

Preparation for Oral Qualifying Examination in CM/MCBB

Please consult with your major professor and decide on four other faculty members who might be willing to serve on your qualifying examination committee. As stated in your Graduate Guide, “this committee shall include the major professor and at least three other Biology/MCBB faculty members”, depending on whether you are in CM or MCBB. If you choose to have someone who is not one of these faculty members, they must have a PhD and faculty status. Any faculty members who are not part of the Boston University Graduate School will require a special service appointment. Forms for this are available from Ruth Green or Meredith Canode. Also, discuss with your major professor a reasonable time to hold the exam within the next eight months.

Once you have decided on your committee, contact potential faculty members and ascertain whether he or she will indeed serve and their availability during the time frame you discussed with your major professor. Modify the time or the faculty composition until you have a complete committee who agree on a date for your examination. Remember that plans can change so **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE EIGHT MONTHS TO SCHEDULE YOUR EXAM.** ONLY your major professor needs to sign this form as acknowledgement that they agree with the selected committee. Oral or email agreement by the other members will suffice.

PLEASE SUBMIT THIS COMPLETED FORM TO Meredith Canode (MCBB) or Ruth Greene (CM) within six weeks after you take your preliminary exam.

STUDENT NAME _____

MAJOR PROFESSOR _____

Signature _____

COMMITTEE MEMBER 2 (chair) _____

COMMITTEE MEMBER 3 _____

COMMITTEE MEMBER 4 _____

COMMITTEE MEMBER 5 _____

Proposed Date of Examination _____

If you have any questions regarding completion of this form, contact either Dr. McCall or Dr. Hausman.

Below are some guidelines you should follow in preparation for your examination.

Hints for preparation for the Oral Qualifying Examination:

1. Read the Graduate Guide under **Qualifying Exam**.
2. In writing your written proposal, keep in mind that your consultations with your major professor should be kept to very general discussions of the problem and approaches. The written document should be prepared without editing by your major professor. You are encouraged, however, to seek the advice and help of others in the design of experiments and the wording and writing in the proposal. As stated in the Graduate Guide, “the major professor may have some input in the form of suggestions on content and organization, but should not directly edit the document”.

3. There is NO need for any data in the written proposal. DO NOT think that you need more data before you start writing your proposal. Data has never been the subject of an examination. It is the design of the experiments and their interpretation that will be the subject of the examination. Concentrate on this in the proposal and your preparation for the exam. If you do have preliminary data that is relevant to the proposal, you may include it.

Keep in mind the stipulations of the Graduate Guide and the Academic Code of Conduct at Boston University. The “written document should be from the student’s own hand, not just cutting and pasting old grant proposals, papers, etc”. With the Internet, it is simple to discern if plagiarism exists and commission of such on the qualifying exam is a very serious offense.