PROCEDURES FOR PHD COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS
IN MARKETING
(effective as of March 2024)

NOTE

A. The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) has only a general policy regarding procedures for PhD comprehensive examinations.

B. The comprehensive examination regulations are a departmental responsibility. However, they are subject to the School's general policy, which is outlined in the document entitled *Procedures for PhD Comprehensive Examinations Written in The Faculty of Business* (revised 2023-12-19).

C. According to *Procedures for PhD Comprehensive Examinations Written in The Faculty of Business*, "Students must pass the examination within a maximum of two attempts. In exceptional circumstances, a third attempt will be permitted with the consent of the student's supervisor, the Department Chair, and the Associate Dean of the PhD program."

PURPOSE

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to assess if students are adequately prepared to proceed to the candidacy stage of the PhD program. Students must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the examining committee that they possess: (a) an adequate knowledge of the disciplines and the subject matters relevant to the examinations; and (b) the ability to pursue and complete original research at an advanced level.

PROCEDURES

The comprehensive examination consists of a 2nd-year paper.

1. The 2nd-year paper should be a novel, unique, and new independent research project.

   The research topic and idea should be <u>novel and unique</u>. The expectation is that the paper will be of appropriate quality for an academic submission to a major (marketing) conference, like an ACR conference paper. If the paper involves empirical work, this standard implies that there will be some reliable results/effects to report (e.g., an experiment with significant effects).

   The paper needs to be a <u>new</u> project, and cannot be a paper for which a student previously received a grade (i.e., it cannot be a research paper that is part of a class taken, or part of a student's summer research for which they have received a grade).

   This will be an <u>independent</u> research project and paper, developed and written by the student. A student can receive limited guidance from faculty, but the main idea and theoretical development should come from the student.

   Students should discuss the paper idea with their advisor to ensure the appropriateness of the topic, and to make sure the paper meets the above criteria.

2. Students should consider utilizing the MARK subject pool to conduct experiments (if appropriate for their paper). They can also use their TEA funds or other sources (e.g., advisor funding) to conduct online studies.

3. For most students, the written paper should be submitted for evaluation by the first Monday in June at the end of the student's second year in the program. If students begin the program later (e.g., January), this timeline may be extended.

4. Within 2-4 weeks after the paper submission, the student will give an oral presentation based on this paper. This is a closed exam and the audience will consist of marketing faculty only.

5. Each student should give a presentation of 15 minutes or less (presentations will be cut off at 15 minutes). Faculty will have read the paper. Therefore, the presentation should cover only the highlights of the paper (approximately 5 minutes), with the remaining time focusing on a discussion of the student's experience with the research project (i.e., the "journey"). This will include some details about the studies conducted (and potentially also studies that failed).

   After the presentation, there will be a question-and-answer session of about 30 minutes. Questions will be asked in an order where those the farthest "removed" from the student will start. The student's advisor(s) will not ask any questions. The question-and-answer session will be followed by a closed faculty meeting, after which the student will be informed of the outcome: Pass, Defer, or Fail.

6. A committee consisting of all Marketing faculty members will evaluate the quality of the paper. The evaluation criteria mirror what is typically used in the editorial review process (e.g., conceptual/theoretical and methodological soundness). The committee may judge the paper either as acceptable ("Pass") or not ("Defer" or "Fail"). In the latter case, the student will receive feedback from the committee regarding what it deems to be the key concerns about and shortcomings of the work. The outcome of "Defer" implies that the student will have the opportunity to revise the paper and resubmit for evaluation. The deadline for resubmission is usually within **three months** of the faculty decision, though alternate timelines can be specified by the faculty. Below is the evaluation form used to assess the paper.

Evaluation Form for University of Alberta Marketing Comprehensive Exam

Student Name: ___________________________

Please rate the comprehensive paper based on the following criteria.

Scale for questions: 1 = Poor, to 5 = Excellent.

1. Motivation/Importance of Research Question
   1 __ 2 __ 3 __ 4 __ 5 __ n/a __

2. Conceptual/Theoretical Rigor
   1 __ 2 __ 3 __ 4 __ 5 __ n/a __

3. Novelty
   1 __ 2 __ 3 __ 4 __ 5 __ n/a __

4. Literature Review
   1 __ 2 __ 3 __ 4 __ 5 __ n/a __

5. Methodology
   1 __ 2 __ 3 __ 4 __ 5 __ n/a __

6. Clarity of Exposition (paper is well-written)
   1 __ 2 __ 3 __ 4 __ 5 __ n/a __

7. Discussion of Results
   1 __ 2 __ 3 __ 4 __ 5 __ n/a __

8. Overall Contribution of Paper
   1 __ 2 __ 3 __ 4 __ 5 __ n/a __

Overall Recommendation

____ Pass

____ Defer

The following option is only for the second round of the paper.

____ Fail (this implies that the student will be terminated from the program)

Reviewer Comments (these comments will be provided to the student after the exam):