

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98195



*Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in
Near and Middle Eastern Studies
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**GUIDELINES FOR PH.D. COMMITTEES AND EXAMINATIONS
(Revised Autumn 2005)**

LANGUAGE EXAMS:

The minimum language requirement for the doctoral program is three languages other than English. The student's Supervisory Committee decides whether the required languages consist of two regional languages and one Western European, or vice versa. This same committee decides whether a fourth language will be required (and is encouraged to do so for students pursuing language related researches), and whether that language will be regional or Western European. If four languages are required, no more than two would be Western European. One regional language should consist of a Middle Eastern language at an advanced level, while one European language should be at a minimum reading level competence. The Supervisory Committee selects the third language. The language requirements may be met by one of the following:

- Two years of course work at the university level except for Arabic and Chinese for which three years are required.
- Passing the proficiency exam administered by either the Educational Assessment Center, U.W., or by an appropriate language and literature department following their procedures. A copy of the exam is to be filed with the student's record.
- The language requirements must be met before the General Exam, and students are encouraged to meet it before taking the Preliminary Exams

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

A student's Ph.D. supervisory committee shall consist of no less than three members of the University of Washington's Graduate School faculty as well as a representative of the Graduate School (GSR). The chair of the committee must be an active member of the Graduate Faculty. At least two members of the committee must be members of the Near and Middle Eastern Studies faculty group. Additional members may be asked to join the committee. The Supervisory Committee must be established at least one month before the Preliminary Exams are taken and at least four months before the general exam warrant is submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School.

The above deadline for establishing a supervisory committee is a formal program requirement. However, students are urged to identify a committee chairperson within the first two quarters of doctoral work. Moreover, by the end of the first year the student should have informally selected the majority of his/her supervisory committee members. One of the supervisory committee's primary responsibilities consists of making sure that the student moves through the program in a satisfactory and timely fashion.

The Graduate Coordinator will provide the student at his/her request with the program form for establishing the supervisory committee. The form must be signed by each committee member signifying a commitment to participate. Or this can be done via email, with confirmation from each committee member indicating his/her willingness to serve and in what role.

EXAMS:

The student will be expected to take the following exams (questions to be set by members of the student's supervisory committee):

- A. Preliminary exams. This consists of three written exams and an oral exam. The three written exams include: an **area of specialization** exam, a **theory and discipline** exam, and a **self-designated field** exam, revolving around the student's interest (e.g., political economy, literary theory, or state-society relations). The **oral exam** following the written exams will be 2 hours in length and will address all these areas.
- B. General exam/Proposal Defense. The student will submit the written dissertation proposal, followed by an oral exam, 2 hours in length.
- C. Final exam. This is the Ph.D. dissertation defense. It consists of a public presentation of the main findings in the dissertation with questions from the audience, followed by a conversation exclusively with the Supervisory Committee.

Scheduling of Exams*: The Program suggests beginning the Preliminary exams after the second year of doctoral work. They must be taken no later than during the third quarter of the third year. The student must complete the three written portions of the preliminary exams within one month of each other. The oral portion of the exams must immediately follow these. Within two quarters following the Preliminary Exam, the student must take the General Exam. The Final Exam is scheduled at the discretion of the student, in consultation with his/her Supervisory Committee.

ACTION: Within one month of the completion of each exam, the supervisory committee shall recommend that the student (a) proceed with his/her work toward the next exam or candidacy, (b) retake the preceding exam at an agreed upon date (set by the supervisory committee and the student), or (c) withdraw from the program on the grounds that the student will not be able to make satisfactory progress toward the degree.

* Please note: It is possible for the student to petition to have any of the deadlines mentioned in these guidelines extended, but such petitions are not automatically approved. They must be approved by both the Program Director and the Chair of the Supervisory Committee.

PRELIMINARY EXAM:

AREA OF SPECIALIZATION, THEORY AND DISCIPLINE, AND SELF-DESIGNATED FIELD EXAMS: These exams will take place over 3 days, with the student being allowed 8 hours per exam. The exam questions shall be made available to the student by 8:30 AM and are to be turned in by 4:30 PM of the same day. The supervisory committee will set the dates, place, and conditions including rules on the use of computers, dictionaries, library resources, etc., for each exam a month before the exam and shall include a copy of these guidelines/rules in the student's file. After the exam, a copy of the answered exam questions shall be placed in the student's file.

ORAL EXAM: The oral exam is two hours in length with the participation of the Supervisory Committee. It should take place in the same quarter as the written portions of the exam. It does not need to be scheduled through the Graduate School.

GENERAL EXAM:

PH.D. PROPOSAL DEFENSE: The graduate student shall submit to the supervisory committee no later than the end of the second quarter following the preliminary exam and at least a month before the scheduled oral exam a dissertation proposal.

ORAL EXAM: This oral exam shall follow the Graduate School guidelines and regulations and must be formally scheduled through the Graduate School via the following link: <http://www.grad.washington.edu/mygrad/student.htm>. The oral exam shall not take place later than two weeks after the submission of the proposal to the Supervisory Committee. The oral exam shall consist of the presentation of the proposal followed by questions and a conversation about it.

The supervisory committee's recommendations after the oral exam shall follow the standard guidelines with the options of recommending the candidate become a Ph.D. candidate, retake the written and/or oral exam, or fail.

Final Exam:

Time Limits for Completion of the Dissertation:

The Graduate School requires that students complete all work for the Ph.D. within a period of ten years. It is possible for the Program to petition to have this limit extended, but such petitions are not automatically granted.

The Reading Committee:

Following the General Examination and prior to the Final Examination, a Dissertation Reading Committee must be established. The Reading Committee consists of three faculty members drawn from the student's Supervisory Committee with the student's primary faculty adviser serving as Chair of both committees. Once the student and the Committee have agreed upon the make-up of the Reading Committee, the student should ask the Graduate Coordinator to inform the Dean of the Graduate School and ask that the Reading Committee be formally established.

The Reading Committee must read and approve a draft of the dissertation before the Final Examination is scheduled.

The Final Examination: Scheduling

When a complete, although not necessarily a final, draft of the dissertation has been judged substantially acceptable to the Reading Committee, the Candidate can schedule the defense/Final Exam. After all Supervisory Committee members agree on the date and time, the Candidate schedules it at: <http://www.grad.washington.edu/mygrad/student.htm>. This should be done a minimum of three weeks prior to the date of the Final Examination. If the Candidate has met all Graduate School requirements for the degree, a warrant authorizing the Final Examination is issued by the Graduate School.

The Final Examination: Format

The Final Examination normally takes approximately two hours and consists of the student's defense of his/her doctoral dissertation. The Candidate is usually asked to give a 20-30 minute presentation on the subject of the dissertation and then the members of the Committee are given the opportunity to ask any questions that they might have about the argument(s) and/or evidence presented in the dissertation.

Submission of the Dissertation

After the Final Examination has been completed, the Candidate must (1) return the warrant to the NME Ph.D. program office, signed by those members of the Supervisory Committee who attended the Final Examination; (2) submit the dissertation electronically, following the directions at: <http://www.grad.washington.edu/students/etd/info.shtml>. Note: the student must be registered in the quarter in which the defense takes place, as well as the quarter in which the dissertation is submitted.