
Guidelines for PhD Candidacy Exam

Every PhD student must successfully complete a pass/fail Candidacy Examination within 16 months from initial registration. The Candidacy Examination includes two exams: the written exam and the oral exam. The student must pass the written exam before proceeding to the oral exam.

The student must submit the Candidacy Examination Scheduling Request form and the PhD Supervisory Committee Approval form to the program office no later than 1 month prior to the Candidacy Exam.

1. The Written Exam:

- The written exam is to be completed within 16 months from initial registration in the program as a Ph.D. student.
- The supervisor will inform the student of the topics covered in the written exam within 10 months from initial registration in the program.
- The written exam may include problem-solving and/or essay-types of questions on the biomedical engineering fundamental and professional topics related to the student's research field.
- The questions for the written exam are to be set up by the Supervisory Committee: supervisor(s) gives 50% of the exam and other supervisory committee members give the other 50% of the exam.
- The supervisor is to coordinate with the supervisory committee to create the exam and then send it to the program administrator at least two business days before the written exam.
- The duration of the written exam is 3 hours.
- The supervisor returns a copy of the marked exam paper to the student. One copy of the marked exam paper will also be sent to the program director and the program administrator by the supervisor.
- If the student fails the written exam (the passing grade for the written exam is at least 73%), the student will be granted an opportunity to write the exam the second time within 2 months of the first exam date. A second unsatisfactory grade for the written exam will result in a withdrawal from the program.

2. The Oral Exam:

- The oral exam is held within 16 months from initial registration in the program.
- The student is required to submit soft copies of the research proposal to the committee members 2 weeks before the oral exam date. The research proposal for the oral candidacy exam should not normally exceed 30 pages.
- If the oral exam is unsatisfactory, the student will be granted an opportunity to attempt the oral exam the second time within 3 months of the first exam date. A second unsatisfactory grade for the oral exam will result in a withdrawal from the program.

For other information, please refer to the [PhD Program Guide](#).