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## 4.6 Candidacy Examination

### 4.6.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Candidacy Examination is to evaluate the student's capability to synthesize and integrate material as applied to the research focus area. It is expected that the student demonstrates a certain breadth of knowledge and is able to apply this knowledge to a problem.

### 4.6.2 Eligibility

The student must have

- filed a formal Program of Study and
- completed the courses recommended by the focus area

before registering for the exam. Usually, the student will register for the Candidacy Examination before the end of the second year of study.

### 4.6.3 Required Action

The candidate must complete and submit a *Request for Candidacy Examination Form* (see Appendix B, P. B-10) to the Program Coordinator no later than 30 days before the scheduled examination. The dissertation advisor and Program Director must sign this form.

### 4.6.4 Examination Format

The exam contains a written part followed by an oral part, usually taken within a three-week period of each other. Each focus area has its own specific format on how to administer the two parts of the Candidacy Examination and who is responsible for these parts. The details for each focus area are outlined in subsection 4.6.7.

### 4.6.5 Examination Outcome

The following outcomes are possible:

- pass
- repeat exam or part thereof after strengthening specific areas of weakness
- fail

The deliberations and vote concerning the outcome of the exam take place immediately following the oral exam. The examination outcome requires a 2/3rd majority of all members of the

examination committee for pass and fail. Any other vote results in a repeat of the exam or part thereof.

When the Candidacy Examination is completed, a *Record of Candidacy Examination Form* (see Appendix B, p. B-14) is signed by all members of the examination committee and forwarded to the Program Coordinator.

#### **4.6.6 Repeat of Candidacy Examination**

If the outcome of the first Candidacy Examination was “repeat exam or part thereof after strengthening specific areas of weakness,” the student may submit another request for a Candidacy Examination. This request is to be submitted no earlier than three months and usually no later than six months after completion of the first attempt. Only one repeat of the Candidacy Examination is permitted.

#### **4.6.7 Specific Focus Area Guidelines**

##### **4.6.7.4 Industrial and Human Systems**

The Candidacy Examination evaluates the student’s capability to synthesize and integrate material as applied to a research area. As such, it is expected that the student will have completed the majority of his or her coursework. The examination consists of both written and oral components.

##### **4.6.7.4.1 Examination Committee**

The Candidacy Examining Committee is comprised of members of the student’s Dissertation Committee.

##### **4.6.7.4.2 Examination Deadlines**

The student submits a request for the Candidacy Examination to the Focus Area Chair and the student’s advisor for submittal to the Program Coordinator. This should be done at least six weeks prior to the expected oral examination date. Along with the request, the student will submit a five-page, double-spaced description of a proposed research topic. Within one week after the request, the research topic description prepared by the student will be distributed to the examining committee by the student’s advisor.

##### **4.6.7.4.4 Examination Content**

Each committee member constructs questions that evaluate the student’s capability to integrate course material, synthesize related research, and critically analyze different aspects of the candidate’s research topic. These questions will be submitted to the Focus Area Chair within two weeks after receiving the research topic description. The full set of questions will then be provided to the student’s advisor. The student’s advisor will select questions to provide to the student.

#### **4.6.7.4.5 Written Exam**

The student receives the questions and prepares written responses to each question. The Focus Area Chair must receive these responses no later than seven days after the date of receipt by the student. Each answer shall not exceed ten double-spaced pages. The Focus Area Chair will provide the student response to the student advisor. The responses for all questions are distributed to the Candidacy Examination Committee the day following their receipt. Evaluation of these answers represents the written component of the Candidacy Examination.

#### **4.6.7.4.6 Oral Exam**

Not less than fourteen days following receipt of the student's answers, the oral component of the examination will occur.

The Candidacy Examination Committee bases determination of the student's capability to continue his or her doctoral studies on a composite evaluation of both the written and oral components. At the conclusion of the oral component, the committee will decide on one of the three outcomes. There must not be more than one dissenting vote by those attending the oral component for an outcome to carry. In cases for which no agreement can be obtained, the examining committee can be dissolved and a new Candidacy Examination process initiated.