COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION GUIDELINES
FOR THE DOCTOR OF EDUCATION PROGRAM (UWF)

*The new format of the comprehensive examination process takes effect on July 1, 2016

Purpose

The purpose of the comprehensive examination includes the following considerations: (a) demonstrate synthesis across ideas, content areas, and courses; (b) demonstrate specialization of knowledge within a particular domain; (c) demonstrate in-depth competency within program areas; (c) integrate content from program courses with professional/experiential knowledge; and (d) support initial work efforts toward the dissertation. The comprehensive exam process proposed for consideration for beginning in July 2016 includes the following components:

Instructions

Students are required to provide well-developed scholarly responses to each of the following three questions, which make up the written portion of the comprehensive examination. Questions will be provided in the second week of the semester in which students are scheduled to take examination. Responses must be submitted within two weeks of receipt of the questions. The oral portion of the examination will be scheduled two weeks following the submission of the written examination. Each response must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Minimum 18 pages, maximum 25 pages per question
- Times New Roman, 12pt font
- Current APA formatting, with proper citation and referencing of scholarly sources.

Process and Administration

After completion of all doctoral course work, eligible students are required to successfully complete the Comprehensive Examination. This examination is a take-home which will last for two weeks, typically from the second to the fourth week of the semester in which the examination takes place. The examination includes written and oral components. The student’s Doctoral and Comprehensive Examination Committee shall use the results from the Comprehensive Examination to determine if the student is eligible to move to Advanced Standing.

Students shall complete a Comprehensive Examination Request Form (to be signed by the committee and division chair1) and submit the form and a final degree plan to the Ed.D. Program office in accordance with the posted schedule. Once the student has completed the examination, the committee chair shall complete and forward a Graduate Student Status Form to the Director of Doctoral Studies indicating the committee’s decision about the student’s performance on the Comprehensive Examination.

In the event that a student should fail all or part of the examination, the student may be

1 Department Chair, Division Chair, Director
subsequently reexamined as deemed appropriate by the student’s Doctoral and Comprehensive Examination Committee. The student’s second attempt on any part of the written or oral examination must result in achieving a grade of “pass” or the student shall be dismissed from the program. The Comprehensive Examination will take place in the second half of the semester, therefore in the event a student has to retake any portion of it, arrangements should be made to complete the retake in the first half of the next semester. No student will be allowed to register for Doctoral Seminar III without passing the Comprehensive Examination. Since the examination is a take-home, any responses from a student found to be plagiarized will be failed and the student will not have the opportunity for a second attempt. Subsequently the student shall be dismissed from the program.

**Eligibility to take Comprehensive Examination**

Students electing to take the Comprehensive Examination must meet the following minimum requirements and conditions:

- Complete all course work including Doctoral Seminar I and must be registered in Doctoral Seminar II.
- Possess a University of West Florida grade point average of at least 3.25.
- Complete required core and program area course work (to include specified competencies in their formal degree plan) with a grade of B- or above.
- Submit a formal, signed degree plan.
- Constitute a Doctoral and Comprehensive Examination Committee (DCEC)

**Written Component of the Comprehensive Examination**

The Comprehensive Examination questions and instructions will be uploaded to the eLearning course shell titled *Comprehensive Examination* by the Ed.D. Program Office on the first day of the second week of the semester. The student must be registered in Doctoral Seminar II to access the examination. Students who have fulfilled all requirements as well as completed all required forms for the Comprehensive Examination will be manually uploaded by the Ed.D. Program Office into the eLearning course. The student will be given two weeks to complete the responses and to upload them to the Dropbox in eLearning by the last day of the fourth week. Provisions will be made in eLearning for students to upload responses through the Turnitin software and to make corrections before the final submission. The Ed.D. Program Office will pull the responses from the eLearning Dropbox on the first day of the fifth week of the semester and distribute them to the student’s Doctoral and Comprehensive Examination Committee and the Director of Doctoral Studies. The comprehensive examination responses will be disqualified for review by the Doctoral and Comprehensive Examination Committee if they are not submitted to the eLearning Dropbox by the last day of the fourth week of Doctoral Seminar II.

**Assessment of the Written Comprehensive Examination**

Written submissions for the comprehensive examination questions should be comprehensive, analytic, well edited, and well referenced using APA citation. Each paper should be approximately 18 pages with 12 font Times New Roman with a maximum of up to 25 pages excluding references. Responses will be evaluated based on the quality of your claims and warrants for your thesis and the major subtopics rather than correct or incorrect positions. Ensure
that there are introduction and conclusion sections. Organize your ideas clearly, systematically and logically. Use facts, details, and references to provide support and explanation for your arguments citing relevant and specific scholars. Do not guess or make up information, factual accuracy is important. To the extent you judge appropriate, use the language and vocabulary of the relevant field, providing brief definitions for terms that would not be commonly understood. In citations avoid layering, i.e. offering the ideas of theorists/scholars in a one-by-one, layered manner. Syntheses of ideas will be the hallmark of a well-integrated write-up. APA style should be used consistently. You are not permitted to allow another person to edit your work for you. Please bear in mind this is an examination and its integrity must be upheld at all times.

The Chair of Doctoral and Comprehensive Examination Committee (DCEC) shall coordinate the evaluation phase of the examination once the responses have been submitted at the end of the fourth week of the semester in which the examination is given. Assessment of individual student's responses by committee members will assess the student's responses individually, based on the rubric as well as acceptable standards for graduate writing.

The DCEC under the guidance of the chair will form a consensus evaluation of the student’s performance on the written examination and eligibility to proceed with the oral segment of the comprehensive examination. The student's written responses shall be assessed overall as "satisfactory," or "unsatisfactory." If the responses of a student on the written examination are assessed as “unsatisfactory” he or she shall be granted permission to retake the written examination in accordance with the policy on Eligibility for Oral Portion of Comprehensive Examination. The committees' overall assessment shall be submitted in writing to the Ed.D. Program Office no later than one week after the written examination has been administered.

**Eligibility for Oral Portion of Comprehensive Examination.**

Students are deemed either eligible or ineligible to take the oral examination by their DCEC. The following conditions are applicable:

- Students who violate university policy on Academic Integrity (i.e., cheating, plagiarism or other inappropriate assistance in work presented) would not be granted the privilege of retaking the written examination or the oral portion of the examination.

- Students who perform unsatisfactorily on the written portion of the comprehensive examination shall be deemed ineligible to take the oral examination. Students in this category shall be granted permission to retake the written examination for the second and final time and can only proceed to the oral examination if they are successful. The Chair of the DCEC, in consultation with other committee members, shall recommend whether the student will retake the entire examination or a particular portion of the examination. Under no circumstances will the privilege of retaking the written examination be extended to the student more than once.

**Oral Component of the Comprehensive Examination**

The oral component of the comprehensive examination is designed to allow the student to formulate and articulate a proposition or thesis. The oral examination shall be completed
between the sixth and the eighth week of the first part of the semester in which the Comprehensive Examination is attempted. Students shall initiate communication with the Chair of the Doctoral and Comprehensive Examination Committee to schedule their oral examination. It is encouraged to begin this process early in the semester in which the student intends to take the comprehensive examination. Upon completion of the oral component, the student’s committee chair will forward a Graduate Student Status Form to the Director of Doctoral Studies through the Ed.D. Program Office indicating the committee’s evaluation of the student’s Comprehensive Examination performance. The Doctoral and Comprehensive Examination Committee shall automatically dissolve after the successful completion of the comprehensive examination. The student could reconstitute the same group or a variation of it to form the Doctoral and Dissertation Committee (DDC).

Assessment of the Oral Portion of Comprehensive Examination

The oral examination will be administered by the student's Doctoral and Comprehensive Committee. The chair or co-chairs of the DCEC shall direct the oral examination. The procedure followed in administering the oral examination shall be determined by the committee but shall not be scheduled for less than a two hour block. It is the responsibility of the student to schedule the oral examination with the DCEC. The Chair of the committee shall be responsible for coordination of the oral examination.

Within the scheduled two hour period for the oral examination the DCEC shall confer and assess the student's responses to the oral exam as either "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory." The student will wait outside the room while the DCEC meets, and the student will then be invited to meet with the committee. The committee shall give the student feedback on his or her responses, and the student’s Advanced Standing status shall then be announced. In the case of a "satisfactory" rating, the chair or co-chairs of the committee shall submit a final assessment in writing to the Ed.D. Program Office which will forward the results for filing in the student's permanent record.

In the case of an "unsatisfactory" rating on the oral examination, the student's DCEC shall decide on the course of action to be taken. As with the written examination, the DCEC shall extend to the student the privilege of retaking the oral examination one additional time. Under no circumstances will the privilege of retaking the oral examination be extended to the student more than once. The DCEC dissolves automatically after successful completion of the comprehensive examination. The student can reappoint the same committee to form the Doctoral and Dissertation Committee or reconstitute it.

Time Schedule for the Comprehensive Examination Process each semester

- Weeks 1 & 2 – students study and prepare for the examination
- Weeks 3 & 4 – students write, complete the examination and submit for grading by the end of Week 4
- Weeks 5 & 6 - Examination graded by the comprehensive examination committee by the end of Week 6
- Weeks 7 & 8 - Oral exam defense completed by the end of Week 8, delivered in face-to-face and/or Skype-like formats
### Rubric for Assessing Comprehensive Examination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates knowledge of APA formatting and referencing</td>
<td>Demonstrates perfect or almost perfect use of APA formatting and referencing</td>
<td>Demonstrates strong use of APA formatting and referencing</td>
<td>Demonstrates adequate use of APA formatting and referencing</td>
<td>Demonstrates poor use of APA formatting and referencing</td>
<td>Demonstrates unacceptable or no use of APA formatting and referencing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promotes scholarly writing and use of appropriate terminology</td>
<td>Demonstrates perfect or almost perfect use of scholarly writing skills and appropriate terminology</td>
<td>Demonstrates strong use of scholarly writing skills and appropriate terminology</td>
<td>Demonstrates adequate use of scholarly writing skills and appropriate terminology</td>
<td>Demonstrates poor use of scholarly writing skills and appropriate terminology</td>
<td>Demonstrates unacceptable or no use of scholarly writing skills and appropriate terminology</td>
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<td>Demonstrates scholarly understanding of program content and application</td>
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<td>Demonstrates strong scholarly understanding of program content and application</td>
<td>Demonstrates adequate understanding of program content and application</td>
<td>Demonstrates poor understanding of program content and application</td>
<td>Demonstrates unacceptable or no understanding of program content and application</td>
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<td>Demonstrates scholarly connections among concepts and applications within the program content as well as real world applications</td>
<td>Demonstrates perfect or almost perfect scholarly connections among concepts and applications within the program content as well as real world applications</td>
<td>Demonstrates strong scholarly connections among concepts and applications within the program content as well as real world applications</td>
<td>Demonstrates adequate use of connections among concepts and applications within the program content as well as real world applications</td>
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<td>Demonstrates scholarly oral presentation skills relative to concepts and applications within the program content as well as real world applications</td>
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