
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

4.6.7.7 Sensor Signal and Image Processing

4.6.7.7.1 Examination Committee

The WSU faculty members of the Dissertation Committee are responsible for administering the candidacy exam.

4.6.7.7.2 Eligibility

In addition to the items listed under 4.6.2, the student must have passed the Program Qualification and have the membership of the Dissertation Committee in place.

4.6.7.7.4 Examination Content

The content of the examination is drawn from the student’s course work with consideration of the planned area of specialization.

4.6.7.7.5 Written Exam

The examination will consist of two or more written questions, at least one being open-ended and relating to the candidate’s chosen area of specialization. The dissertation advisor will interact with the committee members to achieve the desired content and rigor of the questions. The examination committee decides if it is a take-home or sitting exam, what supporting materials are allowed for a sitting exam, and how much time is allocated to create the answers to the questions.

In addition, a written critique of one seminal paper, not authored by a WSU faculty member, is to be prepared within a three-day period.

4.6.7.7.6 Oral Exam

The oral exam takes place about one week after the written exam. The duration of the exam is set by the examination committee.