

# Research Area Exam and Dissertation Proposal Defense Instructions

“The primary purpose of the **research area examination** is to determine whether a student has good understanding of the research area in which the dissertation work falls. Secondary purposes include showing that the student can write clearly, can teach a topic well, and is generally prepared to do research in the dissertation area.” (*Graduate Handbook*)

“The primary purpose of the **proposal defense** is to determine whether a student has established an appropriate research agenda for PhD research. Secondary purposes include showing that the student can think/learn/work independently as a researcher and can present persuasively.” (*Graduate Handbook*)

The research area exam and the dissertation proposal defense are part of the same scheduling process, but they are two events on different days.

## 1. Scheduling your Research Area Exam/Dissertation Proposal:

*The following should be completed at least one week before the scheduled date*

- First, get a scheduling form from the Graduate Secretary. Second, arrange for a date, time, and place for the exam and proposal to take place with all five committee members. Make sure all members of your committee can attend. Schedule a room for the two days for one hour. Have the committee sign the scheduling form, and then have the Graduate Coordinator sign it. Give the completed scheduling form to the Graduate Secretary.
- Provide your bibliographic outline and dissertation proposal to all five committee members one week before the scheduled date. If you have questions about your committee, talk to the Graduate Secretary.

## 2. Research Exam day (or soon after):

- Provide a copy of the bibliographic outline to the Graduate Secretary.

## 3. Dissertation Proposal Defense day (or soon after):

- Obtain signatures from all committee members and the Graduate Coordinator.
- Leave the signed copy with the Graduate Secretary. (Very important!)

# Research Area Exam / Dissertation Proposal Defense

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Research Area Examination

Examination Date, Time and Place: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Dissertation Proposal Defense

Proposed Dissertation Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposal Date, Time and Place: \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Signatures

Signatures of the advisor and second and third committee members indicate that

- the bibliographic references and proposal have been thoughtfully read,
- approval has been given to schedule the dissertation proposal, and
- the committee members will attend on both dates.

Signatures of the fourth and fifth committee members indicate that

- the bibliographic references and proposal have been received, and
- the committee members will attend on both dates.

Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup> Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

4<sup>th</sup> Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

5<sup>th</sup> Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_