

Policy S-4.04
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
COLLEGE OF NURSING

TITLE: **PHD QUALIFYING EXAMINATION AND ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY**

POLICY: The College of Nursing shall have clear and specific procedures for the PhD qualifying examination, admission to candidacy, and doctoral dissertation.

RATIONALE: The purpose of the Qualifying Examination is to assess the student's ability to synthesize and integrate knowledge from the program of study in the areas of research, knowledge development, nursing, and an area of concentration. The qualifying examination is both written and oral, and covers the student's area of concentration as well as a draft dissertation proposal. The qualifying examination and dissertation proposal will provide evidence the student has the necessary preparation for initiating dissertation research.

PROCEDURE:

1. Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible to take the qualifying examination, the student must have:

- a. Successfully completed coursework without any existing incomplete grades
- b. Successfully completed the progression exam.
- c. Received a satisfactory rating on the most recent annual evaluation
- d. Refer to Policy S 4.03 for Dissertation Options Format
- e. Received the approval of the supervisory chair and committee to proceed to the qualifying exam
- f. Registered during the term the examination is administered.

2. Time Schedule

The examination is taken after the second year of full-time study or equivalent part-time study. There must be a minimum of two semesters between the date of the qualifying examination and date of the degree. All work for the PhD degree must be completed within five calendar years after admission to candidacy or the examination must be repeated.

3. PhD Qualifying Examination

- a. Students planning to take the qualifying examination must request the examination by initiating; Qualifying Examination: Request to be Examined form (Attachment #1)
- b. The student, in consultation with the supervisory chair, requests a meeting of the supervisory committee to review the dissertation proposal, to determine completion of all other eligibility criteria and to discuss the projected test date.

Policy S-4.04
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
COLLEGE OF NURSING

Page 2 of 5

- c. The student and/or supervisory chair will inform the Office of Student Affairs the date set for the qualifying exam by submitting attachment #1 to the Office of Student Affairs at which time the Associate Dean for Student Affairs (ADSA) will notify the PhD Program Director and provide the Supervisory Chair with the Candidacy form one week prior to the oral exam.
- d. The student, with the agreement of the supervisory chair and committee, may elect any time during the semester to take the written portion of the qualifying examination
- e. By the predetermined date, the student will submit to the chair of the supervisory committee four (4) questions accompanied by a comprehensive reading list (in APA format). The questions should reflect the synthesis and integration of the student's individual program of study and cover:
 - 1) Theoretical issues and research findings that pertain to the student's area of research, including analysis of ethical, social, political, economic, and/or cultural issues
 - 2) Methodological issues that pertain to the student's area of research, including analysis of how a variety of research approaches have been used, or could be, used to expand the scientific knowledge base in the area of the dissertation proposal.
- f. The chair and supervisory committee will discuss the questions prepared by the student and may select or modify these questions or add alternative questions. The final two (2) questions will be provided to the student two (2) weeks after the committee receives the student's proposed questions.
- g. Once the student has received the questions, the student will proceed independently to prepare responses. Questions regarding procedural issues are to be addressed to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and PhD Program Director. Violation of rules will constitute failure of the examination.

Policy S-4.04
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
COLLEGE OF NURSING

Page 3 of 5

- h. All answers are to be typewritten, double-spaced, APA format in 12 pt or equivalent font. Each answer may be no more than 15 pages in length, excluding references, tables, and figures. The completed examination is to be delivered electronically or by hard copy by the student to each member of the Committee. Hard copies should be on plain white 8.5 x 11 inch paper, securely clipped together but not stapled or bound. The student will have two weeks (14 days) to deliver the completed examination to the committee. Committee members will acknowledge receipt. Students will adhere to the UF honor code (4.9).

- i. Evaluation of the written component. Each of the two questions will be weighed equally and evaluated separately by the members of the Supervisory Committee using the following criteria:
 - 1) The answers reflect in-depth knowledge and synthesis of relevant theory and research.
 - 2) The answers reflect a comprehensive review of literature in the student's area of research.
 - 3) The answers reflect knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research.
 - 4) The answers reflect an understanding of the student's area of concentration/supporting courses and their relevance and/or application to the student's dissertation proposal.
 - 5) The answers give evidence of scholarly thinking appropriately reflected in scholarly writing.

No decision on pass/fail will be made until after the oral portion of the examination.

- j. Within four (4) weeks after submission of the written portion, an oral examination will be held. The student is responsible for arranging the time and date of the exam which must be agreed upon by all committee members. It is the responsibility of the supervisory chair to secure a location for the oral examination and to notify the student.

- k. Members of the Supervisory Committee must participate in the oral examination. The student may not change membership of the supervisory committee between the time of written and oral portions of the qualifying examination. The oral examination may be conducted using video and/or telecommunication. However, the student and chair or co-chair must be in the same location. All other members may participate from remote sites via tele-communications.

Policy S-4.04
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
COLLEGE OF NURSING

Page 4 of 5

1. The oral examination provides opportunity for the student to amplify, clarify, and verify written responses. The focus is on the student's ability to communicate orally and substantiate integration of knowledge. The oral examination normally requires approximately two hours.

4. PhD Qualifying Examination Outcome

- a. At the conclusion of the oral examination, the Supervisory Committee shall assign a grade of pass or fail and complete the Graduate School Form: Admission to Candidacy (which is sent to the Supervisory Chair by the Office of Student Affairs), including necessary changes in student's program or special conditions. The Admission to Candidacy Form is submitted to the College Office of Student Affairs who will then submit the form electronically to the Graduate School via the Graduate Information Management System.
- b. A failing grade is also recorded and submitted on the Admission to Candidacy Form.
- c. A failing grade in the examination results in one of the following recommendations:
 - Dismissal from the PhD program in nursing, or
 - Petition of re-examination, with a change in program of studies and additional coursework, or request to further develop dissertation proposal. (See Attachment #2: Qualifying Examination; Preparation for Re-Examination).
- d. If re-examination is recommended, it must be requested in writing by the supervisory chair and committee through the College Associate Dean for Student Affairs and approved by the UF Graduate School. At least one semester of additional course work must be completed before re-examination (per UF Graduate Catalog). The required date of reexamination is to reset by the supervisory chair and committee.
- e. If permission for re-examination is granted, the student must re-initiate the examination process as in #3 above
- f. If a failure occurs at the time of a second examination, the student will be dismissed from the PhD program in nursing. The supervisory committee records the outcome and the committee chair submits the forms: Graduate School Admission to Candidacy and the College of Nursing, Qualifying Examination: Dismissal or preparation for Re-Examination, to the Office of Student Affairs (See Attachment #2).

**Policy S-4.04
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
COLLEGE OF NURSING**

- g. If the Qualifying Examination is passed, the student may proceed to revise the dissertation proposal, based on the supervisory chair and committee's input. The supervisory chair and committee will review the final dissertation proposal and grant approval for the student to proceed. Once authorization from the chair and committee is obtained, the student may apply for Institutional Review Board approval and begin to conduct the dissertation study.

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	3/98	6/13		4/16
Approval	Leadership Council	11/98	6/13		4/16
Approval	Faculty Vote	1/99	6/13		4/16
Approval	Dean	2/99	6/13		4/16

***Bold denotes committee with A-01 approval responsibility.**

**Policy S-4.04
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
COLLEGE OF NURSING
Attachment #1**

**PHD in Nursing Science
Qualifying Examination: Request to be Examined**

Page 1 of 1

Student: _____ UFID #: _____

This is to verify that the student listed above has met all criteria and has Supervisory Committee approval to be examined for the qualifying examination required for PhD studies.

Examination Schedule:

1. Sample questions received from student _____
(date)
2. Examination questions provided to student _____
(2 weeks following #1) (date)
3. Written examination to returned to Committee _____
(2 weeks following #2) (date)
4. Oral examination:
Date _____ Time _____ Room _____
(2-4 weeks following #3)

Signatures:

Student _____ Date _____
Supervisory Chairperson _____ Date _____
Committee Members _____(external member) Date _____
_____ Date _____
_____ Date _____

<p><i>Distribution:</i> Original Copy to: ___Student Record Copy to: ___Student ___Supervisory Chair ___Committee Member s ___Program Director</p>
--

Policy S-4.04
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
COLLEGE OF NURSING

Attachment #3
Candidacy Checklist
Instructions for PhD Students

1. Review Graduate School deadlines --
(<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=893>)
2. Make sure the College's Office for Student Affairs (OSA) has your supervisory committee information.
3. Please complete Attachment #1 from Policy S-4.04 and submit to OSA so that staff know the date of your oral exam.
4. A week prior to your exam, the OSA will provide your supervisory chair with the "admission to candidacy" form. After the exam is completed, the form must be submitted to OSA in the College of Nursing. The information will then be entered into the Graduate Information Management System.
 - There must be at least two semesters between the oral part of the qualifying exam and the date of the degree. The term in which the qualifying examination is passed is counted, if the exam occurs before the mid-point of the semester. If the oral exam is passed prior to mid-point of the semester, NGR 7979 will be converted to NGR 7980, and these credits will count toward the required 14 credits of NGR 7980.
5. After being admitted to candidacy, students must register for a minimum of three credits of NGR 7980 each semester..