

COE GRADUATE EXAMINATIONS

Qualifying examinations requirements

- Written, oral or both. Written examination at least four hours, oral examination at least two hours
- A student who fails the examination may be allowed one re-examination in the failed part(s).
- Re-examination must be recommended by the examiners and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- The re-examination can be taken after a minimum of ten weeks, but it must occur within one year.

Comprehensive examinations requirements

- Written part
 - A least eight hours
 - The time and place of the examination are arranged by the major professor, graduate program director/department chairperson, or Dean of the Graduate School, in consultation with the student.
 - Unanimous approval by all members of the doctoral committee is required for passing.
 - A student who fails may be allowed one re-examination in the failed part(s) if recommended by the doctoral committee and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.
 - The second examination may be taken after a minimum of two weeks, but it must occur within one year.
- Oral part
 - Held within four weeks after passing the written exam.
 - Maximum of two hours, excluding committee deliberations.
 - Unanimous approval by all committee members is required to pass.
 - If the student fails, one re-examination may be allowed, pending recommendation by the committee and approval by the Dean.
 - The second exam must occur at least two weeks later and within one year.

Graduate School Manual

7.55 Qualifying Examination (Ph.D. degree only)

7.55.1 General: Students without a master's degree who are accepted into a Ph.D. program are expected to take a qualifying examination during their first two academic semesters. This examination is intended to assess a student's potential to perform satisfactorily at the doctoral level, and shall not consist of courses taken unless specific approval has been granted by the Graduate Council. If granted, the courses shall be listed in the University of Rhode Island Catalog. The type of examination to be used, whether it is to be written or oral, or both, and the preparation and administration of the examination(s) are the responsibilities of the Graduate Program Director in consultation with 1) a departmental committee designed for this purpose or 2) with the major professor. The procedure used for giving qualifying examinations shall be incorporated into the departmental procedure given to each new student and filed with the Dean of the Graduate School. Written qualifying examinations should be, in general, scheduled for a minimum of four hours and oral examinations a minimum of two hours. Both the student and the Dean of the Graduate School will be informed promptly of the results of the examination(s) in accordance with the procedure described in [7.70](#). The form for reporting the results of the examination can be found at <https://web.uri.edu/graduate-school/forms/>. A student who fails the examination may be permitted one re-examination in the part or parts failed if re-examination is recommended by the examiners and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. The second examination may be taken only after an interval of ten weeks has passed, but before one year has elapsed.

7.55.2 Exemption from Qualifying Examination: Exemption from Qualifying Examination: A student who has earned a master's degree in the same or a closely related field before being admitted to a doctoral program does not usually take a qualifying examination, but may be required to do so if the department recommends it. The decision whether or not to require a qualifying examination shall be made by the department at the same time that the application for admission is processed. Both recommendations shall be transmitted simultaneously to the Dean of the Graduate

School by the program director. When a qualifying examination is required, it will be stipulated at the time of admission. (Amended March 4, 2024)

7.57 Comprehensive Examinations

7.57.1 General: Each doctoral student shall take comprehensive examinations at or near, but no later than twelve months after, completion of the formal courses stipulated in the Program of Study. Comprehensive examinations should be designed to assess a student's intellectual capacity and the adequacy of training or scholarly research. The comprehensive examinations that each student must pass shall consist of two parts as follows:

7.57.1.1 Part I – Written: This is a written examination of at least eight hours duration. When the student has met all prior requirements, the student's major professor in consultation with members of the doctoral committee including those from other departments, is authorized to prepare, administer, and evaluate the examination. The major professor, graduate program director/department chairperson, or Dean of the Graduate School will arrange the time and the place the examination is to be given in consultation with the student. The doctoral program shall review the results and shall make the final decision as to whether or not the student has passed. Unanimous approval by all members of the doctoral committee is required for passing. Both the student and the Dean of the Graduate School will be informed promptly of the results of the examination(s) in accordance with the procedure described in [7.70](#). The form for reporting the results of the examination can be found at <https://web.uri.edu/graduate-school/forms/>. After the examination has been graded, the results will be accepted in partial fulfillment for the degree for which the student is registered for up to five years from the time the examination is taken. A student who fails this examination may be allowed one re-examination in the part or parts failed if recommended by the doctoral committee and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. A second examination, if permitted, may be taken only after a minimum of two weeks has passed to allow for additional student preparation. In all cases, a second examination must take place before one year has elapsed.

7.57.1.2 Part II – Oral: The oral comprehensive examination shall be given only after passing and normally within four weeks following successful completion of the full written examination. An oral examination, of no more than two hours exclusive of committee deliberations, is conducted by the oral comprehensive examination committee, which consists of the doctoral program committee and one additional Graduate Faculty member nominated by the student in consultation with the major professor. The additional member will be from an outside area. The major professor shall act as chairperson for the oral comprehensive examination. The major professor, program director/department chairperson, or Dean of the Graduate School will be responsible for scheduling the oral comprehensive examination in consultation with the student and all potential members of the oral comprehensive examination committee. Following the given program's guidelines, the Major Professor must communicate the expected format for the oral exam to the student and the committee members in written form upon scheduling the exam. The customary format of the oral exam is for physical attendance of all oral comprehensive examination committee members and the student; however modifications of this format can be considered prior to the beginning of the exam. The location of the oral comprehensive examination must be agreed upon by unanimous consent at the time when the oral exam is scheduled, whether that location be virtual, physical, or hybrid in form. The full oral examination committee must be present for the duration of the oral exam, including the discussion of the results and final vote. (Amended November 21, 2022)

At the discretion of the major professor and the chair of the examination committee, an oral exam may be open to other faculty members as non-voting observers. Faculty observers can ask questions if recognized by the major professor. At any time during the exam, however, the major professor can clear the room of all faculty observers. Non-faculty may not attend an oral exam without unanimous consent of the student and doctoral program committee. The student will be notified orally of the results of the examination as soon as the committee has completed its deliberations. The exam chair is responsible for notifying the Dean of the Graduate School of the results of the examination promptly on the form provided for this purpose, digitally signed by all members of the oral examination committee and acknowledged by the Graduate Program Director. Unanimous approval by all members of the oral examination committee is required for passing. A student who fails the examination may be permitted one re-examination if re-examination is recommended by the committee and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. A second examination, if permitted, may be taken only after a minimum of two weeks has passed to allow for additional student preparation. In all cases, a second examination must take place before one year has elapsed. ([See 7.74](#)) (Amended March 4, 2024)

7.57.1.3 Time Limit: The results of the written and oral comprehensive examinations will remain valid for five years from the time the examinations are taken.