

Master's Student Comprehensive Examination in Community Health Promotion

All Master of Science in Community Health Promotion students are required to sit for a written comprehensive exam in order to complete their program of study.

Eligibility for Sitting for Exam Students will meet with their advisors near the end of their coursework to determine when they will be permitted to sit for the examination. Generally, the Comprehensive Exam will be taken in the student's last semester of coursework. Notification of intent to sit for the exam should be given to the Academic Advisor the semester prior to taking the exam. Application for the exam should be submitted to the Academic Advisor at the beginning of the semester the student intends to take the exam. To sit for the exam, all Community Health Promotion core coursework and all research core coursework must have been successfully *completed*. In addition, there should be no more than 6 hours of coursework left to complete.

Selection of the Exam Committee All students are expected to identify three faculty members as their examination committee. One member should be the student's Chair/Advisor, one member should be another CHLP faculty, it is recommended that the remaining member be CHLP faculty; however, the third member may be selected from within the HHPR department, with Chair/Advisor approval. All members must hold current graduate faculty status with the Graduate College.

Application for Sitting for Exam Comprehensive Examinations are usually held around the 12th week of the semester, but may vary, depending on the Academic Calendar. Comprehensive exams are not administered during the summer. A student who is not able to sit for the Spring semester exam, for whatever reason, will be required to take the exam at the next regularly scheduled exam time in the Fall semester. Once advisor approval is granted, eligible students will obtain the Comprehensive Examination Application form from the HHPR office, HPER 308 (vertical carrel in the Student Resource Library). Applications must be submitted to the Academic Advisor no later than the end of the 8th week of the semester in which the student plans to take the exam; earlier submission is strongly encouraged.

Purpose of Exam The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to demonstrate their ability to synthesize the depth and breadth of knowledge gained in the Master of Science in Community Health Promotion program. The exam will focus on the concepts and skills learned during the student's program of study, as well as the application of research and related theory in Health Education/Promotion.

Content of Exam Exam questions will be derived from the student's coursework. Questions are generally designed to allow the student to demonstrate their ability to synthesize, apply, and communicate competencies in Health Education/Promotion. While students may discuss general content of the exam questions with their advisors, students will not be made aware of the exact question(s) prior to the examination. The Comprehensive Exam is generally scheduled for a 3 1/2 to 4 hour time period, and is scheduled each Fall and Spring semester by the HHPR Graduate Coordinator. Exam dates will be announced by the HHPR Graduate Coordinator.

Preparing for the Exam The Comprehensive Exam is designed to test the graduate student's breadth and depth of the content areas of study (i.e. Community Health Promotion core, Research core, and Community Health Promotion electives). Students must be able to:

- Synthesize knowledge acquired within the program;
- Ground the knowledge in scholarly literature;
- Apply the knowledge to contemporary programming; and,
- Effectively communicate that knowledge to appropriate audiences.

It is suggested that students *review the objectives of all course outlines* contained within their course of study. Particular attention should be given to the content of assignments, exam questions, and lecture/classroom materials and activities. Students are encouraged to create a study group of peers to review the content of courses. Students are also encouraged to contact their Chair and/or course faculty if there are any questions regarding how or what to study.

Exam Evaluation Procedure The Comprehensive Exam will be read by students' program committee, who may consult with any appropriate content faculty in evaluating responses. Advisors will read the responses independent of each other.

In addition to assessing accuracy and thoroughness of content, committee members will evaluate a students' writing style. Each student must demonstrate the ability to produce advanced organized thought and an ability to communicate ideas so that they are easily understood (i.e. be able to write in a clear, concise, and grammatically accurate manner that is representative of graduate level competency).

Students must earn an overall "pass" on all questions to successfully complete the comprehensive exam.

Exam Rating Scale The following three categories are used to evaluate the Comprehensive Exam. Each question will be rated, individually, on its quality, according to the following criteria.

- Pass: The response reflects an appropriate level of understanding of the content, includes supporting detail, includes adequate references to the scholarly literature, and the writing style reflects command of the standard, academic use of language.
- Marginal/Questionable: The response is weak and does not reflect an adequate level of understanding of the content. Supporting detail is lacking, and references to the scholarly literature are minimal. The writing style is not professional and contains grammatical and structural errors. Additionally, there is insufficient evidence of the relationship between theory and practice.
- Fail/No Pass: The response does not reflect an adequate or appropriate level of understanding of the content. References to the scholarly literature are weak or absent, and it is clear the student's communication skills are inappropriate or lacking based on expectations for academic and professional writing at the graduate level.

Notification of Results Within 2 - 4 weeks of completing the exam, students will be informed of the results by the student's Academic Advisor and/or the HHPR Graduate Coordinator.

Failure to Pass Exam An examination or parts of an examination may be repeated only twice, and only at the discretion of student's program committee. When a student does not

pass all or part of the Comprehensive Examination, the program committee chair will meet with the student to discuss one of the following options:

- Option 1: If it is determined that the student has failed all aspects of the exam, the student will rewrite the entire examination at the next scheduled Comprehensive Exam period (Fall or Spring semester). The content of the question(s) will be decided upon by the student's program committee.
- Option 2: If it is determined that the student has performed at a "Questionable" level, on all or some questions, the student may be asked to rewrite only the questions considered insufficient, after a waiting period - generally a minimum of 2 weeks after discussion of the results with the Advisor. The content of the failed questions will be the same.
- Option 3: If it is determined there are relatively minor concerns with specific questions, the student may be allowed to orally clarify his/her responses to their Advisor and/or program committee within 3 weeks of notification of the examination. The Advisor and/or program committee will make a decision at the conclusion of the oral exam and notify the student, within 7 days, of the results.

NOTE: In the case that a student fails all, or part, of the exam and is required to rewrite: If student circumstances would prevent them from completing the re-write with less than 3 weeks remaining in the semester, the student must complete the re-write after the start of the subsequent Fall or Spring semester.

Both the Community Health Promotion Program Coordinator and the HHPR Graduate Coordinator will be available to meet with the student, should the student have any questions or concerns about the exam or the exam process.