



**PhD in Applied Science  
Doctoral Qualifying Examination (APSC 7603)**

**Information for Students & Faculty**

- The Evaluation Form for the Qualifying Examination is included at the end of this document.
- The student should complete Part I of this form, print it, and bring it with them to the Qualifying Examination.

**Overview**

- PhD students should complete the Qualifying Examination by the end of their seventh semester in the program.
- Students should follow the normal registration procedures, as outlined in the APSC program guide
- The Qualifying Exam is administered by an Examination Committee consisting of:
  1. the Supervisory Committee, and
  2. an External Examiner, who is not part of the student's Supervisory Committee, and is not from the same department as the Supervisor.
- The Qualifying Examination is to be presided over by an Examination Chair. The Chair should be a faculty member who has not previously been involved in the student's research. It is the responsibility of the Supervisor to find a faculty member who is willing to chair the student's Qualifying Exam.

**Exam Preparation**

- Three to Four months before the Qualifying Exam, the Examination Committee should assign the student several (e.g. 3-4) fields of study.
- It is expected that the student will spend the months leading up to the exam engaged in full-time, self-directed study within these fields.

## Exam Process

- The Examination Committee will compose two questions to be answered by the student, with one question related to the student's research area and the other from an allied area.
- Upon receipt of the two questions, the student must prepare and submit written responses to the Committee within seven days. Each response should be in the form of a short review, synthesis, or forum article (typically 7-10 pages) as would be found in a peer-reviewed scientific journal.
- The student must then successfully defend their two responses and their background knowledge in these areas during an *in camera* oral examination, to be conducted within 14 calendar days of submitting the written responses.
- For each of the two written responses, questioning will begin with the External Examiner and proceed member-by-member, with the Chair ensuring that all members are afforded equal time. The Chair will allow additional rounds of questioning as required.
- The oral exam should not last longer than 3 hours.
- At the end of the exam, the student will be asked to leave the room while the Examination Committee deliberates and completes Part II of the attached evaluation form. In assessing the student, the Examination Committee should keep in mind the objectives of the Qualifying Examination:
  - to assess the student's ability to synthesize information across fields,
  - to assess the student's potential to contribute to original research in their field, and
  - to determine whether the student is ready to begin writing the PhD thesis
- After deliberations have concluded, the student should then be invited back into the room to receive feedback and be informed of the exam outcome.

## Exam Outcomes

- It may take a student two attempts to pass the Qualifying Examination. Based on both the written responses and oral defense, the Examination Committee will confer one of the following outcomes:

**1<sup>st</sup> Attempt:****Pass**

The student is now considered a candidate for the PhD in Applied Science. A passing grade for APSC 7603 is recommended.

**Fail**

The Examination Committee will inform the student which exam components require revision and re-examination. This may include written and/or oral components of the exam. Exam components for revision and re-examination should be documented in Part II of the attached form, which should be submitted to the Program Coordinator. Re-examination should occur within six weeks of the original oral exam.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Attempt:**

On re-examination, the Examination Committee's assessment should be documented using a new copy of the attached Evaluation Form.

**Pass**

The student is now considered a candidate for the PhD in Applied Science. A passing grade for APSC 7603 is recommended.

**Fail**

A second failure will cause the student to no longer be in Good Academic Standing under Graduate Academic Regulation #30 "Standing Required". The student will be assigned a failing grade for APSC 7603, and withdrawn from the program.

**PhD in Applied Science**  
**Doctoral Qualifying Examination (APSC 7603) Evaluation Form**

**Part I: To be completed by Student**

<b>Student Name:</b>		<b>A#:</b>	
<b>Program Start Date:</b>			
<b>Thesis Title:</b>			

<b>Date of this Meeting:</b>	
<b>Date of last Committee Meeting:</b>	

<b>Planned &amp; Completed Courses/Degree Components</b>		
<b>Course</b>	<b>Semester</b>	<b>Grade (if complete)</b>
APSC 7600: Graduate Seminar		
APSC 7610: Research App. & Knowledge Trans.		
APSC 7602: Doctoral Research Proposal		
APSC 7603: Qualifying Examination		
APSC 7620: Research Internship		
APSC 7604: Doctoral Dissertation		

**Part II: To be completed by Examination Chair under direction of the Examination Committee**

<b>Assessment of Written Responses</b>					
	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Very Good	Excellent
Comprehension of fields					
Scope of responses					
Citation of prior research					
Quality of writing					
<b>Comments:</b>					

**Assessment of Oral Defense**

Poor    Unsatisfactory    Satisfactory    Very Good    Excellent

Ability to defend written responses

Comprehension of fields

Knowledge of the scientific literature

Oral communication

**Comments:**

Examination Committee's Decision	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Attempt:</b>  <b>Pass</b> (pass assigned for APSC 7603)  <b>Fail</b> (re-examination within 6 weeks)	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Attempt:</b>  <b>Pass</b> (pass assigned for APSC 7603)  <b>Fail</b> (dismissal from program)
If Fail: Exam components requiring revision and re-examination:	
<b>If Fail: Date of re-examination:</b>	

**Part III: Signatures**

<b>Examination Committee Approval</b>			
	<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Signature</b>
External Examiner			
Supervisor			
Committee Member			
Committee Member			
Examination Chair			

<b>Student Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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<b>Program Coordinator Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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Submit to the Applied Science Program, c/o Dean of Science Office