

Preliminary Examinations

Getting Ready

You won't be formally admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. until you've passed your preliminary examinations (prelims). The earliest a student may take the prelims is during the semester immediately following the completion of all course work (including the foreign language requirement, though a student may petition to satisfy ONE of the two languages for this requirement after passing the prelims.). Graduate students are required to take prelims by the end of the second semester (excluding summer) after they have completed their coursework.

Course Summaries and Reading List

Upon completing all required course work the student will prepare a series of course summaries drawn from their course syllabi. The course summaries should be preceded by a cover page containing the doctoral degree checklist and the composition of the doctoral committee. The course summaries should consist of a single page pertaining to each course (in the order of the checklist) containing the following:

1. student name and examination date,
2. course number, title, and professor (complete with email and phone number),
3. a single paragraph description,
4. list of texts read, and;
5. topic of the student's research project from the course.

The course summary for each individual class should not exceed one typewritten page. Course summaries must be submitted, in digital format, to the Program Assistant of DIH no later than the first week of classes in the semester in which they intend to take their exams. A copy should also be given to the student's directing professor. See Appendix 4.1 for example.

NB: Fall 2008 marks a significant change in exam procedures, in particular the section entitled 'The Nature of the Exam'. Students who entered the program prior to Fall 2008 may opt to follow the Old Bulletin if they so choose. You MUST make your choice when you sign up up to take your exams (i.e. no later than the last day of the first week of classes in the semester you intend to take your exams).

Old Bulletin Ph.D. exam

The Nature of the Exam

The Preliminary Doctoral Examination, designed to establish that you are prepared to begin serious work on a Ph.D. dissertation, is a 16-hour written test plus a 1-2 hour oral examination.

- The written part of the test is given over 4 days, in four 4-hour periods, administered in-house.
- The exams will be administered on a departmental computer using Microsoft Word and a department supplied diskette (or other location as deemed suitable by the directing professor and DIH).
 - As the student completes each exam at regular intervals he/she should "Save" often and leave time to review his/her answers.

Structure of the Preliminary Examinations

The doctoral preliminary examination will be administered over the course of four days, each day consisting of a four-hour exam period. The exams fall within the following four categories:

- major area of study,
- minor area of study/ discipline,
- seminar/pedagogy, and;
- Humanities core.

Note that students who have received a Master's degree through the department of Humanities and have already been tested on the humanities core are exempt from that portion of the prelims (leaving only three areas and three days of exams). Generally the student can expect to write on each of the courses completed for the degree and submitted for examination. The student can expect to write anywhere between two and four questions within the four-hour exam block.

New Bulletin Ph.D. exam

The Nature of the Exam

The Preliminary Doctoral Examination, designed to establish that you are prepared to begin serious work on a Ph.D. dissertation, is a take-home written test followed by a 1-2 hour oral examination.

The Exam is divided into four parts taken during one week:

- Core
- Major Area
- Minor Area
- Dissertation Research

The Dissertation Research Category exam

This portion of the exam is designed to look forward toward the dissertation stage of the Ph.D. student's training. Students prepare and negotiate a reading list with the major professor, who will provide the questions for this part of the examination. Exam reading lists are expected to be substantial bibliographies reflecting the major contours and current issues of the scholarly literature pertaining to the dissertation topic to be explored. Ordinarily, the student prepares a draft reading list and then meets with the advisor, who may add (or delete) items, as appropriate. The size of the reading list may vary according to the discipline or sub-field, and should comprise anywhere between 50 to 100 items (books and articles).

The written exam will be a take-home exam; the student will have one week to complete all questions that comprise the written portion of the Preliminary Doctoral Examination. The written answer to each question should be a maximum of ten double-spaced pages. The advisor and major professor will guide the student as to the level of rigor that is expected in the essays.

The graduate student reports to the office manager/program assistant at the scheduled time to receive his or her set of exam questions. The graduate student has **one (1) week to complete the exam**, unless the student is registered with S.D.R.C. and needs more time (see Graduate Advisor if this applies). Each exam is crafted to the individual student's coursework, as questions are solicited from the student's instructors and compiled by the Graduate Advisor or Department Chair.

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Preparing for the Exam

You can prepare for your prelims by taking up to 12 hours of HUM6904, Directed Readings, under the supervision of your major professor.

Also consult with the members of your supervisory committee before you register for prelims: committee members may provide you with reading lists or study questions.

The semester you plan on taking prelims, you must register for HUM 8964r, Preliminary Doctoral Examination. This is a one-time registration. You need to get the reference number from the department staff. (If you do not in fact take the examination that term, you will receive an "I." This grade will then be changed once you do take the exam.) You must take the doctoral exams by the end of tenth week of the term. Prelims are not scheduled during the summer term. Based on availability the student can schedule their exams for either 8am-noon, or 1-5pm on four consecutive days, or every other day and one weekend (for example: Monday-Thursday, or Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Monday). Should a student wish to deviate from the above format they should consult the Chair of Humanities.

If a majority of committee members agree that the student has failed the written portions of the examination, the student shall be deemed to have failed the examination at that stage. If a student fails a particular question (having passed other portions of the exam) the student upon approval of the major professor and the Chair of Interdisciplinary Humanities may consult with the professor in question to agree on a suitable method for obtaining a passing grade (this usually consists of some sort of rewrite). Otherwise, the student will proceed to the oral examination, and the decision to pass or fail will be based on the student's performance on both portions of the exam. A

student who fails the examination (at either stage) may take it a second time; should a student fail the examination twice, he or she must petition the Graduate Committee for permission to make a third attempt.

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Preliminary Exam Defense

Oral examination ordinarily takes place within three weeks after the written exam portion. Upon completion (no later than five working days) of the written portion of the preliminary examination DIH will distribute copies of the exam and the appropriate forms to members of the student's doctoral committee and those professors who submitted questions. Additionally, the student will receive a copy of the exams in written form. Upon receiving commentary from all who are grading the preliminary exams the student in conjunction with the major professor, members of the committee, and DIH will schedule the Oral defense. The content, structure, and format of the Oral defense shall be determined by the director of the doctoral committee (major professor).

Appendix 4.1

Course Summaries for M.A. [or Ph.D.] NAME

1. Required HUM Courses (9 hours)

HUM 5227: Greek/Roman Dr. Leon Golden (Fall 02)

This course covers several principle texts of the Classical world. The first unit addresses the Greek concept of the heroic in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The second looks at the Greek concept of tragedy. The three types of tragedy discussed include ‘pity and fear,’ ‘hubris, ate, nemesis,’ and ‘pathos.’ The portion on Roman civilization discusses two kinds of ancient comedy, critical and great. ‘Pietas’ and ‘furor’ characterizes the Roman concept of the heroic, while Roman tragedy moves toward the ‘grotesque.’

TEXTS: *The Iliad* (trans. Stanley Lombardo); *The Odyssey* (trans. Stanley Lombardo); Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*; Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*; Euripides, the *Bacchae* and *Alceste*; Platus, *The Brothers Menaechmus* and *The Swaggering Soldier*; Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Tacitus, *Annals of Imperial Rome*; Seneca, *Oedipus* and *Thyestes*

ASSESSMENT: Midterm and Final Examinations

(...)

2. HUM 6939 Courses or Seminars (12 hours) [9 hours for Ph.D.]

HUM 6939: Science Fiction and Technology Dr. Gary Stillwell (Summer 02)

This course identifies key scientific achievements and how they influence science fiction. Topics included the history of the atom that leads to the development of the atomic bomb, an overview of cosmology, a history of machine intelligence, and space travel and relativity. These coincide with the four categories of science fiction that include ‘utopia/distopia,’ ‘mythology,’ ‘technology, discovery and invention,’ and ‘fantastic voyage.’

TEXTS: Vonnegut, *Player Piano*; Asimov, *I, Robot*; Heinlein, “Expanded Universe” and “Solution Unsatisfactory;” Lindsay, *Voyage to Arcturus*; Stapledon, *First and Last Men*

ASSESSMENT: Midterm and Final Examinations; Class Presentation entitled “The Application of Chaos Theory to Literary Analysis;” Term Paper entitled “Chaos in Tony Kushner’s *Angels in America*”

(...)

3. Cultural Period or Theme (12 hours) [**18 hours for major/ 12 for minor for Ph.D.**]

MMC 5305: Media and Globalization

Dr. Greg Elmer (Fall 03)

'Media and Globalization' looks at how conflicts emerge on local, national and international levels through the recent trends of globalization, due largely to changes in media and communication technologies. It explores the dynamic relationship between the 'core' or conventional centers of global power that range from Hollywood to Hong Kong, and 'perDIHery,' which combats globalization by implementing more of a 'grass-roots' approach to media technologies. Other theories of globalization discussed include 'Origins and Spread of Nationalism' and 'Media and Cultural Imperialism.' The second section entitled 'Text, Technology, Space' deals with specific media technologies that contribute to globalization including satellites, television and film, and world music. Other topics in this section include 'Indigenous Peoples and Global Media,' 'Media and the Politics of War, Peace, and Terror,' and 'Global Piracy and Copyright: From Napster to Kazza and Beyond.'

TEXTS: Thussu, *Electronic Empires: Global Media and Local Resistance*; Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*; Hardt and Negri, *Empire*; Miller, *Global Hollywood*; Essays Selected by Instructor

ASSESSMENT: In-class Presentation of Assigned Reading; Research Paper entitled "An 'I' for an Eye: An Attempt at Understanding the Role of Self-Observation in *Empire* through Art"