The 5th Semester Oral Research Progress (ORP) Examination

- For graduate students starting in the Fall 2007 semester and thereafter: The committee for the 5th semester ORP shall consist of four (4) faculty members—none of whom will be the student’s research advisor(s). The committee will have two (2) faculty members from within the student’s division—one of which will be designated as the "chair" of the committee, one (1) member from outside the division, but within the department, and one from outside the department (including researchers from industry with a PhD degree).

The advisor and the student shall choose two (2) members, including the member from outside the department. The Chair of Graduate Studies shall appoint the two (2) other members. The advisor and the student may make recommendations for these members, and may request one faculty be excluded from the committee.

- The chair of the ORP Committee shall be appointed by the Chair of Graduate Studies from among the members of committee who belong to the student’s division.

- The student’s research advisor has the option of giving a short verbal statement addressed to the committee before the examination begins, and with the student outside the room, detailing the student’s abilities, progress, and other relevant matter.

- The student’s research advisor shall not be present during the examination.

- The advisor and student shall not be present during the committee’s deliberation process.

- The ORP committee shall deliberate and decide whether or not the student should be promoted to PhD candidacy. The deliberations shall focus on the following aspects:

  1. General knowledge in chemistry, and competency in the area of specialization and chemistry division.
  2. Knowledge of previous work and techniques in the research field.
  3. Research progress, potential for future research, and originality of the project.
  4. Quality of oral presentation, organization and research summary.
  5. Ability to formulate analytical solutions to the questions posed.

- The chair of the ORP committee will communicate the committee's observations, recommendations, and suggestions for further improvement—in the form of a detailed written confidential report—to the Chair of Graduate Studies. Evaluation forms with relevant comments and recommendations from individual committee members will be attached to this report. The Chair of Graduate Students will then produce the final ORP exam report, which will be made available to the student and the advisor. The ORP committee’s recommendation will be one of the three options listed below:
a) Student passed at the PhD level.

b) Student failed and placed into the M.S. (Plan I) program.

c) Student failed, but may retake the ORP exam by a specified date; however, this must be no later than the end of the sixth long semester.

• The ORP exam must be taken before the end of the student’s 5th semester in residence. Failure to observe these time limitations will result in the student being AUTOMATICALLY placed in the M.S. (Plan I) program. In other words, the students will not be able to obtain a PhD from this Department.

• All four members of the ORP committee must be present during the entire examination for it to be valid. It is the student’s responsibility to reserve a room and arrange the time and date for the ORP examination.

• Upon promotion of the student to PhD candidacy, the student’s research advisor shall be added to the ORP committee, and becomes the chair of the student’s dissertation committee. The remaining members of the ORP committee shall automatically become members of the student’s dissertation committee. In the case of a student having two research co-advisors, the second research advisor will replace one member of the ORP committee to be selected by the Chair of Graduate Studies.

• The thesis committee of the student placed in the MS (Plan I) shall be composed of 5 members: the research advisor, two (2) from within the student’s division, one from outside the division but within the department, and one from outside the department (including people from industry with a PhD degree).

The 5th Semester ORP Report and Presentation

• The written report should be no longer than 10 double spaced pages—minimum font size 11 point and at least 1 inch margins on all sides, including figures. An 11th page may be used for references. The reference page need not be double spaced.

• A one page summary of the student’s academic performance in the past four semesters of residency, approved by the Graduate advisor, shall be provided by the student to the committee. The summary shall list the student’s cumulative GPA, all courses taken while in residence in the Chemistry graduate program and the grades in those courses.

• The written report needs to be given to members of the ORP committee at least ONE WEEK (7 days) before the scheduled exam.
• The student’s oral presentation should last no more than 30 minutes. Members of the committee may ask questions at anytime during and after the presentation.

• The committee shall ask questions relevant to the student’s specific research project, competency in the area of specialization and in the relevant chemistry division, as well as general knowledge of Chemistry.

Revised: 9 / 24 / 2009