

**TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES GRADUATE PROGRAMS
HDFS DOCTORAL DEGREE**

GRADING CRITERIA FOR THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

The faculty's intention and desire is for all students to pass the qualifying examinations and to bring out the best in students. On their first testing occasion, students must take all three portions of the qualifying examination during the same semester (i.e., students must take the theoretical foundations and research methods portion of the examination when they are conducted during the semester even if the specialization portion has been failed prior to their administration). Students will receive a grade of pass or fail on each portion of the exam, although a committee may recommend a deferred decision to the graduate faculty as a prelude to receiving a pass or fail. A deferred decision will be a rare option in which the faculty do not assign a grade of either pass or fail. The student will meet only with the chair of the committee (or committee designate) within three working days of notification of the qualifying exam result (e.g., if notified on Thursday, the student makes an appointment for Friday, Monday, or Tuesday) in order to determine the concerns of the committee. Following the meeting with the committee chair, the student will have 14 calendar days only to address the concerns of the committee.

➤ **Procedure When the Examination is Satisfactory:**

If the qualifying examination is considered satisfactory, the chairperson of the doctoral (advisory) committee will send to the Graduate Dean, for consideration by the Graduate Council, a formal written recommendation that the applicant be admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree. (The letter should also state the date of the examinations and whether or not the student passed each portion of the exam.) This recommendation should be forwarded as soon as possible after all the above requirements have been met.

Following successful completion of the qualifying examination, the student is officially admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree (see pages 22-26 for qualifying examination procedures). Upon admission to candidacy, the student has a maximum of four years in which to complete the dissertation.

➤ **Procedure When the Examination is Not Satisfactory:**

An applicant who does not pass the qualifying examination may be permitted to repeat it once, after a lapse of at least four months, and not more than twelve months from the date of the unsatisfactory examination. All failed sections of the qualifying exam can be taken either together or separately; however, each one must be retaken and passed within the two testing occasions that they are offered after the original fail. Failure to pass the qualifying examination within the specified time will result in dismissal from the program irrespective of performance in other aspects of doctoral study.

Students who decide to take the doctoral qualifying examination certify by virtue of such decision that they are prepared to do so, and thus cannot at a later date (i.e., following the grading of the examination) claim prior disability or other hardship as: (a) a reason for their unsatisfactory examination performance; and therefore as (b) grounds for an appeal to overturn the decision of the graduate faculty.