

Qualifying Examination Procedures

For

Ph.D. Students

(enrolling *BEFORE* Fall 2009)

in

Instructional Technology

Qualifying Exam Guidelines for Doctoral Students
in
Instructional Technology
@
The University of Texas at Austin

To be admitted as Ph.D. candidates, students will be examined by the faculty in their program area through two written examinations followed by an oral defense of the written examination.

Qualifying Examination Committee Constituency

The Qualifying Examination Committee will consist of a chairperson and four other faculty members:

- The chair or one of two co-chairs must be from IT.
- At least two members must be from IT.
- At least three members of the committee must be from the C&I department.
- One member of the committee must be from another department.

At least one member of the qualifying Examination Committee must be on the student's Dissertation Committee.

Components of Qualifying Examination

Qualifying Examinations consist of three parts: Part A) a four-hour Comprehensive Examination related to the foundational knowledge of education and instructional technology; Part B) a four-hour Specialization Examination related to IT; and Part C) a two-hour Oral Defense in which the student elaborates or justifies responses on the written examinations and can demonstrate readiness to proceed with the dissertation.

Description of the Qualifying Examination Components

Comprehensive Examination (Part A)* is a four-hour written examination that is prepared by the student's Qualifying Examination Committee, and which represents the foundational knowledge of curriculum, cultural foundations, instructional psychology, and research methods.

Specialization Examination (Part B)* is a four-hour written examination prepared by the student's area of concentration by the Qualifying Examination Committee.

- For students with college degrees in an academic language other than English, part A and part B have been extended to eight hours each.

Oral Defense (Part C) is a two-hour oral examination conducted by the student's Qualifying Examination Committee. The written examinations and general coursework serve as the basis

for the oral defense. The committee must also determine that the student is prepared to engage in dissertation research.

Scheduling the Written Examinations

Step 1: A student will schedule the Qualifying Examination on the basis of advice from the IT Program Area Coordinator and the committee chairperson. Parts A, B and C should be completed within one semester and are usually conducted during the Fall or Spring semesters.

Step 2: When a student is ready to schedule their qualifying examinations, they secure agreement of an IT faculty to chair the Qualifying Examination Committee and choose the other members of the Committee.

Step 3: When a student has secured agreement of five faculty members to serve on the Qualifying Examination Committee, they obtain from the Graduate Coordinator the following two forms: 1) **Intent to Take C & I Doctoral Qualifying Exam**, and 2) **Program of Work (in guideline form)**. The **Intent** form lists the names of the Qualifying Examination Committee members. The **Program of Work** form, which follows IT program guidelines, is to be completed and typed. Both the **Intent** form and the **Program of Work** form should be reviewed by the IT faculty advisor, the IT program advisor and then returned to the Graduate Coordinator in the C&I office no later than three weeks before Part A is to be taken.

Step 4: The Graduate Coordinator will then circulate to members of the Qualifying Examination Committee a copy of the student's **Program of Work** (in guideline form). For Parts A & B, the chair of the Qualifying Examination Committee will confer with the committee members on the nature and number of questions of each part of the examination. The committee chair will prepare the examination and deliver a copy to the Graduate Coordinator at least two days before the examination scheduled.

Step 5: A computer will be provided. This is a closed book/notebook exam. Notes, books, and wireless devices are not allowed. A dictionary and thesaurus will be provided during the examination.

Step 6: After completing the examination, the student will turn in the responses to the Graduate Coordinator in SZB 406 who will duplicate the questions and responses. A copy of the entire examination will be sent to each of the Qualifying Examination Committee members and a copy to the student.

Scheduling the Oral Defense

For the Oral Defense (Part C), the student must schedule a two-hour block of time on a date agreeable to all members of the Qualifying Committee. When the date and time are firm, notify the C&I Graduate Coordinator who will send a written notice of date, time, and place of Part C to each committee member and to the student (usually at the same time the Part A and B responses are sent).

The Oral Defense is scheduled a minimum of three weeks after both Part A and Part B have been taken to allow the Graduate Coordinator time to duplicate the entire examination and the committee time to review the written responses. Students are advised to work backward from the Part C date to allow enough time (usually about six weeks) for the entire exam process.

Evaluating the Qualifying Examinations

The entire written examination is read and evaluated by the Qualifying Examination Committee. Any faculty member may attend any student's Oral Defense with permission from the Qualifying Examination Committee Chair. At the close of the Oral Defense, the student will be told whether her or she passes, passes with conditions, or fails the exam.

Decisions

A decision to pass the student means the student will advance to qualifying. A decision to pass with conditions means the student will be allowed to advance to qualifying as soon as specified conditions are met. The imposition of these conditions is intended to help the student strengthen areas that are of concern to the faculty (e.g. additional research coursework, additional involvement in research projects, additional courses in content areas). The Qualifying Examination Committee chair is usually responsible for monitoring student work on the conditions set.

A decision to fail will carry the recommendation that the student be dropped from the program or that the student retake one or all parts of the Qualifying Examination. In the case of a recommendation to redo, the student will be given specific suggestions. One retake is permitted according to Graduate Studies Committee policy.

When the student is recommended for advancement to qualifying, the student's program is submitted to the C&I faculty for review. The program cannot have incompletes. The C&I Graduate Coordinator will then formally notify the student of the results and guide the preparation and submission of qualifying papers.

Dissertation

Once the student is advanced to qualifying, s/he will proceed to form the dissertation committee. The Dissertation Committee for IT students will consist of a chairperson and four other faculty members:

- The chair or one of two co-chairs must be from IT.
- At least three members of the committee must be from the C&I department.
- One member of the committee must be from another department.

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