












## Department of Geosciences (02/2015)

### Ph.D. Students

-  Consult the University guidelines for comprehensive exams.
-  The Ph.D. comprehensive exam should be conducted soon after the student has completed the coursework listed on the Graduate Study Plan.
-  The comprehensive exam consists of a written exam followed by an oral exam.
-  A written thesis proposal is required within the degree requirements and is part of the comprehensive exam.
-  Determine and agree on the subject areas in which the student will be examined (listed in the Graduate Study Plan). The subject areas are based on the student's coursework and PhD research. Typically committee members distribute the responsibility of examining in the different subject areas.
-  Written examination practices vary between programs. It is common (i) to examine a student in 3 to 4 different subject areas on different days within a week or two, and (ii) for each committee member to provide a list of 2 to 4 questions on the selected subject area to the committee chair, who would then administer the written exam. Students are encouraged to meet with committee members to clarify expectations for the written exam.
-  It is a committee's decision whether each section of the written exam should be closed book or open book. The committee members also decide whether to give the student access to the internet during the written exam. Committee members should evaluate the written response and communicate their opinion/result to the committee chair.
-  The oral exam requires an outside examiner appointed by UAF's Graduate School Dean. The student is responsible for contacting the Graduate School to request an external examiner.
-  The oral exam should start with a presentation of the PhD research proposed and the work completed so far by the student. The presentation will be followed by an oral exam with the committee and external examiner.
-  Students are encouraged to meet with committee members prior to the oral exam to clarify expectations for the oral exam. The typical oral exam lasts 3 to 4 hours; students should plan accordingly when reserving a room.
-  Complete and submit relevant paperwork (see Graduate School forms), including the report on comprehensive exam, the external examiner's report, and the advancement to candidacy form.