

EXAMINATION PROCEDURES FOR PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS
(To be distributed to all doctoral committees prior to the examination)

1. The committee conducting the preliminary examination of a doctoral student consists of four or more graduate faculty members approved for this purpose by the Associate Dean of the Graduate School. At least one member of this committee must represent the student's minorfield or a related field; at least three members must be from the student's major department or program. Normally the student's supervisor presides over the examination as chair of the committee, although some departments and programs select another member to serve this function at the preliminary examination. The student, the chair, and the majority of the committee must be present in person; other member(s) may participate remotely if approved in advance by the Associate Dean.
2. Preliminary examinations may be oral or written or both, taken at one sitting or at several sittings. If the examination consists of multiple parts, votes taken on any of those parts must follow the procedures governing voting on the examination as a whole (i.e. the entire committee must vote on each part).
3. At the conclusion of the examination, the committee votes on whether the candidate has passed the examination and is therefore allowed to progress to candidacy. All members of the committee must sign the Report of the Doctoral Preliminary Examination form. Any member who votes to fail must write "Fail" by his or her name on the Report form. Original signatures are required. In the event that a member is approved to participate remotely, he or she must provide signed documentation of the vote per Graduate School instructions.
4. If the committee is composed only of the required minimum of four members, the student fails the preliminary examination if any adverse vote is cast. If the committee is composed of five or more members, a single adverse vote does not fail the student unless it is cast by the chair of the committee. Two or more adverse votes always fail the student. In all cases, the Report of the Doctoral Preliminary Examination carries a complete record of the vote as cast (i.e., all members must sign the form, with those voting adversely so signifying by writing "Fail" next to their signatures).
5. A candidate who fails the preliminary examination may be granted a single re-examination upon recommendation of the examining committee (a recommendation to be determined by a second committee vote taken after the first vote results in a failure of the candidate) and approval of the Associate Dean no sooner than three months and no later than six months after the date of the first examination. The examining committee must remain exactly the same for the second examination. The committee vote must be unanimous in order for the student to pass the second examination. A candidate who fails the preliminary examination twice will not be given another opportunity and will be withdrawn from the Graduate School. In cases where a student fails the preliminary examination, the committee may decide to recommend awarding a terminal master's degree rather than granting a re-examination.