Department of Geography  
PhD Comprehensive Examination Procedure

- A comprehensive examination committee consists of at least four members.
- At least three **must be** members of the Department of Geography.
- The examinations are only administered during the fall and spring semesters.

**Written Exam**
- **At least two weeks prior** to the beginning of the written component, the advisor asks the committee to submit written questions.
- **At least one week** before the beginning of the exam, questions are received by the advisor.
- The advisor may edit the questions for clarity and/or duplication.
- The advisor provides all committee members with the complete list of questions for the committee’s comments and approval before the exam.
- Written exams last five days.
- Each daily exam period should last no more than four hours.
- The Department will provide a computer with word-processing software.
- After the exam, the advisor makes copies of the questions and the student’s answers and provides these to all committee members.
- Each committee member judges whether the student has passed and informs the advisor of his or her opinion.
- If all or all but one member of the committee determines the student has passed, then the student passes the written examination.
- **Within one week**, determination of passing or failing must be communicated to the student.

If the student fails.
- The student is eligible to retake the written examination once.
- The second examination must take place no less than three months and no more than one year after the end of the first written examination.
- A student who fails the written examination twice is denied admission to the PhD candidacy.
- The student may be required to complete up to six hours of additional course work before retaking the examination.
- Once the student has passed the written component, the oral component of the examination is scheduled.

**Oral Exam**
- **Within three weeks** of the end of the written exam, the oral exam occurs.
- The oral exam is chaired by the Graduate Program Coordinator unless the Coordinator is a member of the committee.
- The oral exam may last no more than two hours.
- Immediately after the exam, the student is excused while the committee deliberates.
- If all but one member of the committee judge the exam as passing, the student passes the examination and is admitted into the PhD candidacy.
If the student fails.

- A student who has failed the oral examination is eligible to retake the oral examination once.
- The second oral examination must be taken no less than three months and no more than one year after the date of the original oral examination.
- A student who fails the oral examination twice is denied admission to PhD candidacy.

### Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>advisor requests questions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>questions have been received by advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before the end of Week 2, the advisor distributes the questions to the committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>written exam is taken</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>committee reviews answers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>student is told if he or she passed or failed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>before the end of week 6, the oral exam must occur</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All of this must occur during one of the regular long semesters and cannot extend over a semester break.