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Doctor of Philosophy in Civil Engineering ? Candidacy Examination

The student must prepare and defend a research proposal for their dissertation research as the candidacy exam. The objectives of the examination are to ensure that the research topic is appropriate and manageable, the student is capable and prepared to undertake the proposed research, they have investigated the research point thoroughly and that they are proposing a reasonable approach. The candidacy examination should be taken after the student passes the comprehensive examination.

The student will prepare a written dissertation proposal and submit it to the dissertation committee (see below) in advance of the oral examination. During the examination, the student should present his/her proposal to the committee orally, and answer their questions. The proposal should include:

1. tentative title, objectives and scope of the proposed research;
2. the results of a literature search on the subject (with a selected bibliography) indicating the present status of related work;
3. a discussion of the proposed problem;
4. preliminary data collected to date;
5. plans for completing the research; and
6. requirements of any computer work that is included.

As soon as the student passes the examination (which implies the committee's approval of their proposal), the student can formally proceed with the research plan and register in the dissertation (CIVE 8399, 8699, or 8999). Upon successful completion of the Candidacy Examination the student is formally considered a Ph.D. candidate.

The candidacy examination is administered by the student's dissertation committee. This committee consists of at least three civil engineering faculty members from the student's major and supporting (if needed) areas, including the major advisor as committee chairman, and two faculty members from outside the department. The advisor will ask the Departmental Chairman (through the Director of Graduate Studies) to appoint the dissertation committee. The advisors request should propose the committee's membership, which should include those faculty members with the most expertise in the proposed research topic (that enables them to contribute effectively and to judge adequately). This request should be submitted as early as possible after the student passes their comprehensive examination and selects their research topic (form). The Departmental Chairman, after consulting faculty members in the major area, will appoint the committee (with any appropriate changes in the proposed membership judged necessary).

The major advisor is responsible for arranging the candidacy examination and transmitting its results (i.e., the committee's decisions) in writing, to the student, to the members of the committee, and to the Department Chairman and Director of Graduate Studies.

The dissertation committee has the responsibility of passing final judgment on the students degree plan (and imposing additional courses, if necessary), administering and grading the candidacy examination, supervising the dissertation research, passing judgment on the student's defense of their dissertation, and approving and signing the completed final copy of the dissertation document.

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