor and two KAHS members not arm's length member)

In the case of “**Re-examine with revisions**”

- The student will automatically be put on academic probation.
- Required revisions must be specified in writing for the candidate and a copy of these specifications shall be provided to the graduate program office.
- The Re-examination shall occur within 6 weeks of the initial exam.
- The examination committee membership shall remain the same as for the initial exam.
- The student will present the examination committee with revised written paper(s) in the relevant area(s) a minimum of 10 working days prior to the re-examination date.
- The student will undergo a second oral examination, following the same procedures.
- The student's performance in each area is evaluated as 'pass' or 'fail' and recorded on the Re-examination form.
- All examining committee members must sign the form, and submit the signed form to the graduate program office after the Re-examination.
- In the event of a 'fail' vote in any area after re-examination, the student cannot be converted to a master's degree and will be terminated from the program immediately.