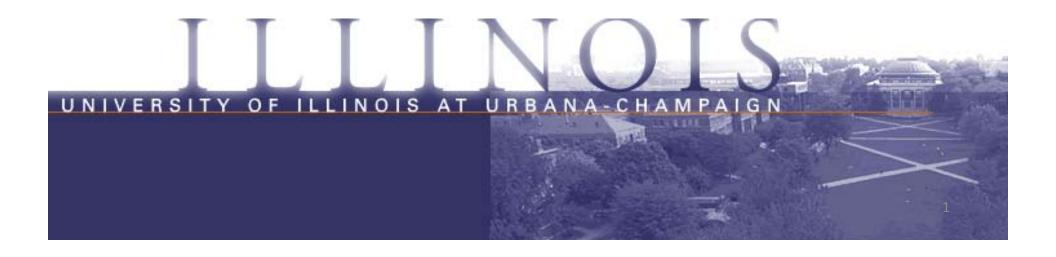
The ECE Qualifying Exam

Graduate Committee



Role of the Exam in Ph.D. Program

- Admission to Ph.D. candidacy is based on a faculty vote at a meeting held at end of the semester
 - This vote decides whether the student is allowed to continue as Ph.D. student
 - Faculty vote is "pass" or "fail"

- Faculty vote is based on three criteria:
 - Graduate course work → grades and class rank
 - Qualifying Oral Exam → committee of three faculty
 - Research → support of thesis adviser

Qualifying Exam Purpose

To provide an independent assessment of student's potential to perform research fundamental knowledge in primary/secondary areas

During the Oral Exam, Students are evaluated on:

- their ability to describe research motivation, background & context
- background knowledge from course work
- ability to understand and answer questions (oral skills)
- ability to express ideas in a written format (written skills)

Research contributions (papers) are not essential or required

Preliminary exam assesses research performed by student

Oral Exam Structure

Written Report:

- 5 pages maximum length
- Needs to emphasize background, motivation, rationale, and scope of the research area you choose
- Needs to be written for a broad audience (do not write for experts in the field)
- Do not dwell on your specific contributions
- Student should be the sole author, use your own words!
 (do not copy text from published sources, plagarism will be checked)

Oral Exam:

- -90-120 minutes should be scheduled for room, 90 minutes should typically suffice
- -Approximately 12 slides/20 minute presentation if uninterrupted
- Needs to emphasize background, motivation, rationale, and scope of the research area you choose
- Needs to be presented for a broad audience
- Expect questions on area of research
- Expect questions on background topics related to research

Consensus Evaluation Form

Links to all finalized evaluations

Exam Date:

Tester, Joe

Student:

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Exam Preparation

Based on the information you provide:

- committee is assigned
- questions from primary/related areas will be asked by your committee

Review relevant course work:

- Fundamentals of primary/related areas will be probed
- questions from undergraduate & graduate courses will be asked to test your grasp of fundamentals during exam

Write a report:

- committee is interested in the "why" more than the "what"
- background, motivation, and research context is most important

Give a presentation:

- practice your presentation before a live audience
- seek clarification if question asked during exam is not clear
- do not answer the wrong question
- exam is not a "time-trial"
- demonstrate your ability to think critically ("outside the box")

Sequence of Events

Sign-Up: during the first two weeks of the semester.

Entry with B.S. degree: no later than the fourth semester;

Entry with M.S. degree: no later than the third semester;

Ph.D. Thesis Advisor Agreement must be on file.

Committee Assignment: soon after sign-up deadline

Scheduling: student must contact the examination committee members to schedule a mutually convenient 90-120 minute slot for the exam by deadline Check committee members' general availability (teaching, travel, etc.)

Use a poll with as many slots as possible: 9:00-11:00, 9:30-11:30, 10:00-12:00, etc.

Exam Topic: Should be related to the student's research. Need not be completed research work. Examples: the student's M.S. thesis research, work carried out since the M.S. thesis, or a summary of important papers in a research area.

Report: upload a written report no later than one week prior examination date. Reports are checked for plagiarism including self plagiarism.

Examination: student should not provide any food or drink.

Consensus Evaluation: provided to student usually a few days after the exam

Faculty Meeting: faculty meets at the end of the semester and votes to determine which students are to be admitted into Ph.D. candidacy