



California Institute of Integral Studies

PhD Programs

Comprehensive Exam Rubric

Purpose

The purpose of this rubric is to give doctoral students a clear understanding of the criteria that will be used to guide the assessment of the quality of their comprehensive exam.

Application

This rubric is intended to be shared with doctoral students as part of their program's introduction to the comprehensive exam process. Students can use this rubric as a coherent set of criteria that include descriptions of expected levels of performance while developing their scholarship during their program.

Implementation

While this rubric should be a foundation for the comprehensive exam process, it will be formally implemented when presented as a final product:

- 1) The rubric will form the basis to provide clear feedback by the faculty who are assigned to guide the student through the comprehensive exam process.
- 2) Once the assigned faculty approves the student's final comprehensive exam draft this rubric will be used to assess the exam. The completed rubric will be returned to the chair of the department/program and the student. *Other written feedback by the assigned faculty will be sent to the chair and student.*

Explanation of the Scale

The purpose of the Comprehensive Exam Rubric Scale is to develop a consistent guide for faculty to assess performance across the institution's PhD programs. It is as much a performance scale for *programs* as it is for the *individual* student. PhD students develop the attributes expressed in the scale as a result of participating in program coursework and the subsequent dissertation process. As such, the expectation is that a student will start the program as an '*emerging scholar*.' During the coursework phase of a candidate's time here they will be '*developing*' their scholarship. Our PhD programs are then designed to contribute to a candidate's subsequent success through the *advising* phase wherein the expectation is that a PhD candidate will in some, but not all cases, be able to demonstrate a '*developed scholarship*' of some criteria of their work. This is what can be normally expected for new scholars. On rare occasions, faculty may see attributes that are quite advanced. While these are typically attributes that only develop after practicing one's profession for an extended period of time some *developing scholars* show unusual traits that should be given notice as '*exemplary scholarship*.'

Passing Criteria

To successfully pass the Comprehensive Exam a student may not receive a 1 or 2 score on any item **AND** must receive at minimum a score of 6 on *Foundation for Proposed Dissertation Research (Original Contribution)* and *Scholarship* items.

PhD Programs – Comprehensive Exam Rubric

Candidate: _____

Student ID: _____

Assigned Faculty: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Program Chair: _____

Approval Signature: _____

Date: _____

Score (circle one): Pass No Pass

Program:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anthropology & Social Change | <input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy & Religion, with a concentration in Asian Philosophies & Cultures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> East-West Psychology | <input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy & Religion, with a concentration in Philosophy, Cosmology & Consciousness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Sexuality | <input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy & Religion, with a concentration in Ecology, Spirituality, & Religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integral & Transpersonal Psychology | <input type="checkbox"/> Transformative Studies |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Women's Spirituality |

Instructions for Chair and Committee

- 1) Assigned faculty should fill out the complete form. *Do not leave blanks.*
- 2) Using the 10-point scale below only circle one number for each rubric section to indicate your assessment of the student's scholarship.
- 3) Once complete, please return the completed form to the Department/Program Chair.
- 4) To successfully pass the Comprehensive Exam a student may not receive a 1 or 2 score on any item **AND** must receive at minimum a score of 6 on *Foundation for Proposed Dissertation Research (Original Contribution)* and *Scholarship* items.

	Exemplary Scholarship 10 9	Developed Scholarship 8 7 6	Developing Scholarship 5 4 3
Focus-Scope of Inquiry	Explicitly articulated, sophisticated, and researchable question/focus that is systematically and comprehensively addressed; nuanced approach to inquiry.	Explicitly articulated researchable question/focus that is well addressed; could be more nuanced, systematic, or comprehensive.	Inquiry is well formed and clearly stated; focus still needs some refinement; some gaps in the execution.
	Exemplary Scholarship 10 9	Developed Scholarship 8 7 6	Developing Scholarship 5 4 3
Organization	Overall organization is logical, consistent, and nuanced; organizational structure reflects a mature understanding of topic of inquiry; creates a logical flow of ideas; grammatical structure mature.	Organization is strong overall; with guidance could be improved; organization reflects a good understanding of the topic of inquiry; some refinement or re-working of order or structure of content would bring more clarity; grammatical structure mature.	Organization is sufficient for the reader to follow the key points; lacks clarity and/or consistency; grammatical structure acceptable but not mature.

Emerging Scholarship 2 1
Focus of inquiry is too broad or too narrow and/or not clearly articulated; multiple topics or threads of inquiry are presented that are not relevant and/or not clearly distinguished.
Emerging Scholarship 2 1
Overall organization does not lend clarity to the inquiry; lacks cohesive structure in presentation of material; organization reflects a misunderstanding of the topic of inquiry OR contributes to a general misunderstanding of the topic; poor grammatical structure.

	<i>Exemplary Scholarship</i> 10 9	<i>Developed Scholarship</i> 8 7 6	<i>Developing Scholarship</i> 5 4 3	<i>Emerging Scholarship</i> 2 1
Foundational and Current Relevant Sources	Excellent familiarity with foundational and current relevant literature apparent; good presentation of important theories related to these resources; critical synthesis of the literature demonstrates a mature understanding of field.	Familiarity with foundational and current relevant literature apparent; good presentation of important theories related to these resources; critical synthesis of the literature attempted	Some evidence of familiarity with foundational and current relevant literature; some presentation of important theories related to these resources; analysis of the literature lacking in critical synthesis.	Little evidence of familiarity with foundational and current relevant literature.
	<i>Exemplary Scholarship</i> 10 9	<i>Developed Scholarship</i> 8 7 6	<i>Developing Scholarship</i> 5 4 3	<i>Emerging Scholarship</i> 2 1
Foundation for Proposed Dissertation Research (Original Contribution)	Sophisticated integration of existing literature with especially promising and/or novel approach for constructing new knowledge.	Effective treatment of literature with sound approach to constructing new knowledge. May need some refinement to foreground originality and significance of proposed approach.	Shows methodical and competent approach to laying the foundation for future research. May not be fully integrated into preparation for dissertation proposal.	Relationship with proposed doctoral research is unclear or confusing. Use of literature does not seem to be aligned with preparation for proposal.

	<i>Exemplary Scholarship</i> 10 9	<i>Developed Scholarship</i> 8 7 6	<i>Developing Scholarship</i> 5 4 3
Mastery of Lexicon	Effectively defines and precisely applies appropriate technical and (trans-) disciplinary terms to support the inquiry.	Technical and (trans-) disciplinary terms are defined and employed appropriately with few exceptions; some refinements in precision and clarity in application may be needed.	Technical and (trans-) disciplinary terms are defined and appropriately applied; uneven application or clarity of usage apparent in places.
	<i>Exemplary Scholarship</i> 10 9	<i>Developed Scholarship</i> 8 7 6	<i>Developing Scholarship</i> 5 4 3
Scholarship	Well prepared for proposed doctoral research; work embodies strong personal and professional capacities expected of a scholar.	Demonstrates emerging capacities for author to function as independent scholar in chosen area of interest.	Demonstrates some of the attributes of a successful independent scholar; work on some dimensions (e.g., independence, insight, dedication, resourcefulness, and reflectiveness) necessary.
	<i>Exemplary Scholarship</i> 10 9	<i>Developed Scholarship</i> 8 7 6	<i>Developing Scholarship</i> 5 4 3
Program-Specific (optional)			
	<i>Exemplary Scholarship</i> 10 9	<i>Developed Scholarship</i> 8 7 6	<i>Developing Scholarship</i> 5 4 3
Program-Specific (optional)			

<i>Emerging Scholarship</i> 2 1
Technical and (trans-) disciplinary terms are defined sporadically or not at all; inappropriate or unclear application of scholarly vocabulary in many places.
<i>Emerging Scholarship</i> 2 1
Skills and capacities necessary for success as independent scholar nascent or underdeveloped in this draft; work on agency and/or sophistication in approach to writing and scholarship needed.
<i>Emerging Scholarship</i> 2 1
<i>Emerging Scholarship</i> 2 1

Comments to student:

Comments on the Rubric:

How well did this rubric encompass the major dimensions you were looking for in evaluating this paper? Any comments?

How well did the indices for each rating (explanations for each rating in the cells) match you expectations for each level? Comments or suggestions?

What would you change, add or delete to make this rubric more useful for the purposes of your own review and assessing the effectiveness of your Ph.D. program in preparing students for independent scholarship? (And thank you for your participation in this pilot project!).