

- to develop scholars and researchers who have an advanced level of understanding of the psychological sciences, including comprehensive knowledge of contemporary data and theory in psychology and a high level of methodological expertise
- to prepare graduates with an understanding of the linkages between psychological, biological, social, cultural, and ethical dimensions of human functioning
- to communicate the results of research in order to contribute to the enhancement of northern British Columbia and other regions by developing sound psychological strategies, appropriate assessment tools, and program planning and evaluation methods

To meet these three objectives, the candidacy examination will be a *written examination* with at least one question in each of the following three categories as *related to the student's field of study*:

- (a) ethics,
- (b) research methodology, and
- (c) competency in the field of study.

To meet the program objectives, the student must demonstrate competency in all three categories. That is, a pass on the candidacy examination requires passing all three categories.

If the student does not pass all of the categories (a) through (c) above, the student can re-write the candidacy examination *only once*. However, they only need to re-write the category(ies) that they did not pass. Normally, the second examination will involve different question(s) based on the same content as the initial examination's question(s).

Importantly, because this is a candidacy examination, it must be passed *before* the student can defend her/his dissertation proposal.

2. Procedural Guidelines

Timeline for the Candidacy Examination

- Although the Psychology Program's description of the timeline states that normally the candidacy examination takes place by the end of the first year (or 12 credit hours for part-time students), the timing of the examination will be set by the supervisory committee in consultation with the student. In scheduling the examination or any re-examination, the committee will take into consideration:
 - (a) the UNBC Graduate Calendar's statement that a doctoral student *must* pass the candidacy examination within two years of registration as a doctoral student and at least six months before the final oral examination (see Appendix A),
 - (b) the Psychology Program's policy that a student must pass the candidacy examination before he/she can defend the dissertation proposal, and
 - (c) that the two-year limit applies to both part-time and full-time students.

- It is strongly recommended that the candidacy examination occur within the first 20 months of registration to allow for up to 4 months for the student to prepare for re-examination, if a re-examination is needed.
- Our interpretation of the UNBC Calendar is that time spent on an approved leave of absence will not count toward the two-year deadline.

Step #1: The Field of Study

- In consultation with the *supervisory committee*, the candidate must declare a "field of

Step #5: The Examination Days

- The candidacy examination will take place over three *consecutive* days -- one day devoted to each of the above three categories. The examination will be conducted from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- The candidacy examination will use an open-book format.
- The student is *not* permitted to consult with anyone in preparing his/her responses to the examination questions. Violations will be treated under the university's policy on academic offenses.
- The student will be provided with a computer and a quiet place to write the examination.

Step #6: Grading the Candidacy Examination

- All questions are to be graded on a pass/fail basis. If a category is comprised of more than one question, all questions must receive a passing grade in order for the category to receive a pass. Recall that a student must pass all three categories to pass the candidacy examination.
- Each question will be graded by two members of the examining committee. Given that one of the program goals is communication skills, grading should reflect both the content and writing of the answer.
- Markers will independently evaluate the student's responses. If the two markers cannot agree on a pass/fail decision, the examining committee will meet to arrive at a pass/fail decision for that question.

Step #7: Providing a Letter to the Graduate Committee

- A letter signed by all members of the examining committee is to be sent to the Graduate Committee within 21 calendar days of the date of the candidacy examination indicating the pass/fail outcome of the examination.
- If the outcome is a pass, the Graduate Committee will then forward this letter to the Dean of Graduate Studies on behalf of the examining committee.
- If the outcome is fail, the examining committee must indicate which categories require re-examination and provide detailed reasons for the failing grade on any question. As per normal practice, a student who fails the candidacy examination has the right to appeal before re-examination and should consult with the Dean of Graduate Studies regarding the appropriate procedures.

Step #8: Re-Examination (if necessary)

- Recall that a student need only re-write the category(ies) that he/she did not pass.
- Candidacy examinations can be re-written only once.
- When setting the date for the second examination please refer to the Timeline (see above) and follow Steps #3 through #6.
- It may be suggested in Step #3 that the student complete further readings in preparation for re-writing the examination.
- Normally, the second examination will involve different question(s) based on the same content as the question(s) on the initial examination.

