

Comprehensive Exam Information Session

Monday, February 18, 2019

Procedural Information

1. Establish who your chair will be and who will be members of your committee and their roles (i.e. chair, major program, outside unit/outside field). You may have 4 – 6 members on your committee. Typically, you will have 4 or 5. Upon occasion you may have a Special Member, who is someone who is NOT affiliated with PSU, but who is otherwise qualified due to their expertise in the student's research area. This is an unusual situation and not done very frequently. Grad Staff Asst will verify faculty member's percentage appointment for member or outside unit/outside field.
2. Email the Grad Staff Asst (Cheryl) with your committee make-up. The Grad Staff Asst will prepare the form for you to pick-up from her. You are responsible to obtain original signatures on the form and then return it to the Grad Staff Asst. Make sure you look at, and actually read the form as to who has to sign and where!
3. The Grad Staff Asst will submit your form to the Graduate School to have your committee established. This form needs to be submitted at least four weeks prior to the beginning of your comprehensive exams.
4. Once the committee is established and you have chosen your dates, the Grad Staff Asst will submit a "Request for Exam" form to the Grad School to request that you be able to sit for your exams (both written and oral). Please be sure that you have NO DF or NG on your transcript. After processing the request, the Grad School will send the department Grad Staff Asst your grading sheet.
5. After you have proceeded with your oral comprehensive exam, your committee will grade and sign the form. The chair returns the completed form to the Grad Staff Asst right after the exam. The Grad Staff Asst will then forward your paperwork to the Grad School for processing.
6. It will appear in your LionPATH that you have passed your oral comprehensive exam, along with the date that you did so.
7. The oral exam should take place about two weeks after the last written comprehensive exam.
8. The Grad Staff Asst will need a copy of your READING LIST. It is preferable to have this submitted before you start your first written exam.

Changes with the New Exam Format

1. In the old format, the exam was a total of 11 hours. The exam was broken out as follows: Day 1, 3 hours; Day 2, 3 hours; Day 3, 3 hours; Day 4, 2 hours. You would have taken the exam in an assigned room in the Burrowes Building. At this time, we currently do not have the physical space to accommodate this type of exam.

Changes with the New Exam Format, *continued*

2. With the new format, you have three exams. Each exam is 24 hours in length. You choose to receive the exam either at 8:30 a.m. or 1:30 p.m. You will also choose which days you would like to have the questions sent to you, excluding Saturday and Sunday. You will then have 24 hours to return your answers to the Grad Staff Asst. After all three exams are completed, the Grad Staff Asst will send your questions and answers to your chair in one email. The chair will forward your questions and answers to the committee along with any comments or instructions they wish to impart.
3. The Grad Staff Asst is working on a method in which the exam is auto-sent at the prescribed time without having to be physically present to send it. There was a trial completed, and at this point, it worked well.
4. Chair needs to send your questions to the Grad Staff Asst at least two days prior to the first written exam.

Issues

1. Advisors need to be clear on which exam is to be administered each day (Day 1, Day 2, Day 3) and the number of questions that should be answered from the submitted exam.
2. After you receive your questions, should you have any issues, please immediately email your chair, so that they can respond to you in a timely fashion. Questions might include how many questions to answer, etc.
3. Preferred way to save your files to send to the Grad Staff Asst: **SmithSue COMPS Day1Answers 02XX19**.
4. Scheduling a room for the oral defense is a timing issue with the current use of the rooms in Burrowes. So, the sooner you know and notify me of what date and time you want to schedule, the better!

Guidelines after COMPS

1. Arrange with your committee to determine a date and time to meet to have your dissertation topic approved. You are required to have the committee sign a form stating that they agree with your chosen topic. You will obtain this form from the Grad Staff Asst. The Grad Staff Asst can arrange for the meeting room.
2. Submit your signed form, along with a copy of your Dissertation Prospectus to the Grad Staff Asst. This goes in your file. The date is also entered to your LionPATH account. So, even though this is an in-house departmental form, you must make sure that you submit *(90 days after oral exam)* it. The Graduate School does check to see that the date of the prospectus meeting is listed in your LP.
3. If you need to change committee members, a natural time to do so is after the COMPS process.