Science and Mathematics Doctoral Program Written Examination

Exam Process
1) The student and advisor (with communication from SME faculty) determine if the student is appropriately prepared to begin the exam before a committee is selected.
2) After there is agreement that the student is ready to enter the examination process, the student must be registered during the quarter the exam is being assessed.
   a. Committee of SME and associated faculty write two questions (two faculty members are assigned on a rotating basis).
   b. The student discusses with the committee his/her interests to inform the formulation of the questions.
   c. The student, advisor, and committee members communicate on the question prior to distributing the questions to assure substance adheres to the program purpose and processes.
   d. The committee confers on questions both questions before distributing to student for response.
3) The questions are distributed by advisor to student (using the format included on pp. 3 of this document) according to timeline agreed to by committee and student. The student has three weeks for each question. A committee meeting to discuss evaluation of responses should be made when setting up initial exam timeline.
4) The written product is limited to 2000 to 4000 words for each response.

Evaluation Criteria
The criteria below are used to assess the written exam responses.
The exam as a whole must:
1) Use meaningful and relevant literature as it relates to the question,
2) Critically evaluate key pieces of empirical and theoretical research relevant to the question, and
3) Synthesize a coherent point of view using evidence-based and theoretical arguments relevant to the question.

Evaluation Process
1) Written Exam Committee determines if the responses meet the criteria within two weeks after student responses are complete.
   a. Strengths and weaknesses of the two responses are discussed in person or via email and the committee make a final determination if the set of responses meet the program criteria listed in this document.
   b. Results of exam are communicated to student by advisor within three weeks of the return of the student responses. The committee may meet with the student or the advisor may present the committee’s evaluation and feedback.
2) Committee evaluation of responses results in one of the following outcomes:
   • Satisfactory Written Exam.
     o Comments on responses summarized and presented to student within three weeks of completion of exam.

Please note that when scheduling exams during summer term or between term breaks the two-week timeline may be adjusted due to faculty’s schedules.
Written responses distributed to Oral Graduate School Exam committee along with written exam committee results.
A written summary of exam committee’s evaluation (compiled by advisor) will be given to the student and placed in student’s file.

- Responses Not Sufficient.
  - The committee will determine appropriate action for remediation, revision, or re-examination. If responses are insufficient the oral exam can not be scheduled until satisfactory responses are completed. It is the advisor’s discretion if the written exam committee will meet with the student or only the advisor will meet with the student to communicate results.
  - The committee may choose one of three options: (a) the student will revise one or both questions, response(s) will be returned to faculty within three weeks per question (b) responses are left “as is” and one or two new questions are presented the responses will be returned to faculty within three weeks per question, or (c) a new committee will be convened, within two weeks, and one or two questions will be prepared. Responses will be returned to faculty within three weeks per question.
  - The written exam committee has two weeks to read responses and prepare evaluation. Advisor will communicate with student within three weeks of completion of revised or reconvened written exam. Student’s second response must pass standard or student is recommended to master’s project option or termination. A written summary of the written exam committee’s evaluation (compiled by advisor) will be given to the student and placed in student’s file.

***The Written Exam is followed by the Preliminary Oral Graduate School Examination. The advisor will send Graduate Committee the questions and responses two weeks prior to the exam (scheduled at least two weeks after successfully completing written exam & results communicated).
First Exam Question

Committee Members:
Proposed Timeline:
Date Distributed:
Date Returned:
Committee Question/ Assessment Notes on Response:

Second Exam Question

Committee Members:
Proposed Timeline:
Date Distributed:
Date Returned:
Committee Question/ Assessment Notes on Response: