The Qualifying Exam Committee Chair will organize and chair a committee to administer the qualifying exam. The committee should consist of faculty who teach in graduate courses and reflect the breadth of the program, and at least one student who has advanced to Candidacy.

**Notification.** The chair of the committee will notify in writing those students who are to take the qualifying exam and their advisors. Letters will be sent at least one month before the written exam and will also include a tentative date(s) for the oral exam. The letter will describe the procedures to be followed, and the required performance standards.

**Written Exam.** The committee will solicit essay questions from faculty. Questions should be accompanied by an outline of an adequate answer, which will be distributed to faculty graders. The committee should ensure that questions are based on material to which the students were exposed during the first two years. Relevant course syllabi will be available for determining the suitability of questions.

**Grading of the Written Exam.** Written exams will be coded so that graders will not know the identity of the students. At least two graders for each question will be recruited by the committee; a question’s author will be one of its two graders, when possible. Each question will receive a numerical score based on a continuous scale from 0 to 4.0, with 4.0 being the highest possible score. The final grade for each question will be determined by averaging the scores from each grader. For each student, the grade for the one question with the lowest score will be discarded, and the scores for the remaining questions averaged to determine the final grade. Students will receive written notification of their average grade on each question as well as their final grade. **The minimum passing grade is 3.0.**