



COLLEGE OF

Natural and Social Sciences

Procedures for the Comprehensive Examination

To inform departments in the administration of comprehensive examinations, the following procedures have been developed and approved by the Graduate Studies Subcommittee and the Educational Policy Committee of the College of Natural and Social Sciences.

Although the format will vary from discipline to discipline, a comprehensive examination should aim to test the master's candidates' ability to integrate the significant materials and generalize about the field, rather than merely to repeat information or demonstrate skills acquired in particular courses.

- Adhere to departmental policy regarding the establishment of a comprehensive examination committee. A committee should have a least three faculty members to administer the comprehensive examination. All members of the committee must be approved by the department chair.
- Department should establish, disseminate, and enforce procedures for comprehensive examinations.
- Departments should establish scheduling procedures of exams, which must be scheduled at least once a semester.
- Comprehensive examinations must be given prior to or during the final examination period in any semester.
- Students will normally take the comprehensive examination in the semester in which they complete their course work or in a later semester.
- Students may not take the comprehensive examination if they are on academic probation.
- Students who are enrolled in 5960 (comps exam) cannot change to thesis or project culminating experience.
- Departments shall allow at least two, but no more than three, attempts to pass the comprehensive examination.
- Departments shall notify the NSS Dean's Office immediately in writing of students who failed the comprehensive examination for the final time.
- In addition to the above requirements regarding the master's thesis, students are reminded that credit for courses will expire seven years after a course is taken, if degree requirements are not met by that time. The 5970 units will expire after five years.