

B. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

1. Expectations

The theories qualifying exam committee expects that students will:

- demonstrate critical thinking about theories and theoretical issues/constructs;
- demonstrate understanding of complex theoretical issues at an abstract level (i.e., beyond the superficial description of concepts);
- identify, explain, compare, contrast, assess, apply, and/or integrate multiple theoretical perspectives both within and across Human Development and Family Studies theories;
- discuss metatheoretical issues about the integration of theories; and
- support theoretical arguments and constructs with specific examples and evidence from scholarly literature.

2. Written exam

The written exam should be concise, clear, non-redundant, accurate, consistent with instructions, and grounded in the scholarly literature. Additionally, students are expected to cite original sources unless a secondary source makes a unique contribution. Students are expected to follow APA style.

3. Oral exam

The purpose of the oral exam is for students to defend and discuss theoretical knowledge relevant to the written exam. In preparing for orals, students should focus on the clarity of their written work so that they can adequately respond to questions about the paper's content. Students should not focus on minor or superficial details in the written paper (e.g., errors in APA formatting). The oral may be used to amplify, reconsider, correct, or adjust the arguments/substantive issues raised by the written paper. In the oral, students may be asked to identify, describe and/or apply additional constructs of the theories they chose to use in the written paper.