

Guidelines for Administering Graduate Student Qualifying Examinations

Graduate students pursuing a Doctoral Degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences will be administered a Qualifying Examination for Admission to Candidacy. Failure to successfully complete the qualifying examination will be cause for dismissal from the program.

The Qualifying Examination will be administered in two (2) parts, consisting of a written and oral exam. The written exam will be administered to students who have completed the Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences (GPPS) core curriculum. The oral examination must be completed within 12 months of the written exam.

Written Qualifying Exam

1. Written examinations will be administered annually, in June following completion of the student's graduate core curriculum.
2. Each faculty member of the GPPS will contribute questions in their assigned content areas (Biochemistry, Pharmacokinetics, Pharmacology, Physiology, and Pharmaceutics). The questions will be of a general nature, designed to test the overall didactic knowledge from the core curriculum and constructed so that students can answer a content area within 90 minutes.
3. In the first phase of the written exam the candidate will answer all questions from each of the five content areas and must receive an average of >80% in each content area to pass. **Unmet content areas** will be retested in the second phase of the exam at a predetermined time.
4. Upon candidate's completion of the written exam, the Graduate Program Coordinator will collect the completed questions and distribute them to Faculty for grading. Grades will be assigned with a % score then returned to the coordinator for reporting.
5. The Graduate Program Coordinator will inform the student and their Major Advisor of the outcome on the written exam within 2 weeks of the exam date.
6. In the event of an unsatisfactory result after both phases of the written exam – the student will be dismissed from the program or given the option to petition to the Graduate Program Committee for entrance into the Masters Degree Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Oral Qualifying Exam

1. Upon successfully completing the written portion of the Qualifying Examination, the student's Advisory Committee will be informed that they may schedule a time to administer the oral portion of the Qualifying Examination. This examination must be completed within 12 months of the written exam.
2. The candidate must receive a satisfactory result from their committee to be admitted into candidacy. In the event of an unsatisfactory result: the student will be required to retake the oral examination after 4 months.
3. A student failing to successfully complete the Oral Qualifying Examination under the guidelines listed above will not be admitted into candidacy for the Ph.D. degree and will be dismissed from the program.
4. Upon successfully completing the Oral Qualifying Examination, the Graduate Program Coordinator will notify all members of the candidate's committee and send a recommendation letter to the Dean of the GSBS.
5. All records will become part of the student's permanent file in the Graduate Program Office.

Graduate students pursuing a Masters Degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences will be administered a Qualifying Examination upon completion of the core requirements of the GPPS. Masters students must complete the examination before the last term of their enrollment (graduating term). Failure to complete the qualifying examination will be cause for dismissal from the program.

1. Candidate's major advisor should notify Graduate Program Advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator of planned exam date. The coordinator will then reserve a room for that time.
2. The Graduate Program Coordinator will notify the other advisory committee members to submit exam questions. The questions should be of a general nature, designed to test the overall knowledge of the candidates in the faculty member's general area of expertise and be designed so that the student should be able to answer within 2 hours, leaving the balance of the 2 day testing time for questions from the student's Committee Chair.
3. The coordinator will then copy the questions to remain on file for authorized scrutiny. The coordinator will administer the examination at the appointed time.
4. As the candidate completes exam sections they will return the answers to the coordinator to forward to committee members for grading. **Grades shall be assigned as Pass or Fail then returned to the coordinator by members to be tabulated and reported (no number or letter grades).**
5. Scoring for the Masters examination will be: Major advisor section – 60% of grade, remaining committee members – 40 % of grade divided equally. Candidate must receive 80% or greater to pass.
6. In the event of a Satisfactory result: Coordinator will notify all members of the committee and send a notification letter to Assoc. Dean of the GSBS in Lubbock.
7. In the event of an Unsatisfactory result: after a four month waiting period, a meeting will be scheduled between the student's committee advisor, the Graduate Program Advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator to schedule an oral examination by the committee members. In the event the student is failed by a majority vote of the Ph.D./Masters Advisory Committee Members, student will be dismissed from the program without appeal.
8. All records will become part of the student's permanent file in the Pharmaceutical Sciences office.