

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Graduate Student Services & Progress (GSSP)

TO: The Chair of the Preliminary Oral Examining Committee

FROM: GSSP, 160 Williamson Hall, 612-625-3490, gssp@umn.edu

Before the examination begins – Please ensure that all assigned committee members are present. The absence of any assigned member results in an invalid examination. If all committee members are not present, you must contact the College Coordinator (CC) immediately before the examination begins, to request any last-minute committee changes. CC contact information can be found at, <https://apps.grad.umn.edu/lists/CC/>. After the exam, students must initiate a committee request at, <http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/forms/doctoral/index.html>.

Conducting the Examination--Immediately before the preliminary oral examination, the committee chair stipulates the objectives of the examination and, in consultation with other members of the examining committee, determines how the examination is to be conducted. Immediately after the examination, the candidate is excused from the room and a written secret ballot is taken before discussing the examination. Following the discussion, a second and final vote is taken, and the participants sign in the appropriate place on the report form, which is to be returned to the Graduate Student Services and Progress Office (GSSP), 160 Williamson Hall. **Note:** If the exam result is PASS WITH RESERVATIONS, the committee is permitted one week to return the Preliminary Oral Examination Form along with a copy of the letter or email outlining the steps the student must take to remove the reservations (see pass with reservation instructions below).

The outcome of the examination, with all committee members present and voting, is recorded in one of three ways: pass, pass with reservations, or fail. The voting proportions necessary for these decisions are as follows: if the committee consists of four members, a favorable verdict for passing consists of either a unanimous vote or a vote of 3-1; if the committee consists of five members, a favorable verdict for passing consists of either a unanimous vote or a vote of 4-1; if the committee consists of six members, a unanimous vote or a vote of 5-1 or 4-2 is needed; and if there are seven members, a unanimous vote or a vote of 6-1 or 5-2 is needed. Candidates who do not earn committee votes in these proportions fail the examination. If, in order to achieve the minimum number of votes to reach a verdict of pass, any vote of pass with reservations is included, then the outcome is recorded as a pass with reservations. A vote to pass the student with reservations still constitutes a passing vote.

Pass with Reservations--If the student passes the examination with reservations, the student is informed immediately, but the committee is permitted one week in which to convey its reservations to the student in writing, informing the student of the steps that must be taken to remove them, as well as a deadline by which the committee expects the reservations to be removed. A copy of this letter must be sent to the GSSP along with the Preliminary Oral Examination Form. When the student has satisfied the committee's reservations, a second letter or email informing the student and GSSP that the reservations have been removed and that the student may proceed toward the degree is also required. The committee chair should write both letters. The final oral examination may not be scheduled until GSSP has received a copy of the letter indicating that the reservations have been removed.

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If the committee members disagree as to whether the reservations have been satisfactorily removed, the committee chair asks for another vote, the results of which are subject to the same voting proportions as the initial vote.

A student who is unable to satisfy the committee's reservations may be terminated from doctoral candidacy and from the graduate program.

Failure of the Preliminary Oral Examination--Students who fail the examination may be excluded from candidacy for the degree (i.e. dismissed from the doctoral program). The student may retake the examination, provided that all committee members, or all committee members save one must approve the re-take. The *original preliminary oral examining committee* conducts the reexamination.

Recess of a Preliminary Oral Examination--If the preliminary oral examining committee recesses without having determined whether a student has passed the examination, the chair of the committee must send a letter to the Dean of the Graduate School explaining the reasons for the recess and noting the date on which the examining committee will reconvene. If the recess will be longer than one week, the examination report form must be returned to GSSP, 160 Williamson Hall. The student must schedule the Preliminary Oral Examination **at least one week** before the rescheduled exam. A new examination report form will be mailed to the chair of the committee before the date on which the committee will reconvene. *The reconvened committee must comprise of the same members as the original preliminary oral examining committee.*

NOTE: If the candidate's research involves human or animal subjects, radioisotopes, hazardous chemicals, or other activities subject to University or governmental regulation, the committee should discuss with the candidate whether s/he is aware of the regulatory requirements and whether they have complied with the requirements or how they plan to do so.

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