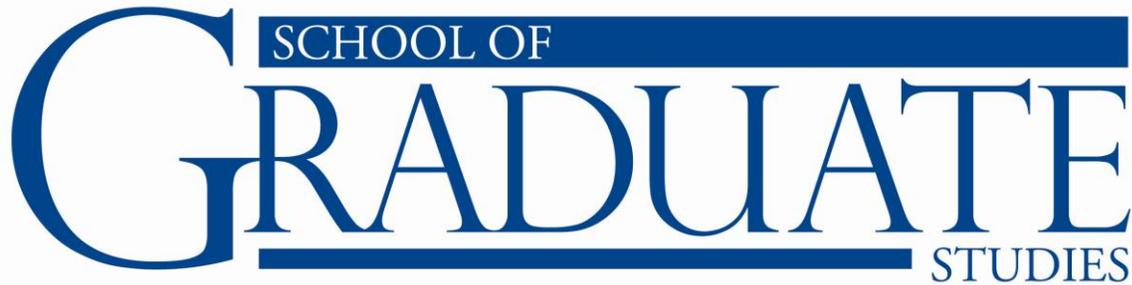


Central Connecticut State University



**Questions and Answers about
the Comprehensive
Examinations**

June, 2008

Comprehensive Examination Guidelines

1) What are the requirements for attempting the comprehensive exam?

- a) *The comprehensive exam may be attempted after the student has completed 75% of their planned program requirements. Exceptions to this criterion may be granted with the recommendation of the student's advisor and permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies.*
- b) *Students are required to have a minimum 3.00 grade point average at the time of application.*
- c) *Students meeting the above criteria must complete the Application of Master's Comprehensive Exam form, which is available in department offices that offer graduate programs, the Graduate Studies office(102 Barnard), or on the School of Graduate Studies website www.ccsu.edu/grad. The application form must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies no later than October 1 for fall semester exams, and no later than February 15 for spring semester exams.*
- d) *Each graduate program department will notify students concerning the time and place of the exam and will inform students of the results.*

2) When is the comprehensive exam offered?

- a) *Comprehensive exams are offered each fall and spring semester and, at the discretion of the academic program, during the summer. Students should consult their advisors and/or department chairs concerning the availability of a summer session comprehensive exam. Students who wish to take the Comprehensive Exam in the summer must receive special permission from the department and the Dean of the Graduate School.*

3) What kinds of guidelines are available for the exam?

Programs shall provide students with written guidelines for preparation for the exam. Materials in the guidelines might include reading lists, sample exam questions, lists of the various content domains the exam will cover, and information on the format and grading of the exam. Students should consult their advisor or department chairperson or graduate coordinator (if applicable) for their program's current guidelines.

4) Who evaluates the exam?

Each department's exam evaluation process involves at least two qualified faculty members. Individual exam questions may be evaluated by a single faculty member. If a program has a single faculty member evaluate an exam question, the question will be evaluated by a second faculty member if the first faculty member gives the question a failing grade. The two faculty members will try to reach consensus regarding the student's performance; if necessary, they may bring in a third qualified faculty member for consultation.

5) Is there an appeals process after notice of failure on the exam has been received?

A student who believes their failure on the comprehensive exam was due to a procedural error or palpable injustice may file a written appeal with the program's department chair. This written appeal must specify the nature of the perceived injustice, and be submitted within two weeks of the student receiving notice on their performance on the exam. The student will receive a written response from the department chair regarding the outcome of the appeal. If, after this process, the student wishes to appeal the decision further, they may file a written appeal within two weeks of receiving the department's response to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. This appeal must include the written response from the program's department chair. The student and department chair will receive a written response from the Dean regarding the outcome of the appeal. Within two weeks of receiving the Dean's decision, the student or the department may make a final written appeal to the Standing Appeals Committee of the Graduate Studies Committee. This final appeal must include the original appeal and prior responses from the program's department chair and the Dean. The Graduate Studies Appeals Committee will meet to evaluate the appeal and will render its decision in writing by notifying the student, the Dean, and the department chair.

6) Can the exam be attempted more than once? What is the maximum number of times a student may attempt the exam?

A student has a maximum of three (3) attempts to pass all sections of the Comprehensive Examination. If a student receives a failing grade on their first attempt of the comprehensive exam, they may take the exam a second time as scheduled by the department. The department may require the student to enroll in additional coursework or to make other special preparations for reexamination. If the student again receives a failing grade on the comprehensive exam, they must receive permission from the program's department chair and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies to take the exam a third time; again the department may require the student to enroll in additional coursework or to make other special preparations. If the student receives a failing grade on this third attempt on the comprehensive exam, they will be dismissed from the graduate program, unless they are granted permission to choose another capstone option by the program's department chair."

7) Will my Comprehensive Examination results appear on my transcript?

Final results of the Comprehensive Examination will be posted on student transcripts as Pass/Fail.