

OHIO UNIVERSITY COUNSELOR EDUCATION Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Procedures

All doctoral students must complete and successfully pass a Doctoral Comprehensive Examination. The comprehensive exam has both a written and oral component, and is usually taken at or near the end of doctoral course work. The written and oral exam evaluates students' mastery of their field of specialization and the counselor education and supervision core curricular areas. The exam can include, but is not limited to, content from core doctoral coursework, the student's field of specialization, and research interest areas. Performance on the exam provides an opportunity for the Doctoral Program Committee to determine students' readiness to complete a dissertation.

Description of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

The written comprehensive exam dates are scheduled annually for Fall (July 15th-August 15th) and Spring (December 15th-January 15th). Comprehensive examinations are typically not scheduled during the summer term. Exceptions to this policy may be considered on a case-by-case basis and are dependent on committee approval and availability. Following the submission August 15th (Fall) or January 15th (Spring) of the written Doctoral Comprehensive Examination, the oral defense is scheduled between the 25th of the current month and 1st of the following month.

Written Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

Students write four sections (i.e., papers) in response to four questions for the written Doctoral Comprehensive Examination. The sections must demonstrate depth and breadth beyond that of a term paper and should clearly answer all parts of the question. Students are allotted four weeks for the written component of the exam. Each response will be no less than 20 pages of content and should draw on a minimum of 20 references. Each faculty member who serves on the Doctoral Program Committee will prepare one question for the student.

The exam sections are framed around the five CACREP (VI.B.1-5) doctoral curricular areas: (a) counseling, (b) supervision, (c) teaching, (d) research and scholarship, and (e) leadership and advocacy. Since there are four sections, students combine two core curricular areas for one question. Each committee member who serves on the student's Doctoral Program Committee will prepare a question for the student addressing one of the four sections.

Oral Defense of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

Following the submission of the written Doctoral Comprehensive Exam, the Doctoral Program Committee has a minimum of 10 calendar days from the receipt date to review before the oral defense can be scheduled. Oral defenses should be scheduled between the 25th of August (Fall) or January (Spring) and the 1st of September (Fall) or February (Spring).

Preparing for the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

In consultation with the advisor and members of the Doctoral Program Committee, students must schedule the term in which the exam will occur. Conversations with faculty about the exam should begin in the semester prior to which the student plans to take the exam. Students are required to submit the Application for Doctoral Comprehensive Exam (See Appendix I) to the CE program coordinator by the 6th week of the semester before the exam is scheduled and must be registered for a minimum of 1 hour of graduate credit during the semester in which the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam is taken.

Committee members and students develop the topic within each section based on the program of study and student interests. Once the topic area has been agreed upon, the student and committee member will complete the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Topic Contract (See Appendix II). *At this stage, students are not provided with the actual section question; instead, students receive general topic areas for further independent research to prepare for the question to be provided on the exam date.*

Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Procedures

Committee members should submit questions to the Doctoral Program Committee Chair and the CE program coordinator to input in LiveText. Written comprehensive exam questions for each section are made available in LiveText by 9:00am on July 15th (Fall) or December 15th (Spring). From that point, students have until 5:00pm on August 15th (Fall) or January 15th (Spring) to complete the written exam and submit to LiveText. *In addition, students submit a copy of the written exam to the CE program coordinator by the deadline as one email with the 4 sections of the written exam.* This mechanism serves as a precaution in the unlikely event of technical difficulties with LiveText, as late submissions are not accepted.

Students should copy the question onto the first page of each section of the written exam and provide their response. All papers should be completed using the current edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual. The department administrative specialist will make copies of the written exam for distribution to committee members for those who request it.

The oral defense is conducted by all faculty members on the Doctoral Program Committee for approximately two hours, after which, the student is informed of the outcome of the exam.

Academic Integrity and Honesty

Graduate students at Ohio University are expected to abide by principles of [academic integrity and honesty](#). It is expected that the comprehensive examination is undertaken and completed independently and with the use of resources appropriate to doctoral-level scholarship. All references must be appropriately cited. Failure to abide by such principles of honesty and appropriate use and citation of references will be handled with the greatest severity, with ramifications ranging from a failing grade on the exam to expulsion from Ohio University.

Assessment and Evaluation of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

Outcomes of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

1. **Pass** – the student’s exam are assessed and evaluated as satisfactory in all four sections.
2. **Revise and Resubmit** – If minor concerns are noted in any section, the student must revise and resubmit the section within a two-week time frame. The revision will be reviewed by all committee members. If the revision is assessed and found acceptable, the exam is evaluated as satisfactory. If the revision is assessed and found insufficient, the student exam is evaluated as unsatisfactory.
3. **Fail One Section** – A student whose exam is assessed and evaluated as satisfactory in one section and unsatisfactory in three sections is permitted to write a response to a new question in the one area that was failed. The new section will be reviewed by all committee members. If the new section is assessed and found acceptable, the exam is evaluated as satisfactory. If the new section is assessed and found insufficient, the student exam is evaluated as unsatisfactory.
4. **Fail Two or More Sections** – A student whose exam is assessed and evaluated as unsatisfactory in two or more sections are required to begin afresh with four new sections in a subsequent semester.

Additional course work or other recommendations may be required of the student by committee members in the case of unsatisfactory performance on the examination. Barring extenuating circumstances, students who do not submit by the deadline will be evaluated as unsatisfactory. They are required to begin the comprehensive exam again with new topics in a subsequent semester.

Limits to Attempting the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

Students who have failed the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination twice will not be permitted to sit for the examination again and will be terminated from the doctoral program.

Reporting Results of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

Following the oral defense, the Report of the Results of a Doctoral Comprehensive Examination form, signed by all committee members, must be submitted to the Patton College of Education Office of Student Affairs, Graduate Records. The form is available in the [Patton College](#) and must be submitted within one week of the date of the completion of the examination. Upon (a) the completion of written and oral components of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination, (b) assessment and evaluation of the exam, and (c) submission of the results of the exam, the Doctoral Program Committee is dissolved.

APPENDIX I

APPLICATION FOR DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

**Counselor Education Program
Application for Doctoral Comprehensive Examination**

Student Name _____ **PID Number** _____
Number of cumulative credit hours earned by anticipated exam date _____

Anticipated Semester of Written Comprehensive Examination

____ **Fall** July 15-August 15, 20____
____ **Spring** December 15-January 15, 20____
____ **Summer***

*Note: Comprehensive examinations are not scheduled during the summer term. Exceptions to this policy may be considered on a case-by-case basis and are dependent on committee approval and availability.

Student Signature

Date

By signing this form, the Advisor/Doctoral Program Committee Chair,
_____ **attests that the applicant:**

- has completed sufficient course work to complete the comprehensive examination
- is proficient in research methodology and scholarly tools

Advisor/Doctoral Program Committee Chair Signature

Date

Committee Member, Printed Name and Signature

Date

Committee Member, Printed Name and Signature

Date

Committee Member, Printed Name and Signature

Date

Program Coordinator, Printed Name and Signature

Date

APPENDIX II

DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION TOPIC CONTRACT

**Counselor Education Program
Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Topic Contract**

Student Name _____ **PID Number** _____

Anticipated Semester of Written Comprehensive Examination

___ **Fall** July 15-August 15, 20___
___ **Spring** December 15-January 15, 20___
___ **Summer**

Program of Study Area: _____

Topics for Comprehensive Examination:

NOTE: At this stage, students are not provided with the actual section question; instead, students receive general topic areas for further independent research to prepare for the question to be provided on the exam date.

Student Signature

Date

Committee Member, Printed Name and Signature

Date