

School of Meteorology Policy for the General Examination for a Ph.D. in Meteorology

Approved by a SoM faculty vote: 4 Match 2010

As stipulated by the Graduate College, passing a "General Examination" consisting of a written and oral portion is a degree requirement for receiving a Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma. The Graduate College defines many procedures about the General Examination, which the student and the student's Doctoral Committee should recognize and heed. This document codifies additional School of Meteorology (the "academic unit") rules pertaining to the "General Examination for a Ph.D. in Meteorology."

The Graduate College states: "The General Examination consists of a written and oral portion. It is intended to test the student's mastery of a number of related fields as well as the student's capacity for synthesis, sound generalization and critical ability". To this end, the following is required:

1. The student's Doctoral Committee will define a task of critical review and analysis of a topic in meteorology. The task may be relevant to the student's specialty within meteorology, but should not be about material that is planned to be directly incorporated into the student's Dissertation. The task should be sufficiently challenging that the written report stemming from it would allow indication of (i) a breadth of knowledge of graduate-level meteorology, (ii) an intellectual capacity to proceed with independent research at the doctoral level and (iii) written communication skills necessary for the research to culminate in the production of a Dissertation.
2. After the student's "Application for General Examination" has been approved by the Graduate Dean, the Doctoral Committee will inform the student -- in writing -- of the examination task, and set a time limit by which a written report fulfilling the task must be returned to the committee. The report serves as the written portion of the General Examination.
3. The definition of the task and the evaluation criteria that are given to the student must be in writing, and a copy, signed by all members of the student's Doctoral Committee, should be submitted to the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee for record keeping.
4. The School of Meteorology recommends the time limit for completing the written report to be approximately one month after the task is revealed to the student. Other time limits could be used, but should be roughly commensurate with expected half-time labor by the student toward completion of the task. As mandated by the Graduate College, "The student must complete the General Examination during the semester in which the authority is given." and "Both the written and oral portions should be taken during the same semester."
5. The School of Meteorology recommends that the student be allowed full access to all written resources for completion of the written report: all books, journals and online resources.

However, the student is not allowed to receive personal tutoring from any source, except perhaps clarification of the task from the Doctoral Committee (the Committee will decide based on the wording of the original task and of the background knowledge expected of the student whether such clarification is warranted).

6. Any clarification as described in Point 5 should be viewed as an amendment to the original definition of the task. As such, the clarification should be communicated to the student in writing. A copy should also be provided to the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee and a copy placed in the student's file.
7. The School of Meteorology requires that an Oral Examination of the task also be undertaken and recommends that this Oral Examination occur within the two weeks following submission of the written report.
8. After the submission of the written report, and prior to the oral Exam, the committee members may provide feedback to the student about the written report and the upcoming oral Exam. During that time, the student may freely discuss the task with any source. A written record of the feedback provided to the student from the committee members should be provided to the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee and a copy placed in the student's file.
9. The Oral Examination procedure should be akin to the procedure traditionally used for a defense of a Dissertation. That is, the student will be asked to present an explication and defense of the written report accompanied by thorough questioning confirming the student's mastery of a number of related fields as well as the student's capacity for synthesis, sound generalization and critical ability.
10. Only the student and student's Doctoral Committee will be present for the Oral Examination.
11. Within one week of having administered the General Examination, the Chair of the Doctoral Committee will provide a photocopy of the official "Report of General Examination" to the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee. The photocopy will be placed in the student's School of Meteorology file.
12. The result of the General Examination will be announced during executive session of the next faculty meeting by the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee.