

# Comprehensive Exams

## Guidelines

- Students will receive a copy of these guidelines at the same time as they receive the problem statements and the comprehensive exam rubric.
- Faculty will prepare a set of problem statements that are aligned with the program outcomes. The problem statements will be distributed to students in late spring.
- Students may request copies of any course syllabi that they believe would benefit them in preparing for the comprehensive exam.
- A list of faculty members who may serve as exam evaluators accompanies these guidelines.
  - For those students who have chosen a specialization, one faculty evaluator must be teaching in the chosen specialization or have significant experience in that specialization;
  - One faculty evaluator must teach in the core degree curriculum; for straight track students, both faculty evaluators must be teaching core curriculum courses;
  - All faculty evaluators must have minimally taught five courses for the graduate programs and have minimally two years tenure with the graduate programs;
  - One of the faculty evaluators must have a terminal degree (JD degrees are considered terminal degrees at Marquette).
- By the designated date, the student informs the graduate advisor of the problem statement or topic selected. (Please know that some problem statements permit the student to choose from a number of topics; in those cases, only one problem statement has been distributed. In other cases where at least one problem statement is topic specific, two problem statements have been distributed; in those cases, students are asked to select one of the two problem statements.)
- By the designated date listed in the calendar of events below, students inform the graduate advisor of the selected faculty evaluator.
- It is mandatory that students' work:
  - Demonstrate knowledge of the learning outcomes in the context of the problem statement;
  - Meet the guidelines established in the comprehensive exam rubric;
  - Reference work following APA 6th edition guidelines and the University's academic honesty statement ([http://www.marquette.edu/mucentral/registrar/policy\\_honesty.shtml](http://www.marquette.edu/mucentral/registrar/policy_honesty.shtml))
- Students with a specialization are expected to integrate degree and specialization concepts.
- Response to the problem statement will not exceed 30 pages or be less than 25 pages, inclusive of title page, reference list and appendices.
- For grammar and formatting, students may seek the assistance of an editor. However, as related to APA formatting, evaluators will apply the 6th edition of APA, second or later printing.
- Following submission, two faculty members, one selected by the student and one selected by the College, will have one week to read the student's written response to the problem statement. During that time the student will prepare for oral presentation of the problem statement, which will occur approximately one week following submission of the written response.
- Oral presentations will be held from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. on the delegated date. Specific times will be sent to students after faculty evaluator selections have been made.
- Students may audiotape their oral presentation if they so desire. Please know that in a case where two faculty evaluators cannot come to consensus regarding a pass/fail decision, a third faculty evaluator will be consulted. If the presentation has not been audio recorded, the student may be asked to repeat the presentation.
- Excluding faculty questions, there is a 20 minute time limit for presentations.
- Immediately following oral presentation, faculty evaluators may ask questions regarding the written response, oral presentation and points from the problem statement that have not been comprehensively or clearly addressed.
- Using the comprehensive exam rubric, the two faculty evaluators will independently score the student's work; if there arises a situation where faculty evaluators have not reached consensus regarding a pass/fail decision, a third faculty member selected by the College will be asked to review the oral and written work and provide a score.
- A student who does not pass the exam may repeat the process the following semester.
- If an emergency arises and the student is unable to complete the exam as scheduled, the exam will be rescheduled for the next term that comprehensive exams are scheduled.