

CSPT CANDIDACY EXAM GUIDELINES

September 2024

1. The CSPT Candidacy Exam will consist of two (2) mandatory Categories (or parts). For both Categories, the student and their (Co-)Supervisor will identify two *problématiques* (or two sets of related *problématiques*) from the [list of problématiques](#) provided on the Candidacy Exam page on the CSPT website. A *problématique* not on the list may be proposed with the permission of the CSPT Director. From the sources they find appropriate in relation to their selected *problématiques*, the student and their (Co-)Supervisor will construct two Reading Lists (20 books or equivalent in each). The bibliographies for these lists *may* be drawn from the [former CSPT Reading List](#), but such is for guidance only and not compulsory. Having both “contemporary” and “foundational” texts is encouraged.
2. The (Co-)Supervisor shall then send a memo (via e-mail) requesting the Director’s approval. The memo will include the following information:
 - (a) An attachment containing the PhD student’s finalized Candidacy Reading List that adheres to the criteria listed above.
 - (b) The student’s selected format for writing and submitting the CSPT Candidacy Exam (see below).
 - (c) The names of two CSPT faculty members who will participate, in addition to student’s (Co-)Supervisor, in the student’s Candidacy Exam Committee. In the composition of Examining Committee, at least two (2) of the CSPT participating departments must be represented.
 - (d) The tentative dates of exam and defense (see below).
3. The Reading List is to be ratified by CSPT Director. The Director is mandated to check that the bibliography adheres to the required number of 40 books or equivalent and that they adhere to the two *problématiques* proposed. The Director is encouraged to check that there is a mix of both “contemporary” and “foundational” texts. The CSPT Director’s written approval will officiate the process.
4. The student’s (Co-)Supervisor and Candidacy Examination Committee create the Candidacy Exam Paper, normally consisting of six (6) questions – 3 questions for each Category – of which the student will be required to answer two (2) questions, or specifically, one (1) question from each Category.
5. The Candidacy Examination Committee will meet with the student one (1) month prior to sending out the Candidacy Exam questions to the student. This meeting is intended to clarify the entire process of Candidacy Examination to the student and answer their questions.
6. In terms of the writing and submission of the Candidacy Exam, the CSPT Program allows the students, should they so choose, to follow the format of their participating Department in writing a comprehensive/field exam. CSPT Program recognizes that the student may choose any of the following formats:
 - (a) The exam questions will be provided to the student 24 hours in advance of writing. The exam itself will take **five (5) hours** and the student will write it in the student’s Department and under

the supervision of their (Co-)Supervisor. The submitted exam will take the form of an exam write-up.

- (b) The exam questions will be given to the student at the agreed-upon date and time, in coordination with their (Co-)Supervisor and the answers are due in **72 hours**. The submitted exam will take the form of a short paper.
- (c) The exam questions will be released to the student at 9.00 a.m. of the agreed upon date and the student is required to submit the exam to their (Co-)Supervisor precisely **one week** from the date/time they receive the questions. The submitted exam will take the form of a fully referenced, extended theory paper.

7. A **two-hour Oral Examination** is scheduled no later than two weeks after the submission date of the written exam. The Oral Examination will only take place upon the agreement of Candidacy Examination Committee that the submitted, written Exam is acceptable. The student's (Co-)Supervisor will oversee this process and set up the Oral Examination.
8. The student's (Co-)Supervisor is encouraged to meet with the student and help them prepare for the Oral Examination.
9. The Examining Committee will be chaired by the CSPT Director. In case the Director is unavailable or is the student's Supervisor, a CSPT Faculty designated by CSPT Director will chair the CSPT Candidacy Oral Examination. The chair's function is to observe that the student's written exam accords with his/her chosen format and the oral exam reflects the written exam.
10. The CSPT Candidacy Examining Committee will vote on the student's performance. Should the Examining Committee find the written component insufficient, the student will be given a second opportunity to write up the Candidacy Exam according to the above procedures. Should the Examining Committee find the oral component insufficient, the student will be given a second opportunity for Oral Examination within a maximum of six (6) months. The (Co-)Supervisor will make the arrangements for a second Oral Examination. Failing the second examinations will require that the student withdraw from the CSPT Program. The student may appeal this decision by referring to the Student Appeal Procedures of their home Department.
11. In case of a successful written exam and oral defence, the Supervisor is required to collect the signatures of the members of Examining Committee and file a "CSPT PhD Candidacy Exam Completion Report" to the Graduate Secretary of the student's Department. This form will stay in the student's records to ensure that proper record of his/her work is kept and sent to Faculty of Graduate Studies.