

PhD Candidacy Exam Guidelines

As approved by the April 3, 2015 Faculty Meeting

- The Candidacy Exam will comprise of a written dissertation proposal and an oral defense. Both parts shall be completed at least one year before the final dissertation defense. Furthermore, it shall be administered only after completion of most of the coursework needed toward a Ph.D. degree.
- The student shall prepare a detailed written proposal of their dissertation research in consultation with their dissertation advisor. The proposal must include a well-defined title, the motivation, summary of relevant literature and the state of the art, research objectives, and the proposed methodology for achieving those objectives. Some of the early results that may have been achieved may also be included in the proposal. The main body of the formal presentation shall be no longer than 15 pages. The format for the presentation shall be the same as that required for NSF proposals. The written proposal shall be submitted to the dissertation committee at least one week before the oral part of the candidacy exam.
- The student shall make a formal oral presentation of their dissertation proposal to the dissertation committee.
- The student's dissertation advisor shall turn in the duly filled out and signed Candidacy Exam result form to the Secretary of the Graduate Coordinator at the conclusion of the exam.
- Once a graduate student passes their Candidacy Exam, they must be enrolled in at least one hour of graded coursework or dissertation credit every semester. Other requirements may be imposed by the graduate school or the ISS office with regard to the number of course hours to be taken by the student.