

**SPROTT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
CARLETON UNIVERSITY**

PhD Comprehensive Examination Procedures and Approval Form

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 foundational 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 skills, knowledge, and competencies.

Procedure:

The comprehensive examination must be completed successfully before the Ph.D. proposal defense is scheduled. 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 the 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.

Once registered in BUSI 6908 (Ph.D. Comprehensives), the student must maintain continuous registration in the course until it is satisfactorily completed. Upon approval of the Comprehensive Examination Committee and Scheduling Form (page 5), the comprehensive is allowed to proceed.

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Document Submission: Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisor:

- Submit the **Comprehensive Examination Committee and Scheduling Approval Form** (page 5) to the Director of the Ph.D. Program, proposing the members of the examination committee, the scheduling of the written and oral comprehensive and the student that will be examined at least six weeks before the written examination begins.
- Once approved, the Supervisor informs the student of the scheduling of the written and oral examinations.
- Submit the **Comprehensive Examination Reading List Approval Form** (page 6) to the Director of the Ph.D. Program, 5 weeks before the written examination begins. The reading list will be retained in the files of the Ph.D. Program office.
- Once the Reading List is approved, the Supervisor must send the reading list to the student one month (4 weeks) before the written examination begins.
- Submit the **Comprehensive Examination Question Approval Form** (page 7) to the Director of the Ph.D. Program one week before the written examination begins. The questions will be retained in the files of the Ph.D. Program office.
- Submit grade (SAT/UNS) 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 the 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/Ph.D. Office

- Approve the comprehensive examination committee and scheduling.
- Ensure that the reading list meets the requirements for a Ph.D. Comprehensive.
- Ensure that the examination questions meet the requirements for a Ph.D. Comprehensive.
- Send the exam questions to the student on the scheduled day and time.
- Receive the exam answers from the student on the scheduled day and time and submit to their committee for review.
- Select oral comprehensive examination chair and coordinate room (or online scheduling) for oral exam.
- 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 foundational works in the Management field. The reading

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list will be assigned by the comprehensive examination committee at least 5 weeks before the written examination begins. 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 foundational works in the Management field.

Students who have taken and passed BUSI 5980/6910-Foundations of Management Theory and Research successfully (with a grade of B- or higher) will not be required to have the 4th question (relating to the foundational works in the Management field) and will only be required to have 3 questions on the comprehensive exam. Therefore, these students will also not require a reading list for the 4th question (relating to the foundational works in the Management field).

Examinations will be set as take home (open book). A maximum of seven (7) calendar days will be allowed to complete the written part of the examination (e.g. If the exam begins on Monday at 9:00 am, it will be due the following Monday before 9 am). The written examination will be administered by the Director of the Ph.D. Program or Designate.

It is expected that:

1. The student will complete the examination by answering the questions posed by the comprehensive examination committee.
2. The student will 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 (double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 or equivalent font).
4. The student will submit the written exam to the Ph.D. Administrator and the Ph.D. Director 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 will make a brief presentation (15-20 minutes max.) with a PowerPoint presentation. 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 a 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

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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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Comprehensive Examination Committee and Scheduling Approval Form
(to be submitted 6 weeks before the written examination begins)

PhD Candidate: _____ Student #: _____

Area of Specialization: _____

Written Examination Date and Time Start (*ex. Monday, August 6th at 9am*):

Written Examination Date and Time Submission (*ex. Monday, August 13th at 9am*):

A maximum of seven (7) calendar days will be allowed to complete the written part of the examination

Oral Examination Date: _____

(at least 2 weeks after the written examination is submitted)

Oral Examination Time: _____

Comprehensive Examination Committee:

Supervisor/Mentor: _____

Co-Supervisor (if applicable): _____

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 Readings List Approval Form
(to be submitted 5 weeks before the written examination begins)

PhD Candidate: _____ Student #: _____

Area of Specialization: _____

Supervisor/Mentor: _____

Co-Supervisor (if applicable): _____

List of Readings:

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 foundational works in the Management field.

Students who have taken and passed BUSI 5980/6910-Foundations of Management Theory and Research successfully (with a grade of B- or higher) will not be required to have the 4th question (relating to the foundational works in the Management field) and will only be required to have 3 questions on the comprehensive exam. Therefore, these students will also not require a reading list for the 4th question (relating to the foundational works in the Management field).

Has the student taken and passed BUSI 5980/6910-Foundations of Management Theory and Research successfully (with a grade of B- or higher)? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, please submit a reading list associated with the three areas in an attachment to this form: two relating to the student's area of specialization and one relating to research methodology.

If No, please submit a reading list associated with the four areas in an attachment to this form: two relating to the student's area of specialization, one relating to research methodology, and one relating to the foundational works in the Management field.

Ph.D. Director's signed Approval: _____ Date: _____

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Comprehensive Examination Question Approval Form
(to be submitted 1 week before the written examination begins)

PhD Candidate: _____ Student #: _____

Supervisor/Mentor: _____

Co-Supervisor (if applicable): _____

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 foundational works in the Management field. Students who have taken and passed BUSI 5980/6910-Foundations of Management Theory and Research successfully (with a grade of B- or higher) will not be required to have the 4th question (relating to the foundational works in the Management field) and will only be required to have 3 questions on the comprehensive exam.

Has the student taken and passed BUSI 5980/6910-Foundations of Management Theory and Research successfully (with a grade of B- or higher)? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, please submit 3 examination questions in an attachment to this form: two relating to the student's area of specialization and one relating to research methodology.

If No, please attach 4 examination questions in an attachment to this form: two relating to the student's area of specialization, one relating to research methodology, and one relating to the foundational works in the Management field.

Ph.D. Director's signed Approval: _____ Date: _____