



## Instructions for Written Feedback on Qualifying Exams Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences (adopted in 2009)

**Descriptions of the areas to be evaluated (e.g., “scholarship”) are given below. Evaluations are based on the full exam (written and oral portions.**

- Each item should be rated as one of the following:
  - Exceptional: A rating of “exceptional” will be very unusual and could provide a natural route to consideration of commendation. Written comments are optional.
  - Satisfactory/Pass: This is the most common rating. Written comments are optional.
  - Inadequate/Fail: Any rating of “inadequate/fail,” by any committee member; leads to consideration of failing the qualifying exam. Any ratings of “inadequate/fail” should be followed by written comments explaining that decision.

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For each criteria listed, if the committee members all agree on the evaluation, please just list one final evaluation for that criteria (e.g., “Scholarship: satisfactory/pass.”) **In cases where committee members disagree**, please note that, without identifying individual committee member’s evaluations (e.g., “Scholarship: Two committee members: satisfactory; one committee member: inadequate/fail.”)

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The criteria are *not* weighted. The criteria are important, and there is no equation which sums ratings to yield a final “pass” or “fail” decision about the qualifying exams. Different areas may place different emphases on the criteria, and emphasis on certain criteria might even vary across students.

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Department areas are welcome to compose additional categories/ratings that they believe are applicable to students in their area. These additional criteria/ratings should be used only for qualifying exams in their particular area. Similarly, individual qualifying exam committees may design an additional set of categories/ratings to be used in evaluating the qualifying exam of a particular student.

### CRITERIA DEFINITIONS

**Scholarship:** e.g., knowledge of the field, appropriate citation of relevant works, able to attribute ideas to appropriate sources, able to use references to illustrate a point.

**Analytic, synthetic, and integrative thinking:** e.g., goes beyond simply listing studies in an area; combines them to generate new integrative directions; critiques studies, understanding their ambiguities and limitations; differences between what is actually demonstrated by a study and what the author may have claimed.

**Understanding of fundamental methodological issues:** e.g., aware of strengths and limitations of particular methods; sensitive to limitations in conclusions that can be drawn; able to suggest suitable methodological approaches to answer important questions.

**Understanding of fundamental theoretical issues:** e.g., aware of relevant bodies of theory; use theories to generate predictions or research hypotheses for specific situations; understand degree of research support for existing theories.

**Ability to communicate clearly and effectively:** Written and oral.

#### **Departmental Policy Regarding Qualifying Examinations (revised Nov. 2016):**

1. Qualifying examinations will be taken in the summer after the 4th semester in the program.
2. This Petition for Qualifying Examination form and written plan are due to Patricia Crouch by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, May 5, 2017.
3. All written parts of the exam must be completed by the last week of the summer break (Aug. 14-18, 2017; no later than 5 p.m., Aug. 18).
4. The oral exam, including the examination and the evaluation of it, must be completed by the Friday of the SECOND week of classes in the fall semester (Sept. 1, 2017). By that time, the committee must be prepared to give a report to the full department faculty.
5. If the student does not pass the exam, he/she has until 5 p.m. on Thursday of the third week of classes (Sept. 7, 2017) to meet with the DGS and make a decision about any course changes. All procedures used to let the student complete or re-take the exam must be complete by the end of the fall semester (i.e., the end of the fifth semester). The faculty on the committee must be prepared to give a report to the full department faculty by the end of the final examination week of the fall semester (finals week for Fall 2017 is Dec. 11-15).
6. Students who are pursuing majors from two different departments or programs may be given one extra year to complete their psychology qualifying examinations. (Provided they submit the deferral form, see #7 (listed below) of this policy).
7. Written applications for extensions on the examination (i.e. completed on the Qualifying Examination Petition form, see above, #2 of this policy) must be made by the Friday of finals week of the fourth semester to the qualifying examination committee for approval or disapproval (May 5, 2017).

\*To add or remove persons from your committee visit

<https://apps.iu.edu/kr-prd/kew/EDocLite?edlName=COLLGRAD.AdvisoryComChange.Doctype&userAction=initiate>