

Last Revised 5/16/2016

Idaho State University  
**Engineering and Applied Science**  
**Doctor of Philosophy**

**Civil and Environmental Engineering**

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**Guidelines for Ph.D.  
Comprehensive-Qualifying Examination**

The Ph.D. Advisory Committee has “the responsibility for the student’s progress until after the comprehensive-qualifying examination has been satisfactorily completed and the student has been admitted to candidacy.” Further, the committee members are “responsible for preparation and grading of the comprehensive-qualifying examination which is to be eight hours long”.

**Guidelines for the Comprehensive-Qualifying Examination (CQE) and the Ph.D. Advisory Committee (PAC) are as follows:**

- a) The material to be included in the exam is at junior/senior and graduate levels.
- b) The exam is a closed or open book exam. If closed book, data or any other relevant material may be supplied.
- c) Sample questions for students taking the exam must be made available by the Committee.
- d) In making the exam, the Committee should hold a meeting of its members to discuss the contents of the exam to make sure that the exam questions are within the scope and level of the student taking the exam. The Committee may also request other graduate faculty who are knowledgeable in the area of student’s background, to assist in the exam. Further, the Committee may decide to have some common questions in Mathematics appropriate for the department/program for all the students to ensure that the students have the basic competency expected of a Ph.D. student in Civil Engineering, Environmental Engineering, or Environmental Science and Management, and also to ensure that there is some common basis for easy comparison of students.
- e) Each question should clearly specify the relative weight so that the student may properly allot time for each question.
- f) As the individual questions are sometimes made up and graded by different teachers, students are advised to start a new sheet for each question.
- g) To make sure the results of the exam are communicated by the end of the semester, the exam is normally held on the last Thursday and Friday in October for fall semester, and March for spring semester. The duration of the exam is 8 hours, held in two sessions of 4-hour duration on two days.
- h) The Committee will conduct and grade the exam.
- i) The Committee should have a meeting of its members in which the grading and results are discussed and prepare a report to the Ph.D. Program Committee (PPC) or Dean of the College of Science and Engineering.
- j) The decision of the final result of the exam is to be made only after appropriate discussion by the PPC and all other faculty associated with the exam.
- k) Finally, the PAC as a whole can set any reasonable guidelines for the exam. As explained above, the exam will hold at least two meeting, the first one for making the exam and the second one for discussing grading, result, and preparing report.