**Written Candidacy Exams and Procedures Version 3 December 2018**

The Written Candidacy exam must be successfully completed prior to enrollment in dissertation hours. The exam is broken into four parts:

1. Methods, Qualitative and Quantitative
2. Field, Core and Area

Students failing any part of the comprehensive examination may retake that part one time. If any part of the exam is failed a second time, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Both Methods and the Field Core exams are uniform for each matriculating class of students. The Field Area exam is tailored according to each student’s special area.

It is the responsibility of students with disabilities to inform all Written Candidacy Exam Chairs of their need for accommodation.

All exams are taken at home, open-book. The Graduate Program Assistant distributes the exams electronically to students at 9:00AM on the date of the exam.

* For the Field Area Exam, students have 24 hours to submit their answers electronically to the Graduate Program Assistant (from 9:00 AM to 9:00 AM).[[1]](#footnote-1)
* For the Field Core Exam, two questions are sent at 9 AM on the first day of the exam, with answers due to the program assistant by 5 PM; and one question is sent on the second day of the exam, with the answer due to the program assistant by 1 PM.

The student must work alone and have no contact with other students during the period when a Written Candidacy exam is being taken.

**Methods Exams**

* The Methods Qualitative and Quantitative Exams are normally scheduled for the first Friday of the spring semester of Year 1. Students who do not take POS 7745 Advanced Quantitative Methods in the fall of Year 1 will take the Quantitative part of this exam the first Friday of the spring semester of Year 2.
* Administered by the instructors of POS 7745 Advanced Quantitative Methods (Chair) and POS7707 Advanced Qualitative Methods.
* Students will have a choice on the qualitative portion of the exam (they will choose to answer one of two questions). Students will have to answer *all* questions on the quantitative portion of the exam.  The Chair compiles the questions and sends them to the Graduate Program Assistant.
* The Graduate Program Assistant distributes the exams electronically to students at 9:00AM on the date of the exam. Students have 8 hours (from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM) to answer both parts of the exam.
* The answer for the qualitative section should be 2500-3500 words, not including references.
* Students submit their answers to the Graduate Program Assistant only: \*DO NOT\* submit to the instructors of POS 7745 Advanced Quantitative Methods and POS7707 Advanced Qualitative Methods.
* To promote anonymity in grading, the Graduate Program Assistant compiles and sends completed exams to the two committee members for grading.
* Committee members grade the questions on a pass/fail basis. Graders first process the answers through Turnitin.com.
* Committee members report individual question results to Chair, who then reports the overall result to the Program Coordinator. To pass, student must pass both questions.
* If the graders of both questions agree, the Chair may report that the student passed with distinction.

**Field Core Exam**

* The Field Core exam is normally scheduled for the week before classes start for the fall semester of Year 2.
* The exam is administered by the instructors of INR7687 Theoretical Approaches to Security (Chair), INR7337 Issues in International Security, and INR7139 Issues in Domestic Security.
* Students are responsible for all material, required and recommended, contained in the syllabi of the three Core courses they took in the program (INR7687, INR7337, and INR7139).
* Questions from prior exams will be made available to students for review.
* Each committee member submits one question to the Chair, who complies the questions and sends to the Graduate Program Assistant.
* The Graduate Program Assistant distributes the exam questions electronically to students at 9:00AM on both days of the exam. On the first day, two questions will be sent to students at 9:00 AM, with answers due by 5:00 PM. On the second day, one answer will be sent to students at 9:00 AM, with answers due by 1:00 PM.
* Guideline of 2-4,000 words per question, not including references.
* Students submit their answers to the Graduate Program Assistant only. \*DO NOT\* submit to the instructors of INR7687 Theoretical Approaches to Security, INR7337 Issues in International Security, and INR7139 Issues in Domestic Security.
* To promote anonymity in grading, the Graduate Program Assistant compiles and sends completed exams to the Chair, who distributes to committee members for grading.
* Committee members grade the questions on a pass/fail basis. Graders first process the answers through Turnitin.com.
* Committee members report individual question results to Chair, who then reports the overall result to the Program Coordinator. To pass, student must pass all three questions.
* If the graders of all questions agree, the Chair may report that the student passed with distinction.

**Field Area Exam**

* The Field Area exam tests the student’s expertise in their specific research area.
* The Field Area exam is normally scheduled for the last Friday of May of Year 2.
* By the end of the first week of May, the student should meet with the departmental (‘internal’) members of their dissertation committee to identify the students’ fields and the literature that they will be responsible for on the exam.
* Each of the three internal committee members submits one question to the Chair, who compiles the questions and sends them to the Graduate Program Assistant.
* The Graduate Program Assistant distributes the exams electronically to students at 9:00AM on the date of the exam. Students have 8 hours (from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM) to answer two of three questions.
* Answers should have a maximum of 5,000 words per question, not including references.
* Students submit their answers to the Graduate Program Assistant, who distributes them to committee members.
* Each committee member reviews each answer.  Decisions on outcomes are reached through consensus or majority vote.
* The committee chair may process the answers through Turnitin.com.
* Committee members report individual question results to the Chair, who then reports the overall result to the Program Coordinator. To pass, the student must pass both questions.  Retakes of the exam will follow the format of the first exam: students will receive three questions and answer two of them during an 8 hour period.
* If the graders of both questions recommend, the Chair may report that the student passed with distinction.

**Field Area Exam Procedures**

1. During the spring semester of their 2nd year in the program each student should arrange a meeting of all internal dissertation committee members. The student will participate in this meeting. The outside reader will not participate.
2. The primary purpose of this meeting is for committee members to discern the student’s areas of expertise. This will facilitate the construction of appropriate questions for the Field Area exam.
3. After committee members determine that they have enough information from the student, the student will be dismissed. Committee members then discuss and broadly coordinate the content of the three questions to be drafted, one from each member of the committee.
4. Afterwards, each committee member submits one question to the Chair, who compiles the questions and sends to the Graduate Program Assistant in time for the start of the exam.

1. For the methods exam the examination period is 9am to 5pm if the student is taking only one part of the two-part exam. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)