

**SPROTT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
CARLETON UNIVERSITY**

**PhD Comprehensive Examination Procedures and Approval Form
(Seminal Works Version)**

Overview:

The comprehensive examination provides the opportunity for Ph.D. candidates to demonstrate key capabilities needed to successfully undertake a dissertation in line with the goals of the program. The successful completion of the comprehensive signals readiness to proceed to the dissertation. Through the comprehensive examination process, the candidate demonstrates the ability to critically master the material in research methodology, in an area of specialization, and in material covering seminal and important works in the Management discipline. The comprehensive requires students to answer examination questions in a complete and comprehensive way. Answers should demonstrate high-level analytical ability and knowledge.

Procedure:

The comprehensive examination must be completed successfully before the Ph.D. proposal defense is scheduled. They will be scheduled once per year (normally between June 1 and October 31). A three week period for the comprehensives will be determined each year by the Ph.D. Office, after assessing the requirements for the pool of students scheduled to take the exam. Students registering for the comprehensive examination will have completed all courses necessary to fulfill the program requirements. This normally occurs within 6 terms (24 months) of initial registration for full-time students and 12 terms (48 months) for part-time students. Full-time students must complete the exam within 8 terms (32 months) since registration while part-time students must do so within 16 terms (64 months). In exceptional circumstances, the Dean of Graduate Studies may permit an extension to the time allowed. Students who do not complete the comprehensive in the allotted time may be asked to withdraw from the program.

A comprehensive examination committee must be established by the thesis supervisor or mentor, in consultation and with approval of the Director of the Ph.D. Program. It must comprise of a minimum of 3 faculty members from the Sprott School of Business. One member should be the student's mentor or supervisor, one additional member from the student's area of focus, and at least one from outside the disciplinary area. The committee members will work together to set and assess the comprehensive examination. The examination committee must be established by the start of the 6th term since the student's initial registration, for full time students, and by the start of the 12th term for part-time students.

The Office of the Director of the Ph.D. program will ascertain whether multiple students scheduled to take the comprehensive exams share the same supervisor or are from the same area of specialization. Efforts will be made to ensure that all such students, as far as possible, take the same exam at the same time. Each student will have his or her own examination committee. However, several students with the same supervisor or the same area of focus may take the same exam at the same time. This will be assessed when the pool is known.

Upon approval of the comprehensive examination committee, the Director of the Ph.D. Program will allow the students to register in BUSI 6908 Ph.D. Comprehensives. Once registered in the course, the student must maintain continuous registration in the course until it is satisfactorily completed.

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Document Submission: Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisor:

- Submit the **Proposed Comprehensive Examination Committee Form**, proposing the members of the examination committee and the student that will be examined at least six weeks before the exam is to be held.
- Submit the **Comprehensive Examination Scheduling Form** for scheduling the examination one month prior to the date the examination will be held.
- Submit the **Comprehensive Examination Question Submission Form** to the Director of the Ph.D. Program one week prior to the scheduled exam taking place. The questions will be retained in the files of Ph.D. Program office.
- Submit marked examination documents to the Director of the Ph.D. Program within one week of the written examination.

Student:

Submit written examination documents to the Director of the Ph.D. Program immediately upon completion of the examination. The original documents submitted will be retained in the files of Ph.D. Program office.

Examination Chair:

Submit the completed examination results forms to the Director of the Ph.D. program immediately following the oral examination.

Ph.D. Director

- To approve the comprehensive examination committee.
- To coordinate and schedule the comprehensive examination.
- Ensure that the examination questions meet the requirements for a Ph.D. Comprehensive.
- Select oral comprehensive examination chair.
- Keep records of all material and correspondence related to the comprehensive examinations.

The Structure of the Comprehensive Examination

The oral and written examinations will emphasize both depth and breadth of understanding at a level appropriate for a Ph.D. candidate. Successful students will be able to competently synthesize and apply important concepts across different course areas.

Written Component:

The written examination will cover material relating to the student's area of specialization, research methodology associated with that area, and seminal and important works in the Management field. The reading list for the seminal and important works will be assigned by the comprehensive examination committee at least one month prior to the written examination taking place. It should comprise of 5-10 seminal academic works. The student will be asked to answer questions on four areas: two relating to the student's area of specialization, one relating to research methodology, and one relating to the seminal and important works in the Management field. The actual type and length of time for the examination will be determined by the examination committee. Examinations may be administered a classroom setting or be set as take home. A maximum of seven (7) calendar days will be allowed to complete the written part of the examination. The written examination will be administered by the Director of the Ph.D. Program or Designate.

It is expected that:

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1. The student will complete the examination by answering the questions posed by the comprehensive examination committee.
2. The student will be expected to answer the questions posed in an organized and coherent fashion. The answers to the questions must demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the area being examined and draw on classic pieces of work as well as work on the forefront of knowledge in the area. The student must demonstrate advanced analytical ability in addressing the questions in a complete and comprehensive manner.
3. Answers to questions may range in length but students should expect to write between 10-20 pages for each question.
4. Student will submit the written exam to the Ph.D. Administrator at the time specified.

Note: *In case the committee finds that the written examination does not meet expectations, the student may be asked to redo the exam.*

Oral Component:

The submission of the written examination will be followed by the oral examination. The student will be examined orally on the material covered in the written comprehensive examination. The oral examination will only take place if the written examination is passed satisfactorily. An independent Chair for the oral examination will be assigned by the Director of the Ph.D. Program.

It is expected that:

1. The oral examination associated with the comprehensive requirement will take approximately 2-3 hours (a break during the exam will likely be appropriate).
2. The student may make a brief presentation of the essay (15 minutes max.). Examiners will ask questions based on their review of the written work. Normally, examiners will ask questions in two rounds.

Possible Outcomes of the Comprehensive Examination:

The student may receive grade of “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory”. A student receiving a grade of “unsatisfactory” will be given one opportunity for re-examination. This re-examination should take place not more than six months after the first examination. If a second “unsatisfactory” grade is received the student will be withdrawn from the program.

Notes: *In decision making by the committee, the majority rule applies. Students must pass the comprehensive examination before defending the thesis proposal; continuous registration is required in BUSI 6908 until the student successfully completes the comprehensive examination.*

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Proposed Comprehensive Examination Committee Form
(to be submitted 6 weeks prior to the proposed examination date)

PhD Candidate: _____ Student #: _____

Area of Specialization: _____

Proposed Title: _____

Proposed Examination Date: _____

Proposed Comprehensive Examination Committee:

Supervisor/Mentor: _____

Committee Member: _____
(member of specialization area)

Committee Member: _____
(member outside of specialization area)

Ph.D. Director's signed Approval: _____

Date: _____

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Comprehensive Examination Scheduling Form
(to be submitted 4 weeks prior to the proposed examination date)

PhD Candidate: _____ Student #: _____

Area of Specialization: _____

Supervisor/Mentor: _____

Title: _____

Proposed Written Exam Dates (a range of up to 7 calendar days): _____

Proposed Oral Examination Date: _____
(at least 2 weeks after written submission)

Proposed Oral Examination Time: _____

List of Readings:

Please list 5-10 seminal academic works on which the student will be examined in addition to the student's area of specialization, and research methodology.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Ph.D. Director's signed Approval: _____

Date: _____

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Comprehensive Examination Question Submission Form
(to be submitted 1 week prior to the proposed examination date)

PhD Candidate: _____ Student #: _____

Supervisor/Mentor: _____

Examination Questions:

Students must answer questions on four areas: two relating to the student's area of specialization, one relating to research methodology, and one relating to the seminal and important works in the Management field

1.

2.

3.

4.

Ph.D. Director's signed Approval: _____

Date: _____