Doctoral Qualifying Examination (DQE)

The DQE is a literature review of a particular topic in the field of psychology. The DQE is typically related directly to the topic of interest that the student intends to investigate in his or her dissertation project. After the student has passed the DQE, he or she becomes a "doctoral candidate" and begins formal work on the dissertation.

When to Write the DQE

Most students will begin work on doctoral requirements in the third or fourth year. Doctoral work is initiated with the Doctoral Qualifying Examination (DQE). Students begin their DQE after they have completed their master's degree.

For students to apply for internship in the following Fall semester, they must submit to their DQE committee members the final draft of the DQE by May 15.

DQE Committee

The DQE process is overseen by a committee of at least three faculty members, including the advisor. The DQE committee will normally also be the dissertation committee.

While there can be more than three committee members, at least three must be full-time faculty members of the Department of Psychology at Marquette University. Full-time faculty members in other departments at Marquette and psychologists at local institutions may serve as additional committee members. Any reader not associated with Marquette University must be formally approved by the Graduate School; to be specific, the Department must submit a recent curriculum vitae for that member to the Graduate School for approval.

Proposal

Work on the DQE is initiated by writing the proposal. In consultation with the DQE chairperson, students shall prepare and submit to the DQE committee a formal proposal for the DQE. The proposal should include:

- A problem statement or abstract (250 words maximum)
- A proposed methodology or approach for identifying the literature (250 words maximum)
- A one-page outline (preliminary) of the DQE
- A bibliography is not needed

The DQE committee typically meets with the student to modify or revise the proposal as needed, but this is not required.

After reading the DQE or after the proposal review meeting (if there is one), all committee members complete the DQE Proposal Feedback Form, which indicates either (1) approval of the DQE proposal as submitted, (2) approval with changes that were discussed, or (3) lack of approval. The forms and the DQE proposal should be put into the student’s file. (However, they do not need to be forwarded to the Graduate School.)

Writing

The DQE should not exceed 50 pages text (not including references, appendices, tables or figures). The student is expected to take a maximum of 6 months to complete the DQE. If the
DQE is not completed within 6 months of the proposal meeting, the first attempt will be declared a “failure.”

While writing the DQE, it is permitted that the student consult with the DQE chairperson and/or committee members.

**Evaluation**

The DQE submission to all committee members should include the *DQE Rating Form*, which will be completed by all committee members. Students should expect examiners will require 2-4 weeks to read the DQE. Examiners will rate the DQE in terms of:

- organization and presentation
- readability/writing fluency
- scientific integrity
- integration/synthesis of literature
- critique of literature
- scholarship/contribution to literature

Readers will rate the DQE as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pass (No revisions necessary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pass pending revisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Revised manuscript to chairperson only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Revised manuscript to DQE committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The First Attempt**

If the DQE passes pending revisions, the student will be allowed 3 months to resubmit it.

If the essay is not passed unanimously, the student has failed the first attempt. If the first attempt fails, the student has two options.

1. The student can maintain the same committee and topic. The chairperson will consult with the examiners to determine whether the committee should reconvene to discuss the second attempt, including needed revisions to the DQE.

   The student will have 6 months to revise and resubmit the DQE, otherwise the second attempt will be declared a “failure.”

2. Under extraordinary circumstances, if the student feels that the DQE was not evaluated fairly, the student can formally request of the DCT that a new committee be formed and a new topic be proposed. The DCT will consult with the chairperson and perhaps the committee to determine whether this request should be approved.

   If this is approved, the student will be allowed to construct a new committee and gain
approval of a new topic. The student shall follow the same procedure as the first attempt and will be allowed the same amount of time as the first attempt. The first attempt of the DQE is still considered a failure, however.

The Second Attempt (if necessary)

If the DQE is not passed unanimously, the student has failed the second attempt. According to the Graduate School, the student will not be given another opportunity to pass it.

Paperwork

If the DQE passes, the student must submit to the Graduate School and to the DCT (for their file) the Graduate School forms entitled Doctoral Qualifying Examination Evaluation (completed by all examiners, including the chairperson) and the Doctoral Qualifying Examination Committee Chairperson’s Summary. These can be downloaded from the Graduate School website.