

Department of Communication Studies Comprehensive Exam **Policies and Procedures**

Pre-Planning (Semester before Comps, if not before)

Talk with Your Faculty Advisors

- Determine who your 3 comps committee members will be
- Discuss norms for your area (what kinds of questions to expect, how to prepare, etc).

Workplan Forms

The semester prior to comps, you are required to gather all 3 signatures of your comps committee members on your form. Submit a copy to the Graduate Coordinator for your electronic student records.

Department Rules

- You must complete all questions within 8 weeks (60 days) from start to finish.
- Your defense may be outside those 8 weeks, but should take place before the official end of the semester (defenses during final exam weeks are fine).
- Committees must be given at least 2 weeks to review your responses before the defense.
- Sit-down, timed questions can start no earlier than 8:30 am and no later than 1 pm, Monday-Friday.

Graduate Coordinator's (GC) Role

- The Graduate Coordinator (along with the committee) should receive a copy of your comps schedule as soon as its determined (dates, times, whose question, etc).
- Faculty send their questions directly to the GC.
- The GC delivers questions to you (both take-home and sit-down) on the appointed day/time. Take-home questions can be expected the morning of the desired date.
- You will send your responses via email (and PDF) directly back to the GC when they are due.
- The GC will deliver all of your responses to your committee members when you are done with ALL of the responses.
- The GC/front office staff will schedule a room for your defense once you and your committee determine a date and time.

Comps Structure by Area

Rhetoric, Language , and Political Communication

Three Questions Total:

- Three take-home questions
- Two weeks to complete each (unless a shorter or longer deadline is requested by the faculty member)

Org Comm and Technology

Three Questions Total:

- One sit-down question (timed, 4 hours)
- Two take-home questions completed in 7-14 days (faculty determine the deadline)

Interpersonal

Four Questions Total:

- Three sit-down questions (timed, 4 hours)
- One take-home question completed in one week

Rules and Regulations for Sit-Down Exams (CMA 7.106)

Please bring your own laptop to type up your response. We use the honor system and trust that you are not accessing the internet during your testing and only using the materials given to you with the question (if any) to respond. **NOTES ARE NOT ALLOWED.**

- Feel free to arrive early to get settled before your start time (although, fair warning if you have an earlyish start time: the office doesn't open until 8 am).
- You may want to bring headphones since the testing room is near the staff/faculty break room and sometimes there can be some ambient noise. If you need absolute silence while testing, headphones will help.
- You are welcome to bring water, snacks, etc. to help you get through the four hours.
- Once you are done, please email your response directly to the GC at the appointed stop time.

Sample Schedule (RLP)

First Question (Take-Home):

February 6th – February 20th (due at midnight), Hartelius

Second Question (Take-Home):

February 27th – March 7th (due at midnight), Gunn

Third Question (Take-Home):

March 20th – April 3rd (due at midnight), Stroud

Sample Schedule (OCT)

First Question (Sit-Down):

February 8th from 9 am to 1 pm, Stephens

Second Question (Take-Home):

February 27th – March 7th (due at midnight), Barbour

Third Question (Take-Home):

March 20th – April 3rd (due at midnight), Treem

Sample Schedule (INP)

First Question (Sit-Down):

February 8th from 9 am to 1 pm, Vangelisti

Second Question (Sit-Down):

February 27th from 9 am to 1 pm, Dailey

Third Question (Sit-Down):

March 2nd from 9 am to 1 pm, Donovan

Fourth Question (Take-Home):

March 15th – March 23rd (due at midnight), Vangelisti

When Testing is Done

- The GC will upload all of your responses to UTBox and share them with your committee for their review

Scheduling the Defense

- You can begin to schedule your oral defense when you've received your final question
- Doodle polls are the best/easiest way to do this
- Pro-Tip: Before sending out a Doodle poll, make sure to avoid any dates/times that conflict with faculty classes or office hours – those dates/times are automatic no-gos.

What to Bring to the Defense

- Request the Comps Defense Signature page form from the GC prior to your defense meeting. This form must be signed by your faculty advisor and delivered back to the Graduate Office directly after the defense. (The GC can help the student complete this form and collect the supervisor's signatures via DocuSign. The supervisor or student must request this option from the GC)
- Possible outcomes: "Pass", "Rewrites" or "Fail"
- If you are asked to do a rewrite, a deadline for the new response will be given and written on the Comps Defense Signature page form. Anne will follow-up with committee supervisor for final committee decision.
- Students who fail their comprehensive exams will have their doctoral program terminated at the end of the semester in which the exams were taken. Faculty advisors and comprehensive exam committees may consider allowing the student to petition the Graduate Studies Committee for a continuation of their program and the opportunity to retest.
- Students who fail their comprehensive exams a second time will not be considered for further petitions and will have their doctoral program terminated at the end of the semester in which the exams were retaken.

Next Steps - Stay in touch with the Graduate Coordinator for:

- Prospectus defense timeline
- Applying for Doctoral Candidacy
- Dissertation project/writing schedule
- Graduation
- Submitting the final dissertation