

# THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Department of Educational Administration, Foundations & Psychology  
(Approved by EAF&P Departmental Council June 6, 2012)

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

### Nature of the Examination and Related Requirements

The comprehensive examination is the culminating activity for students in the non-thesis route to the Master's degree in Education. According to the EAFP Supplemental Regulations, the purpose of the examination is "to assess students' abilities to demonstrate *breadth* of understanding about their program specialization, to describe how areas *interrelate*, and to *synthesize* and *apply* knowledge ascertained from a variety of courses. These requirements of breadth, interrelation, and synthesis across different areas of study make the comprehensive examination distinct from term papers and theses, which require depth of understanding of relatively narrow areas of knowledge." The examination involves the presentation of a written manuscript to a committee of examiners. At the discretion of the examiners, the comprehensive examination process may also involve an oral component. Upon successful completion of the comprehensive examination, a "Report on Master's Comprehensive Examination" form is signed off by the examiners and department head and forwarded to the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

The form and content for the written submission of the comprehensive examination are tailored to the needs of each program specialization within the Department of Educational Administration, Foundations & Psychology. These various formats are described further in the appendix to this document; however, regardless of whether the examination takes the form of one paper, several papers, or a portfolio, the expectations are similar to the requirements of a three credit hour course and should be completed in a similar timeframe, i.e., one term.

All written submissions, including citations and references, must be type-written, double-spaced and presented in APA form, that is, in accord with the standards of the most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

### Notice of Intention to Write the Comprehensive Examination

Students must signify to their advisor in timely fashion their intention to write and sit for the examination. In some program specializations (Educational Administration and Adult Education/Postsecondary Education) a formal written proposal must accompany this notice. In all cases, the student must discuss the nature, topic, and timing of the examination with his/her advisor ahead of time and ensure that he/she is registered in the appropriate section (term) of GRAD 7010, the Master's Comprehensive Examination course. The comprehensive examination is normally written after all of a student's coursework is completed.

## Timelines for Notification and Submission

In order that sufficient time is provided for the process of approval of topics, preparation of the written manuscript, adjudication by the examiners, scheduling of the oral component, completion of any revisions that may be required, and the timely reporting of results to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, *the following timelines are recommended:*

<i>For Convocation*</i>	<i>Notification of Intention/Proposal</i>	<i>Submission of the Examination</i>
<i>in May</i>	<i>December 1</i>	<i>February 1</i>
<i>in October</i>	<i>April 1</i>	<i>July 15</i>
<i>in February</i>	<i>August 1</i>	<i>November 1</i>

\*Please refer to the Faculty of Graduate Studies website for exact due dates for the year and term you intend to graduate:

[www.umanitoba.ca/graduate\\_studies](http://www.umanitoba.ca/graduate_studies)

## Adjudication of the Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examining committee will consist of a minimum of two faculty members familiar with the student's program specialization. The maximum size of the committee will be three members and the third member may represent another unit at the University or a colleague from the field familiar with the student's program specialization. One of the examiners shall normally be the student's advisor. It is the duty of the examiners to report to the Faculty of Graduate Studies on the merits of the written comprehensive examination according to the following categories:

- *Pass without modification or with minor revision(s)*
- *Pass subject to modification and/or revision(s)*
- *Fail*

In addition:

- A student has the right to an adjudication of the comprehensive examination if he/she believes it is ready for adjudication.
- The adjudication of the comprehensive examination shall be completed within two weeks of its distribution to the examiners.
- A submission judged "Pass" (in either of the two categories above) shall be reported to the Faculty of Graduate Studies on the appropriate form as "Approved," provided that the oral component is completed successfully, or waived, and any required modifications and/or revisions have been made. Such modifications shall be the responsibility of the advisor.
- A submission judged "Fail" shall be reported to the Faculty of Graduate Studies on the appropriate form as "Not approved."
- In the event that the examiners cannot agree as to the category of the student's submission, the Head may appoint an additional examiner who shall advise the Head of

his/her adjudication. Having the advice of the additional examiner, the Head shall make the final decision.

- No student may write the comprehensive examination more than twice. A student who fails the examination twice, is required to withdraw from the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

### Oral Component

At the discretion of the examining committee, the comprehensive examination process may involve an oral component. The oral component is a public event announced to faculty and graduate students of the academy who are invited to attend if they wish. In the oral, the graduate student is expected to demonstrate a sound understanding of the ideas presented in his/her manuscript or papers and to respond to questions on the topics. The oral is an opportunity for both inquiries by the examiners and a discussion among the participants regarding the implications for professional practice and further research that arise from the study.

Faculty and Students are advised to refer to the Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulations and the EAF&F Supplemental Regulations for more detailed information regarding Comprehensive Examination procedures.

## Appendix

**Format Examples for the Written Submission for the Comprehensive Examination  
(Each format must be equivalent to a 3 credit hour course and completed in one term)**

<b>Specialization</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Educational Administration</b>	Proposal and single case study oriented to problem solving and review of relevant literature.
<b>Adult Education/ Postsecondary Education</b>	Proposal and single case study oriented to problem solving and review of relevant literature.
<b>Guidance &amp; Counselling</b>	Two papers: #1. Analysis, interpretation and treatment plan of a client case and critical review of literature pertaining to key issues of the case. #2. Developmental portfolio of personal-professional growth, with analysis and interpretations of same within a theoretical framework.
<b>Inclusive Special Education</b>	Three papers, each reviewing a distinct professional or theoretical topic.
<b>Social Foundations</b>	Three papers, each reviewing a distinct professional or theoretical topic.