

## **CANDIDACY EXAM PROCEDURES (PhD in Leadership Studies)**

### **DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

The candidacy exam is completed within three years of registration as a Doctoral student and before writing the dissertation proposal. The candidacy examination cannot be completed within the first six months of the initial registration, and normally, will be undertaken when all course work is completed and the supervisor believes the PHD student is ready.

#### **Overview and purpose**

The goal of the candidacy exam is to affirm your preparedness and competence to do research that will culminate in a PhD dissertation in Leadership Studies. The candidacy exam should be considered an important developmental stage in the student's work. The questions should challenge the candidate to synthesize and integrate theory, research and practice in ways that will advance their thinking and conceptualization and position them to design and propose the doctoral research. Candidacy papers may be integrated in the proposal and dissertation, be published in their own right, or serve as a foundation for the proposal. However, they will not necessarily become chapters in the dissertation.

Specifically, the candidacy exam will:

1. Test understanding of material considered essential to completion of a Ph.D. degree and/or the student's competency to do research which will culminate in the dissertation
2. Provide a foundation for designing and proposing dissertation research
3. Examine independent scholarly writing and conceptualization.

#### **Format**

1. **Written component:** Two original papers (one methodological and one in the student's area of specialization) to be written independently without discussion or consultation with other human beings.
2. **Oral component:** A brief presentation of the papers and an oral examination of the content of those papers.

#### **Procedures**

1. In consultation with the committee and with reasonable familiarity with the candidate's area of research and written work to date, the supervisor will construct two questions (one methodological and one in the candidate's area of specialization). The questions will require original writing (i.e. ideas should not be cut and pasted from student's own past papers) designed to advance thinking and conceptualization in preparation for designing and proposing doctoral research.
2. A first paper will be completed within **15 days** and will be followed by a break of up to two weeks. A second paper will be completed within **15 days** following the break. Both papers will normally be submitted electronically to the PhD committee.
3. All PhD committee members must read both papers **within 2 weeks**.
4. The oral examination will be scheduled **within 30 days** from completion. The papers are not to be discussed with the candidate prior to the oral examination.
5. An oral exam of not more than 2 hours will consist of: (a) 20 minute presentation in which the candidate should overview the papers, and (b) questions from the committee. Intent of the

questions is to: (a) clarify points of confusion or areas needing elaboration, (b) confirm that the papers were indeed written by the candidate, (c) guide or inform next steps for the doctoral research.

6. Immediately after the oral exam, the committee will hold an *in camera* discussion to determine the outcome of the exam (written and oral combined). The candidate will immediately be informed of the grade.

7. The candidacy examination grade will be: (a) Clear Pass; (b) Marginal Pass; (c) Retake (i.e. retake of an individual question or of the overall examination); or (d) Fail.

8. If an examination is failed, the Committee will determine whether the student may undertake further preparation and repeat the examination (i.e., within the 2-year maximum) or whether it should be recommended to the Dean of Graduate Studies that the student be required to withdraw. If the examination is passed, the Supervisor(s) will notify the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the student's candidacy for the degree of Ph.D. In the case of a retake, the committee must clearly identify areas of concern in writing, determine a deadline for resubmission, and clearly indicate whether the paper/s need to be orally defended again, and/or read and approved by each committee member.

9. Both the exam questions and documentation about the results of the candidacy exam must be clearly recorded in the student's file.

### **Requirements**

- Papers should be published manuscript length (approx. 20 double spaced pages each before references).
- Candidates are strongly encouraged to clear their schedules to devote the month to focus exclusively on the candidacy papers.
- Candidates may not discuss or consult with another human being about the content of the papers. However they can discuss the process and strategies for organizing and writing.
- The papers must represent the candidate's original thinking and writing.
- The papers cannot be edited by a professional editor or proofreader.
- The papers should include APA citations and references.
- The papers should demonstrate scholarly writing using APA writing style and formatting and be carefully proofread prior to submission.

For unique situations or extenuating circumstances, exam timing may be adjusted. However, any deviation from the format outlined in this document, requires written request and documentation to support the change in format, and written approval from the doctoral committee members and graduate advisor.