

**Policy S-3.04**  
**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA**  
**COLLEGE OF NURSING**

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**TITLE:**           **EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER'S DEGREE STUDENTS**

**POLICY:**       All students completing the Master's of Science in Nursing Degree Program must pass a final comprehensive examination.

**RATIONALE:**   A final comprehensive examination is a University requirement to ensure that students are competent in their major field of study at the time of graduation (See current University of Florida Graduate Catalog, University Record). The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) strongly recommends that all Master's programs include a capstone or culminating experience to facilitate integration of learning and put into practice what has been learned in the program (AACN, The Essentials of Master's Education for Advanced Practice Nursing, 1995, p. 6).

**PROCEDURE:**  
**FORMATION OF THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE**

1.   The committee is formed no later than 6 months prior to the student's anticipated graduation date.
2.   The purpose of the committee is to administer the final comprehensive exam.
3.   The student will need to:
  - a.   Seek out the assistance of their Academic Advisor as needed.
  - b.   Speak with and obtain approval from two faculty members, one of whom will serve as the Chairperson and the other as the faculty representative.
  - c.   Ensure that faculty members selected meet the following:
    - 1)   The Supervisory Chairperson must have Graduate Faculty Status (list available from the Office for Academic and Student Affairs (OASA)).
    - 2)   One faculty member must represent the student's specialty area
4.   Once the supervisory committee is formed, refer to the "Supervisory Committee Appointment Process" in Policy S-3.02, Academic Advising of Master's Degree and Post-Master's Non-Degree Seeking Certificate Students for committee submission and approval process.

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**FINAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION PROCESS**

1. The student will request review with Supervisory Committee Chairperson to ascertain that the student:
  - a. Has no more than 12 credits remaining to complete degree requirements,
  - b. Is within 6 months of anticipated graduation, and
  - c. Is making satisfactory progress in current course work, and
  - d. Has completed NGR 6850 Research Methods and Utilization for Nursing.
2. The student must be registered for classes (3 credits fall or spring; 2 credits summer) in the semester in which the examination is written. A student who has only the Final Comprehensive Examination to complete for graduation will register for the required hours under NGR 6910: Supervised Research.
3. The Supervisory Committee Chairperson and faculty representative will develop a minimum of 5 written questions that integrate content from the core courses, the advanced practice area, and research utilization. This will constitute the Final Comprehensive Examination. The terminal objectives for the Master's Degree Program will be used to guide question development. The student will answer a total of three questions, and the Supervisory Committee Chairperson may designate one or two questions as required.
4. The student will be provided with the questions and given 72 hours within which to submit written answers. It is suggested that the 72 hours be at a time when the student will be able to concentrate on the examination. It is also suggested that answers to each question be approximately 2-3 double spaced pages typed. Citations must be included using current APA Guidelines.
5. The Supervisory Committee Chairperson and faculty representative will evaluate the student's Final Comprehensive Examination within 5 working days of submission.
6. The Supervisory Committee Chairperson and faculty representative will meet with the student to convey the results of the final comprehensive examination.
7. The OASA will provide the Supervisory Committee Chairperson with the *Report on Thesis or Dissertation and/or Final Examination* form from the Graduate School at the beginning of the semester. This form is used to record the exam outcome and committee member's signatures.

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8. The Supervisory Committee Chairperson will return the completed *Report on Thesis or Dissertation and/or Final Examination* form to the OASA.
9. An unsatisfactory response on the written examination to one or more questions constitutes failure of the Final Comprehensive Examination.
10. If the student fails the Final Comprehensive Examination, the student will be given only one opportunity to rewrite the same or similar question(s) in the content area(s) from the initial exam that was (were) unsatisfactory. Repeat examinations may be taken in the same semester as the initial examination or later at the discretion of the Supervisory Committee Chairperson and faculty representative. The Academic and Student Affairs office will provide the Supervisory Committee Chairperson with another *Report on Thesis or Dissertation and/or Final Examination* form to be completed. If the student is not successful on the second written attempt they will be withdrawn from the nursing program.
11. Prior to the re-examination, the student and the Supervisory Chairperson meet to develop a written individual academic assistance plan. A copy of the written plan will be placed in the student's academic file with a copy provided to the student. Depending on the academic assistance plan requirements, graduation may be delayed.
12. A copy of the written final comprehensive examination questions, answers, and faculty critique/grading will be filed in the OASA for a period of three years.

Review or Approval Authority	Responsible Party	Initial Approval / Review	Most Recent Approval / Review Of Changes	Editorial Changes	Policy A-01 Review
Approval	Academic Affairs Committee	11/97	3/10		3/10
Review	Leadership Council	12/97	3/10	6/11	
Approval	Faculty	1/98	3/10		
Approval	Dean	1/98	8/10	6/11	