

## Organic Chemistry PhD Comprehensive Examination Guidelines

### General

The candidate shall submit to a comprehensive, closed book, examination consisting of a three-hour written part covering topics in Organic Chemistry and, subsequent to the written exam at the discretion of the comprehensive exam committee, an oral exam designed to explore areas of perceived deficiency. Candidates shall normally take the examination no later than 12 months after completion of required course work. The exam should normally be written within 18 months of admission for a full time student and 36 months for a part time student.

- i. The examination shall be conducted by the Comprehensive Examination Committee. The coordinator of the Organic division shall be responsible for recommending the Comprehensive Examination Committee and Comprehensive Examination Committee Chair to the Deputy Head (Graduate Studies) for final approval by the Head of Chemistry and appointment by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Comprehensive Examination Committee shall consist of the Chemistry Department Head (or delegate), the candidate's supervisor, the Dean of Graduate Studies (or delegate), the coordinator of the appropriate division (or delegate) and at least two other members excluding those on the candidate's supervisory committee, the total voting members to be an odd number. All members of the Comprehensive Exam Committee including the Chairperson, but excluding the Dean of Graduate Studies, shall be voting members.
- ii. The Comprehensive Examination Committee Chair shall be responsible for assembling a pool of short and long questions and model answers from all members of the Chemistry Department who wish to contribute. Each supervisor who has a student or students writing the examination is permitted to have one lengthy question on the examination appropriate to the specialty of the student.
- iii. The Comprehensive Examination Committee chair will assemble an examination of approximately 3 hours duration along with a mark distribution from submitted questions in a form whose pattern and scope is similar to previous examinations.
- iv. In this examination, the candidate must demonstrate a mastery of those subdisciplines appropriate to his/her research area, as defined by the academic unit in which they are students. Those subdisciplines upon which the candidate will be examined should be made known to the candidate in writing by the examination chair no later than three months prior to the examination. The candidate must further be able to relate the specialization of his/her research to the larger context of these subdisciplines.
- v. The Comprehensive Examination Committee shall decide by majority vote whether the candidate passes or fails. The examination will be independently graded on a numerical basis by each of the Comprehensive Examination

Committee members (no marks on the examination scripts) who will report results to the Comprehensive Examination Committee Chair normally within 24 hours of completion. The Comprehensive Examination Committee Chair will compute an average mark and convene a meeting of the Comprehensive Examination Committee to determine the outcome as specified in III.B.2.vi.

- vi. The Comprehensive Examination Committee shall, by majority vote, normally report a grade of pass (50%), re-examination, or fail. The Examination Committee may recommend re-examination if the candidate fails the comprehensive examination. If the Comprehensive Examination Committee does not so recommend, the candidate's programme will be terminated. If a re-examination is to be held, it must be conducted not less than one month and not more than six months after the first examination. The decision of the Comprehensive Examination Committee following re-examination can only be pass or fail. Failure will lead to immediate termination of the candidate's programme with no option for further examination.
- vii. In cases where the comprehensive examination grade is 40-55 and the Comprehensive Examination Committee agrees that there is legitimate grounds for doubt, an oral examination may be recommended. The oral examination, if required, is normally held within 48 hours of the completion of the written paper and will be conducted by the Comprehensive Examination Committee. The Comprehensive Examination Committee chair will inform the student regarding particular areas of weakness in the written paper.
- viii. The result of the comprehensive examination(s) shall be reported to the candidate by the Dean. The Chairperson of the Comprehensive Examination Committee shall report to the Head of the academic unit who shall report to the Dean.