

Department of Anthropology: Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Guidelines

The Qualifying Exam provides a student with an opportunity to demonstrate their training in one or more subdisciplines of anthropology and a mastery of theory, literature, and research methods relevant to their intended dissertation project. In completing the written and oral portions of the exam the students will synthesize their understanding of that scholarship in relation to their own project as well as broader contributions to anthropology. The written portion of the examination is four days in duration and takes place over the course of one week. The exam period is usually Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday with a break on Wednesday. It is followed by an oral defense that should take place within two weeks of the date of the end of the written exam.

The topical order in which the exam is given and the content and number of questions is the decision of the student's advisory committee. The exam is "open-book" and taken at home. Answers to each of the four days' questions must be completed within a nine-hour period, unless accommodated with a different timeline (see below). Students may consult any notes or published resources needed to answer the questions. Exam questions are based on the bibliographies submitted by the student for each exam area and materials presented in the student's classes. Bibliographies for each exam topic normally range from 25-100 entries and are subject to approval by the student's advisory committee. Answers for each day's questions should be comprehensive but will generally range between 16-24 double-spaced pages of text.

Students for whom English is not a first language shall be allotted a minimum of one additional hour per exam day. Faculty should consult with the Center for English as a Second Language to develop an exam structure that is optimal for the student. Students with a DRC accommodation should notify their committee chair in advance of the written exam during the time when the bibliographies are submitted for approval. The committee chair, in consultation with the student and the DRC, will develop an exam structure in accordance with the student's accommodation plan.

Procedures:

- Students should plan to take their Qualifying Exam no later than the Spring semester of their third year. Per Graduate School policy, students are required to take the exam within five years of entry into the program.
- Before scheduling the qualifying exam, the student must successfully defend the dissertation proposal and submit bibliographies to the advisory committee for approval.
- Students should register for ANT 767 and complete the online scheduling procedure within the first six weeks of the semester during which they plan to take their Qualifying Exam.
- The oral exam cannot be given until the DGS has received approval from the Graduate School. The advisor must obtain the signatory card from the DGS and bring it to the oral defense.
- The examination begins once a student receives the questions and must follow through to an oral exam that should take place within two weeks of the date of the end of the written part of the exam.

- Occasionally an advisory committee may determine that an otherwise passable written exam or oral defense is not adequate in some particular respect. In this case, the student may be asked to submit a written document (to be determined by the committee) within five days of the date of the oral exam for final approval. Once final approval is obtained, the signatory card will be completed and turned into the Graduate School.
- If a student fails their exam, the advisory committee will determine the conditions to be met before another examination may be given. Per Graduate School policy, the minimum time between examinations is four months. A second examination must be taken within one year after taking the first examination. A third examination is not permitted.