

**HAS Graduate Qualifying Examination Procedures**  
**Approved by Faculty Vote on 09.23.2016**

**PhD Qualifying Exams:**

- Purpose:
  - To test the student's basic understanding of their general field of study, ability to communicate their research interests, and potential for doing PhD-level research.
  - Provide feedback on graduate coursework that may help in student's research and/or career goals.
  - Increase students and faculty exposure to each other's research interests.
- **HAS MS students continuing on for PhD in HAS:** If students have successfully completed their MS degrees in HAS, received at least 2 A's and 2 B's in the core courses, and received an unanimous endorsement from their MS defense committee members [i.e. checked box on MS defense form], they may have the qualifying exam waived at the advisor's request.
- Requirements for in-coming PhD students without a M.S. degree from HAS.
  - **Written component\*:**
    - **Graduate Fellowship Research Application (GFRA).** Students must submit a short (typically 2-6 pages) research proposal in the format of one of the following graduate fellowship programs: NSF, EPA, NASA, or NOAA. *Alternative fellowship formats may be used with prior approval by the HAS Graduate Committee.* Proposals must be submitted no later than **February 1** during Spring semester, **OR** due **September 1** during Fall semester. Students are encouraged, but not required to submit the fellowship application to the funding agency.
    - *\*All written components for the PhD Qualifying or Comprehensive exams should have 1" margins, 12 point New Times Roman font (or similar), and be single-spaced.*
  - **Oral component:**
    - **Q&A with 4 Faculty following submission of GFRA.** Two weeks after submission of the Graduate Fellowship Research Application, students must schedule 20-minute individual meetings with 4 tenured/tenure-track faculty members in the department (3 in their program of study, and 1 from another PhD program within HAS). The meetings should all take place within 1 week if at all possible. The Graduate Academic Advisor will assign the 4 faculty members to the PhD Qualifying Exam Committee. Those faculty members will evaluate the student's research application prior to the meeting, and ask the student questions during the Q&A related to their research to test the breadth of their knowledge about their field of study and provide feedback on coursework potentially relevant for their PhD research and career goals.
  - **Grading:** The written and oral exam will be graded Pass/Fail. Students must receive a "passing" grade from at least 3 of the 4 faculty members on both the written and oral components to pass the qualifying exam. If students fail the written exam, they may submit a revised research proposal within one month of receiving notice that they failed the first exam. If students fail the oral exam, they may retake the oral exam within one month of receiving notice that they failed the first oral exam.

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**Graduate Student Exams must comply with University's Academic Policies**

**Student Code of Academic Integrity**

Academic Integrity at the University of Arizona is the principle that stands for honesty and ethical behavior in all homework, tests and assignments. All students should act with personal integrity and help to create an environment in which all can succeed. Dishonesty will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will be reported to the Associate Dean of the Graduate College and receive a sanctions, such as a failing grade on the assignment, exam, and/or in the courses. Students should refer to the UA Code of Academic Integrity if they have questions. Available at:

<http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policies-and-codes/code-academic-integrity>

**Discrimination and Harassment**

Policies against discrimination and harassment, along with offices for reporting concerns related to discrimination or harassment, <http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/nondiscrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy>

Should a student feel he or she has been treated unfairly there are a number of resources available. With few exceptions, students should first attempt to resolve difficulties informally by bringing those concerns directly to the person responsible for the action, or with the student's graduate advisor, Associate Dean of the Graduate College, department head, or the immediate supervisor of the person responsible for the action.

**University's Intellectual Property Policy**

<http://policy.arizona.edu/research/intellectual-property-policy>

**Confidentiality of Student Records**

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) is the federal law that governs the rights of students and institutional responsibilities with respect to student records. FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's educational record. More details on what FERPA is about and specifics of what constitutes an Education Record can be accessed at: <http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/ferpa/default.htm> .