

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR  
GRADUATE PROGRAMS  
IN THE  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION SOCIAL SCIENCES**

(Revised 8/23/10)

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## **GRADUATE EDUCATION IN CONSERVATION SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Welcome to the University of Idaho and the Department of Conservation Social Sciences! We have assembled this material to help you with your graduate program. It is your guidebook to making your program productive and enjoyable. You should keep it handy for reference throughout your stay at the University. It will provide the answers for most of the questions you have about your program. If not, remember that we are always available to assist you. We encourage you to develop a close, professional relationship with all faculty and staff members in the department.

Graduate education can be an exciting experience in learning and discovery. You learn in the classroom, you learn from your peers, and you learn through informal interaction with faculty, industry and government leaders, and others. Determination and dedication will help you get the most out of your experience. Your major professor and your committee will work with you to design a program that best fits your personal educational and professional needs.

### **Admission to the Graduate Program**

Your admission to graduate study normally assumes that you have completed undergraduate coursework in the natural or human sciences. If you have completed your undergraduate program in a field not closely related to Conservation Social Sciences you may be required to complete deficiencies as determined by your graduate committee or based on the results of a qualifying examination.

### **The Department's Program and Philosophy**

We offer educational opportunities at the graduate level leading to a Master of Science (M.S.) in Natural Resources and a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Natural Resources. Entrance is through the University of Idaho College of Graduate Studies and is highly competitive. The business offices of the College of Graduate Studies are located on the first floor of Morrill Hall. Keep in mind that although you are working in the Department of Conservation Social Sciences in the College of Natural Resources, you are officially a student in the College of Graduate Studies. The Dean of Graduate Studies, not the dean of the College of Natural Resources, must sign any documentation that requires a dean's signature.

We place a premium on the development of independent scholarship. We try hard to provide you with the tools, atmosphere, and advice necessary to attain this objective. We make every effort to be available for consultation on special problems; however, you should understand that it is your responsibility to develop independent work habits. Because of the differences between the objectives of undergraduate and graduate education, as a graduate student you enjoy more privileges than do undergraduate students. However, these privileges demand greater personal responsibility. Part of this responsibility is to work diligently toward completing degree requirements as rapidly as the conditions of a particular project will allow while maintaining quality scholarship. It is generally expected that two years is long enough to complete the M.S. degree program. The Ph.D. program typically requires a minimum of three years of study beyond the Master's.

You will find degree requirements and other details in the University *General Catalog* (<http://www.uidaho.edu/registrar/classes/catalogs>) under the section for the College of Graduate Studies. You can also find much of this information on the COGS web page at [www.uidaho.edu/cogs](http://www.uidaho.edu/cogs). In many places in this document, we refer to various forms you will need to file at different stages in your program. The department provides some forms but others come from the College of Graduate Studies. In the latter case, you will find forms online at the College of Graduate Studies webpage. You can obtain information on building keys, financial assistance, and similar matters from our department administrative assistant.

## **THE GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CONSERVATION SOCIAL SCIENCES**

As a graduate student, you work on an individual basis under the advisement of a major professor and a graduate committee of faculty members. All students are expected to take CSS 506 (Fundamentals of Research) and an upper-division undergraduate or graduate analytical methods course (either qualitative or quantitative) unless they demonstrate to the department faculty that they have covered the content of these courses in previous upper division coursework. At least one credit of seminar (501) is required of all students. Ph.D. students must also take CSS 591 (Theories of Environmental Behavior) and CSS 587 (Research Literature in the Conservation Social Sciences). Masters students are also expected to take 591 and 587 unless they obtain approval from the department faculty. These courses, which complement one another, provide you with a solid basis for developing your graduate research project.

The rest of your courses will be selected with your major professor and committee. Ph.D. students, especially those intending to pursue academic careers, will need additional statistics and theory courses.

The College of Natural Resources has adopted a new policy requiring graduate students to be continuously enrolled during the academic year. This means you need to be enrolled for at least one credit each semester. Otherwise you will be considered dropped from the program. In addition, they have adopted a policy requiring all students who are on a 20 hour per week RA or TA position to be enrolled for at least 9 credits.

### **Supervisory Committee Members and Their Role**

You must have a graduate committee comprised of members you select in consultation with your major professor and the department faculty. People who have some interests in common with you and possess skills that may be helpful to you make the best committee members. Presumably, these

are people from whom you will take courses and seek advice. The department head and the College of Graduate Studies must approve committee members.

The College of Graduate Studies requires that all M.S. (Plan A; thesis) students have at least three (3) members on their committee. Although the College does not require a full committee for Plan B (non-thesis) students, the CSS department requires the same committee structure as for Plan A students: in each case one (1) of the three must be from a supporting area outside the department.

Doctoral students must have at least four (4) members on their doctoral committee. The department requires that one (1) or two (2) of the four members be selected from supporting areas outside the department. In all cases, at least two of the members must be from the department faculty.

Committee members are expected to be active contributors to your program and not merely “rubber-stamp” your coursework, proposal, thesis, project, or dissertation. Early in your program you and your committee should agree on members’ roles and how the committee will function. Each student’s experience is likely to be unique.

It is your responsibility to propose the research or scholarly work you will complete for your graduate project or thesis, discuss it with your major professor, and negotiate a mutually agreed-upon proposal with your major professor and committee.

## **Other Considerations**

Human Subjects. The University of Idaho Institutional Review Board (IRB) serves as a technical and compliance resource for research and activities involving human subjects. The scope of the committee includes review and approval of any research that involves human subjects in experiments, surveys, questionnaires, interviews, or observation of behavior.

Principal Investigators and graduate students involved in all research using human subjects must complete and submit a Human Subject Review Summary Form (available at: <http://www.uoi.uidaho.edu/hac/>) and obtain written approval, prior to starting any of the proposed activity. The faculty advisor or major professor is responsible for student research that involves human subjects and must submit the protocol to the committee on your behalf. The IRB approval letter must be submitted with your thesis to the Graduate School.

University Idaho policy, following the lead of most national/federal human research organizations, requires that anyone conducting research with human subjects must complete the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on-line course: “*Human Participant Protections Education for Research Teams*.” This short course, and the test, can be accessed at: <http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>.

Graduate students must take the on-line course, successfully complete the test, and print the Certificate of Completion. Give one copy to the department Administrative Assistant for your file and keep one for yourself.

Other Research Approvals. Any research that involves federal funds or other federal support for collecting data from people needs to receive Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act. See your advisor and agency sponsor for details. The Social Science program of the National Park Service provides details:

<http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/survey.cfm>.

Similar policies also exist for research involving animals or biological hazardous materials. Details can be found on the University Research Office website.

Formatting Written Work. The CSS Department requires written work (proposals, papers, theses, dissertations) to be in APA (American Psychological Association) format. You should use a bibliographic referencing program (such as EndNote) to save yourself a lot of work.

Satisfactory Progress. Students are expected to make satisfactory progress in coursework, research/project, and other aspects of professional development, per guidelines in the UI catalog. CSS has developed a process for evaluating progress – MS students are evaluated at the end of each semester, while PhD students are evaluated once a year. It is your responsibility to obtain the evaluation form and coordinate your evaluation with your advisor.

## **MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NATURAL RESOURCES, CSS EMPHASIS**

### **Plan A or Plan B?**

As part of your Master's program you will be required to conduct a major scholarly project. This project may involve research, carrying out a planning process, creating a product, developing computer software, or engaging in some other in-depth, creative, and disciplined application of knowledge and skills. This project is identified as either a Plan A or a Plan B project. For Plan A you produce a research thesis and for Plan B you produce some other kind of scholarly, creative work. After reading the following discussion of the differences between the thesis and non-thesis approach to a Master's degree, feel free to talk with your major professor and committee if you still want advice on which best suits your program goals.

The differences between Plan A and B programs in CSS are as follows:

Plan A programs are research oriented. Under Plan A you are required to conduct independent research and present the results of that research in a thesis that is formatted and submitted according to guidelines specified by the College of Graduate Studies. Acceptable forms of a thesis include a research report, publishable journal article manuscripts, or some other format approved by your graduate committee. A maximum of 10 credits of thesis (CSS 500) may be used toward the 30 credit requirement.

Plan B programs may include primary research but typically they concentrate more on coursework and synthesis or application of existing knowledge. In this case, you produce a scholarly product in the form of a final report, professional paper, or some other tangible scholarly or creative production approved by your committee. Examples of other kinds of products include management plans, training modules, interpretive media, marketing programs/ materials, or other similarly creative or scholarly work. Plan B projects are not submitted to the College of Graduate Studies but require the approval of your committee. A maximum of five credits of CSS 599 may be used toward the 30 credit requirement.

## Definitions & Additional Information for the M.S. Program

You are responsible for reading, understanding, and following the university's rules and procedures for the graduate program, which are found in The College of Graduate Studies' section of the University of Idaho *General Catalog*. The following section details specific provisions for the CSS graduate program.

### 1. Provisional Status

The Department may provisionally accept a student into the graduate program. In this case, the department requires that the student attain grades of "B" or higher in all courses taken and not receive an "Incomplete" in any course during his or her first semester.

### 2. Appointing the Graduate Committee

Beginning in your first semester, you should meet with faculty members not only in CSS but also throughout the university to determine their academic interests and activities and their potential interest and eligibility to serve on your graduate committee. Faculty members of other institutions and other professionals may sometimes serve on committees. You should have your committee selected and officially established by the middle of your second semester at UI. Once you have discussed potential committee members with your major professor and they have agreed to serve on your committee, you need to complete an *Appointment of Major Professor and Committee* form. These forms can be obtained from the College of Graduate Studies. [www.uidaho.edu/cogs](http://www.uidaho.edu/cogs)

### 3. Study Plan

Once you, your major professor, and your committee have agreed upon the courses you will complete in your program, you must complete the *College of Graduate Studies Study Plan* form [www.uidaho.edu/cogs](http://www.uidaho.edu/cogs). This is an agreement regarding the courses you will complete before receiving your degree. The form should be completed during your first year in the program. In addition to the College of Graduate Studies' Study Plan form, your major professor may require additional information such as:

- Your career and/or educational objectives;
- A justification of how each course or block of courses will help meet your academic objectives and personal development; or
- Other details of what you seek to accomplish while at the University of Idaho and how you intend to do it.

Courses may be taken under several different grading systems. Course level and credit hour requirements are described in the UI *General Catalog*.

### 4. Proposal of Scholarly Project

After you decide on a particular research problem or other scholarly work to pursue, you will prepare a detailed proposal of how to carry it out. This applies to both Plan A and Plan B.

You should solicit advice and input on your proposal from all the members of your committee, but you should submit early drafts only to your major professor. (It often takes several drafts before a proposal is ready for full committee review.) Your major professor will decide when the draft proposal is ready for full committee review, discussion, and approval. Only after your committee approves your proposal are you ready for the public proposal presentation.

A carefully completed proposal will help your work go smoothly and keep you on schedule. It will facilitate communication with members of your committee, project sponsors, and other interested individuals. It will also make it easier for you to conduct the work and prepare the final product.

## 5. Proposal Presentation

All Masters degree students, whether pursuing Plan A or Plan B, follow the same procedures for preparing and presenting their proposal to conduct their scholarly project. The purposes of the proposal presentation are to: a) help structure and sharpen your thinking and approach to your project, b) gain input from a variety of individuals that may lead to constructive modifications in your work plan or proposal, c) provide practice in making a professional presentation, and d) facilitate communication within the academic community.

You must give committee members a period of at least two weeks to review and return the draft proposal before scheduling the proposal presentation. After your committee approves your proposal, you are required to make an oral presentation of the proposed work. The date must be scheduled at least two weeks in advance, but after your committee has officially approved your proposal.

The proposal presentation should fit a two-hour time frame and be geared toward fellow graduate students and CSS faculty. Normally, the actual presentation is between 30 and 45 minutes leaving the remaining time for questions, answers, and discussion. Your major professor will assist you in arranging a time, meeting place, and publicity; however, scheduling and making the presentation is your responsibility. All activities associated with your presentation should be done in a professional manner.

Proposal presentations should be made during the regular academic year (fall or spring semester) when all committee members and at least five CSS department faculty can participate (the five CSS faculty may include committee members). Also, because of semester-end time pressures, oral presentations should be made prior to the last three weeks of the semester.

You must check on the availability of faculty for your proposed presentation time. If, at the time of the presentation, a committee member is absent or fewer than 5 CSS faculty are present, the department head may request that the presentation be rescheduled or that arrangements be made to provide the opportunity for other faculty and students to view and participate in the presentation. It is your responsibility to publicize your presentation at least two weeks before its scheduled date. The department provides the format for the announcement and the administrative assistant will assist you in its preparation and distribution.

The following suggested guidelines should help you prepare for a presentation that will be the most useful and will reflect well on you:

- (1) Prepare a handout or other visual aid showing the stages of the work to be conducted, key definitions, hypotheses, your theoretical model, examples of interpretive materials, or other material that the audience may need or want.
- (2) A suggested outline for the presentation might include:
  - a. General background and introduction
  - b. Statement of problem
  - c. Purpose of project (research)
  - d. Relevant literature, materials, research and/or theory
  - e. Design and methodology
  - f. Implications of proposed work for management, development, education, planning, future research, etc.
  - g. Timeline

This outline is only suggested as a rough guideline. You are encouraged to develop a presentation format that best suits your research or project.

- (3) You may want to circulate any questionnaire or survey instruments you have developed. The comments of the audience often provide very helpful feedback.
- (4) Questions and comments could come from faculty, students, and guests throughout your presentation, at the end of each major section, or at the end of the presentation. It is your job to control the discussion and time your presentation so that it fits the announced meeting length.

Final approval of your proposal can come only after the oral presentation. This approval is given by majority vote of the committee members with input from other graduate faculty in attendance. Prior to the vote, students and other guests are dismissed. Committee members must sign the department's *Thesis/Project/Dissertation Proposal* form that is available from the department administrative assistant. You will also be asked whether you are willing to let other students look at your proposal. If you are willing, you will be asked to sign a release form.

## 6. Revisions to the Proposal

Prior to approving your proposal, your committee may require changes or further review and subsequent revision based upon what took place at the proposal presentation. You or your major professor must file your approved written proposal with the department administrative assistant within 20 working days of the presentation. Normally, only after the proposal is submitted can the proposed work begin.

It sometimes happens that, once your research or project has begun, you discover that it is not possible or desirable to do precisely what you said you would do in your proposal. In other cases, the proposal may have described a process to develop procedures, but not spelled those procedures out in detail. This is especially likely to be the case with qualitative research studies. In such cases, you will need to file a written revision or update to your proposal. You and your major professor should agree on what needs to be addressed and obtain approval (written or email) from all committee members. The revision need not be a lengthy document, but it should cover all relevant changes, including a justification and explanation. The revision should then be filed at the department with your proposal.



## 7. Thesis (Plan A) or Project (Plan B) Drafts and Final Defense

Prior to the final defense (and for Plan A, the thesis submission deadlines of the College of Graduate Studies), the following steps must be followed in completing either a Plan A or a Plan B program. We strongly recommend that you obtain a copy of *The Thesis/Dissertation Handbook* from the College of Graduate Studies. Follow its format directions. Even though it may not be entirely applicable to a Plan B program, the information can be helpful.

- (1) The early drafts of your thesis or final project should be submitted only to your major professor. (As with your project proposal, it is not unusual to do several drafts before your thesis/project is ready for review by the other members of your committee.) After your major professor's approval, you then provide copies to the rest of the committee members. However, it is very important that you seek help and input from each committee member as you are developing your document. Keeping all members involved is important, but remember to use their time effectively.
- (2) Once you and your major professor feel your thesis or project draft is adequate to defend, you should obtain permission to proceed. A request to proceed form needs to be signed by the entire committee and can only be signed when the thesis is ready to defend. It is standard procedure to give your committee at least two weeks to read your thesis. In the case of a thesis (Plan A) a *Request to Proceed with Final Defense of Thesis/Dissertation* form from the College of Graduate Studies must be obtained. The form is submitted to the COGS any time prior to starting the defense. In return, COGS will give the student the "Final Defense Report Form" which has to be signed by the committee at the defense. In the case of a Plan B, you obtain a *Request to Proceed with Final Defense (Plan B)* form from the department. In either case, your committee members must give you the approval to proceed with the defense.
- (3) In addition, the department administrative assistant will assist you in the preparation and distribution of a flyer that publicizes your defense. Your announcement must be posted at least two weeks in advance. Planning ahead is vital.
- (4) The defense comprises two parts. The first part is a seminar presentation of your thesis or project results. It will probably take a form very similar to your proposal presentation but include sections on results, conclusion, and recommendations. Second, you are required to pass a final examination. The examination typically is oral, although you may be asked to answer additional questions in written form. It covers at least three topics, one of which is your thesis or project. For Plan A, the second topic is research methods. The remaining topics are chosen by you and approved by your committee to reflect your fields of study. These topics should be selected and announced to your committee in advance.

Your defense seminar presentation is open to all students and to the public. The examination portion of the defense follows the presentation and it may be open to students and others at your discretion.

The final defense should be scheduled during the regular academic year (fall or spring semester) when all committee members and at least five of the CSS faculty are available. Also, the defense should be scheduled to occur at least three weeks before the end of the semester. You must check on the availability of faculty on the proposed time. If the required attendees cannot be physically present and alternative arrangements have not been made to accommodate their participation, the department head may request that the defense be rescheduled.

**The time necessary to review and finalize your thesis or final project and to schedule and advertise your defense can be long. Consequently, you may need to have your thesis or project in nearly final form one or two months before the end of the semester in which you plan to complete your program.**

Evaluation of your defense is Pass/Fail by a majority vote of your graduate committee after receiving input from other graduate faculty in attendance. If you fail your defense, you may repeat it once at the discretion of your committee

## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM (Ph.D.) IN NATURAL RESOURCES**

The Ph.D. is a college-wide degree with all doctoral students receiving a Ph.D. in Natural Resources, although each department has its own policies. The Ph.D. is a research-oriented degree that requires students to make a unique, independent contribution to knowledge. As a result, students must acquire competency in the application of the scientific method and research skills. Because the responsibility for ensuring that this competence is successfully attained lies with individual departments, the Department of Conservation Social Sciences retains a role in Ph.D. programs that are chaired by department faculty. The department thus has a clearly defined role that is different from that of the doctoral student's supervisory committee.

### **Definitions & Additional Information about the Ph.D. Program**

The UI *General Catalog* stipulates the university rules and procedures for doctoral programs. The College of Graduate Studies' section of the UI General Catalog should be referred to for specific university requirements. You are responsible for reading, understanding, and following the university's rules and procedures for the graduate program that are found in the catalogue. The following outlines the specific provisions for CSS students whose major professor is a CSS faculty member.

#### **1. Qualifying Examination and Academic Deficiencies**

The Ph.D. in the CSS department is based on an advanced understanding of some area(s) of social science. Sometimes students enter our program from other disciplines, without undergraduate or Masters level training in social sciences. If so, you may be required to complete an oral and/or written qualifying examination. Its primary purpose is to assess your background in major and supporting fields and to provide some of the basis for preparation of your study program. Students with deficiencies will take coursework to raise them to the expected level of proficiency. Undergraduate courses may be required, although these may not always be credited toward the Ph.D. itself.

#### **2. Appointing the Graduate Committee**

Beginning in your first semester, you should meet with faculty members not only in CSS but throughout the university to determine their academic interests and activities and their potential interest in serving on your graduate committee. Faculty from other universities and professionals with Ph.D.s may sometimes serve on Ph.D. committees. You should have your committee selected and officially established by the middle of your second semester at the UI. Once you have discussed potential committee members with your major professor and they have agreed to serve on your

committee, you need to complete an *Appointment of Major Professor and Committee* form. These forms can be obtained online from the College of Graduate Studies or from the department administrative assistant.

### 3. Study Plan

Once you, your major professor, and your committee have agreed upon the courses you will complete in your program, you must complete the *College of Graduate Studies Study Plan* form ([www.uidaho.edu/cogs](http://www.uidaho.edu/cogs)). It is an agreement regarding the courses you will complete before receiving your degree. It should be completed during your first year in the program and no later than your third semester.

In addition to the College of Graduate Studies form, your major professor may require additional information, such as:

- Your career and/or educational objectives;
- A justification of how each course or block of courses will help meet your objectives and personal development; or
- Other details of what you seek to accomplish while at the University of Idaho and how you intend to do it.

### 4. Preliminary Examinations (Departmental and Committee)

There are three objectives for these examinations: (1) to strengthen and develop the common bond of knowledge among those who obtain a Ph.D. degree in natural resources, especially those who incorporate human dimensions; (2) to assess a student's competency to continue in the doctorate degree program; and (3) to facilitate a useful and engaging learning experience for the student that demonstrates the skills required in professional life.

The examinations should be scheduled when the majority of your coursework has been completed.

**You must successfully complete both a department and a committee preliminary examination before you are advanced to candidacy and can proceed in conducting your dissertation research.** Following satisfactory completion of the department examination, the department head will file the *Completion of Department Preliminary Examination* to document that you have passed all three parts of the examination. The College of Graduate Studies is notified after you pass your committee preliminary examination.

More discussion and details about these exams are presented on page 14.

### 5. Dissertation Research Proposal

After you decide on a particular research problem to pursue, you prepare a detailed proposal for conducting your doctoral research. A carefully completed proposal will help your research go smoothly and keep you on schedule. It will also facilitate communication with members of your committee, project sponsors, and other interested individuals.

While you may want to solicit advice and input on your proposal from all the members of your committee, the early drafts of the proposal should be submitted to your major professor. (It often takes several drafts before a proposal is ready for full committee review.) Your major professor decides when the draft proposal is ready for full committee review, discussion, and approval. However, it is appropriate to seek help and input from each committee member. Keeping all members involved is important, but remember to use their time effectively.

## 6. Dissertation Research Proposal Presentation

After your committee approves your dissertation proposal, you are required to make an oral presentation of the proposed work. You must give committee members a period of at least two weeks to review and return the draft proposal before scheduling the proposal presentation.

The proposal presentation should fit a two-hour time frame and be geared toward fellow graduate students and CSS faculty. Normally, the actual presentation is approximately 45 minutes, leaving the remaining time for questions, answers, and discussion. Your major professor will assist you in arranging a time and meeting place, but scheduling and making the presentation is your responsibility. All activities related to your presentation should be accomplished in a professional manner. It is your responsibility to publicize your presentation at least two weeks before its scheduled date. The department provides the format for the announcement and will assist you in its preparation and distribution.

Your proposal presentation should be made during the regular academic year (fall or spring semester) or at least when all committee members and at least five CSS faculty can participate. Also, the presentation should be scheduled to occur at least three weeks before the end of the semester. You must check on the availability of all department faculty members on the proposed time. If the required attendees cannot be physically present and alternative arrangements have not been made to accommodate their participation, the department head may request that the defense be rescheduled or that arrangements be made to provide the opportunity for other faculty and students to view the presentation.

The purposes of the proposal presentation are to: a) help structure and sharpen your thinking and approach to your project, b) gain input from a variety of individuals that may lead to constructive modifications in your work plan or proposal, c) provide practice in making a professional presentation, and d) facilitate communication within the academic community.

The following suggested guidelines should help you prepare for a presentation that will be most useful and reflect well on you:

- (3) Prepare a handout or other visual aid showing the stages of the work to be conducted, key definitions, hypotheses, your theoretical model, examples of interpretive materials, or other material that the audience may need or want.
- (4) A suggested outline for the presentation might include:
  - a) General background and introduction
  - b) Statement of problem and justification for the study
  - c) Purpose of project (research)
  - d) Relevant literature, research and/or theory
  - e) Design and methodology

- f) Implications of proposed work for management, development, education, planning, future research, etc.
- g) Timeline

This outline is only suggested as a rough guideline. You are encouraged to develop a presentation format that best suits your research or project.

- (3) You may want to circulate any questionnaire or survey instruments you have developed. The comments of the audience often provide very helpful feedback.
- (5) Questions and comments could come from faculty, students, and guests throughout your presentation, at the end of each major section, or at the end of the presentation. It is your job to control the discussion and time your presentation so that it fits the announced meeting length.

Final approval of your proposal can come only after the oral presentation. This approval is given by majority vote of the committee members with input from other graduate faculty in attendance. Prior to the vote, students and other guests are dismissed. Committee members must sign the department's *Thesis/Project/Dissertation Proposal* form that is available from the department administrative assistant. You will also be asked whether you are willing to let other students look at your proposal. If you are willing, you will be asked to sign a release form.

## 7. Revisions to the Proposal

Prior to approving your proposal, your committee may require changes or further review and subsequent revision based upon what took place at the proposal presentation. You or your major professor must file your approved written proposal with the department administrative assistant within 20 working days of the presentation. Normally, only after the proposal is submitted can the proposed work begin.

It sometimes happens that, once your research or project has begun, you discover that it is not possible or desirable to do precisely what you said you would do in your proposal. In other cases, the proposal may have described a process to develop procedures, but not spelled those procedures out in detail. This is especially likely to be the case with qualitative research studies. In such cases, you will need to file a written revision or update to your proposal. You and your major professor should agree on what needs to be addressed and obtain approval (written or email) from all committee members. The revision need not be a lengthy document, but it should cover all relevant changes, including a justification and explanation. The revision should then be filed at the department with your proposal.

## 8. Dissertation Drafts and Final Defense

Prior to the final defense and dissertation submission to the College of Graduate Studies the following steps must be accomplished:

- (1) The early drafts of your dissertation should be submitted only to your major professor. (Like with your project proposal, several drafts are not unusual before your dissertation is ready for review by the members of your committee.) After your major professor's approval, you then provide copies to the rest of the committee members. However, you are encouraged to seek help and input from each committee member as you are developing your dissertation. Keeping all members involved is important, but remember to use their time effectively.

- (2) Once you and your major professor believe the draft of your dissertation is adequate to defend, you must complete a *Request to Proceed with Final Defense of Thesis/Dissertation* form from the College of Graduate Studies. This must be filed at least 10 working days (two weeks) before your defense. Your committee members give you the approval to proceed with the defense. The College of Graduate Studies will announce your defense in the university *Register*. In addition, the department administrative assistant will assist you in the preparation and distribution of a flyer that announces your defense. After your committee has read and approved your dissertation, the date for your defense can be scheduled. The date must be announced at least two weeks in advance. You should schedule three hours for the entire defense presentation and examination.
- (3) The defense is comprised of two parts. The first part is a seminar presentation of your dissertation results. It will probably take a form very similar to your proposal presentation but include sections on results, conclusion, and recommendations. Second, you are required to pass a final examination. The examination typically is oral, although you may be asked to answer additional questions in written form.

Your final defense is open to all graduate faculty members. The seminar presentation portion is open to all students and to the public. The examination portion of the defense follows the presentation and it may be open to students and others at your discretion. Members of the graduate faculty are encouraged to participate in both your presentation and examination.

The final defense should be scheduled during the regular academic year (fall or spring semester) when all committee members and at least five CSS faculty can participate. Also, the defense should be scheduled to occur at least three weeks before the end of the semester. You must check on the availability of faculty on the proposed time. All members of your committee must participate, either in person or through conference telephone or video. If the required attendees cannot be physically present and alternative arrangements have not been made to accommodate their participation, the defense must be rescheduled. If it is necessary to reschedule the defense, the College of Graduate Studies must be notified. Adequate time (two weeks) must be provided to re-advertise the defense in the University *Register*.

Evaluation of your defense is Pass/Fail by a majority vote of your graduate committee after receiving input from other graduate faculty in attendance. If you fail your defense, you may repeat it once at the discretion of your committee.

## **POLICIES FOR DOCTORAL EXAMINATIONS**

The doctoral preliminary examination in CSS consists of two independent examinations: a Departmental Preliminary Examination and a Committee Preliminary Examination. The committee may modify its expectations and requirements for the committee exam on the basis of your performance in the Departmental Examination.

### **Departmental Preliminary Examination**

You must pass the Departmental Preliminary Examination before you can take the Committee Preliminary Examination. The departmental examination is given in three parts and is intended to demonstrate your ability to:

1. Apply the scientific method to a researchable problem.
2. Critically review a scientific article.
3. Analyze a current issue in your research area from a theoretical standpoint.

This examination and any rewrites must be completed within a continuous period of 120 working days. This period begins when you initiate the examination process by undertaking any one of the parts listed above and ends when the third part is completed. The faculty of the department must approve an extension of time for completing the examination. Three non-committee faculty members will administer the department exam components. The assigned faculty member will complete evaluation of his/her component within 10 working days. No portion of the examination will be scheduled during the final three weeks of any semester unless special approval is obtained from the writer of that section. Department preliminary exams will normally not be administered during the summer; exceptions can be arranged with the individual faculty members who are overseeing the components of the exam. If any portion of the exam is completed in the summer, you must register for academic credit.

To initiate this process you and your major professor should send the department head a memorandum identifying the research topic area around which you would like to have the examination designed and the date on which you would like to begin taking the examination. The department head, in consultation with the faculty, will assign the most appropriate department faculty members to select the articles and issues, develop the questions, and evaluate your work.

A description of each portion of the examination is provided below:

1. Methods: A written prospectus (i.e., approach to a researchable problem) that demonstrates your ability to apply research methods (qualitative and/or quantitative) to a research question within your research topic area (3 days, open resources).
2. Article critique: Review a manuscript for timeliness, relevance, originality and creativity, clarity in writing, use of theory, appropriateness of research methods, reasonableness of analysis, logic in interpretation, and appropriateness of conclusions and implications (8 hours, open resources).
3. Theory: A written discussion, synthesis, and application of theories as they relate to your research topic area (3 days, open resources).

For each of these parts of the departmental examination, one faculty member will read and evaluate your answer. It will be graded pass/fail. The grader may request that a specific portion be rewritten prior to final evaluation. If you fail any of the three parts, you have the opportunity to retake it once. Should you fail all or any portion of the examination a second time, the department must notify the College of Graduate Studies that you have failed the preliminary examination and cannot proceed in the Ph.D. program, but you may be offered the opportunity to finish a Master's degree.

If it is necessary for you to retake any part of the written examination, the same or a different question may be used and the faculty examiner will remain the same. It must be retaken within the 120 working-day time limit of the departmental examination. The retake will be evaluated as pass/fail by the original grader. If it is a "fail," a second department faculty reader will be asked to evaluate the material. The final grade will be determined by a consensus of the two graders. In the

event that consensus cannot be reached, the department head will make a final decision after considering the evaluations of the two graders.

You are expected to share the results of the written portion of your departmental examination with your major professor and committee. They may use this material to guide the development of the committee examination.

The major professor is responsible to complete the *Completion of Department Preliminary Examination* form to document that a student has passed all three parts of the examination. Copies should be given to the student and the original to the department head for final signature and then placement in the student's department file.

### **Committee Preliminary Examination**

Your Committee Preliminary Examination can be scheduled any time after you have successfully completed the Departmental Preliminary Examination. It is your responsibility to initiate this process but except in exceptional circumstances it must be completed prior to presenting your dissertation proposal.

The committee examination is constructed and conducted by your committee. Its format is a two-hour oral examination and its content should be specific to your major and supporting area(s) of study. The procedure involves your major professor soliciting two questions from each committee member (including the major professor) based on the content discussed with you at a meeting with your committee members and major professor in advance of the examination. You will receive these questions one week (seven days) prior to your oral examination and the examination will include some or all of these questions plus follow-up questions. You may not bring any notes or materials to the exam.

Evaluation of the examination is pass/fail by a majority vote of your doctoral committee. If you fail this examination you may repeat it once at the discretion of your committee. After completion of the Committee Preliminary Examination, you are considered a candidate for the doctoral degree. The College of Graduate Studies must be notified upon successful completion of your committee preliminary examination.