

School of Meteorology Comprehensive Exam Policy

Below is the Comprehensive Exam Policy as approved by the School of Meteorology Faculty at the December 7, 2006 School of Meteorology Faculty meeting.

The Comprehensive Examination is required only for the M.S.P.M. degree and the non-thesis option of M. S. degree. Non-thesis M.S. and M.S.P.M. students are required to write a report. The report may summarize original research or may be a critical review of the literature. The Comprehensive Examination consists two parts: 1) evaluation of the report by the student's Examining Committee, and 2) a subsequent oral exam by the Examining Committee covering both the report and all fields studied by the student for the degree, in compliance with the Graduate College stipulation that the Comprehensive Examination should cover all work offered for the degree (fields, not courses).

A student wishing to pursue an M.S. by the non-thesis option must have the request approved by a vote of the Graduate Studies Committee of the School of Meteorology.

According to the rules of the Graduate College, the Examining Committee for a Comprehensive Exam consists of "no fewer than three persons". Also, the composition of the M.S. committee should be consistent with the "Agreement Between the Graduate College and the School of Meteorology on Adjunct/Affiliate Faculty Supervision of Graduate Students". According to this agreement, regular SoM faculty members cannot be in a minority on the M.S. committee. The Examining Committee is nominated to the Graduate College on the Admission to Candidacy Form. The Graduate Liaison of the School of Meteorology (who approves the Admission to Candidacy Form) has ultimate authority within the School of Meteorology in approving the members of the Examining Committee. One of the members will be nominated to serve as Chair of the Examining Committee. It is possible that this Examining Committee could be distinct from any prior Thesis Committee that had been registered with the Graduate College, or that had been provisionally formed.

The student, with advice and consent of the Examining Committee, will choose and provide an outline of an acceptable topic for the report. It is the responsibility of the Examining Committee, led by the Chair of the Examining Committee, to define for the student the acceptable standards for the report.

The student passes the Comprehensive Examination if the Committee judges that the report is of acceptable quality and questions are answered satisfactorily in the oral exam. The questions in the oral exam will be drawn from the fields that were covered in the student's particular degree program, including, for example, radar meteorology, cloud physics, atmospheric dynamics, synoptic meteorology, numerical weather prediction, climatology, climate change, boundary layer meteorology, radiation, objective analysis, data assimilation, statistics, tropical meteorology, mesoscale meteorology, turbulence and computational fluid dynamics. Normally the committee will choose topics from a reasonable sub-set of these fields.

The student has the responsibility for submitting the report to the individual Examining Committee members at a mutually agreeable time prior to the time of the oral exam, normally a minimum of two weeks. The student will bring the "Authority Report Form of the Comprehensive Examination/Thesis Defense" to the Chair of the Examining Committee at, or before, the time of the oral Exam. This form

lists a last date for the exam, which will usually be the "Final Day for Comprehensive Exam" listed in the class schedule. Equally important is the date one week after that, which is the date the "Authority Report Form of the Comprehensive Examination/Thesis Defense" is due in the Graduate College. The Chair of the Examining Committee has the responsibility of obtaining the signatures from the Examining Committee members before the deadline for filing the report. The Chair of the Examining Committee will either return the completed form directly to the Graduate College, or to the student, prior to the deadline.

The Graduate College defines other rules for a Comprehensive exam, among which are rules about repeating a Comprehensive Exam that has been failed.