

MATS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

Students typically complete their MATS program by sitting a six-hour comprehensive examination in their last semester of studies—no later than the tenth week of semester. The student will approach his/her studies advisor prior to his/her last semester of study to arrange for the examination. The student and faculty studies advisor will draw up a list of texts (typically approximately 25 titles, totaling 5,000 to 6,000 pages)—representative of both the general foundational course of study as well as the student's area of concentration—upon which the examination will be based. A comprehensive examination normally takes the form of writing 6 essays in response to a set of questions—at least one of the questions to be outside the student's area of concentration.

The library attempts to be as supportive of students in the preparation for comprehensive exams as is possible. The library will make all reasonable attempts to secure titles to be read—including recalling titles, purchasing two copies of selected foundational titles, extending some loan periods and working with professors' schedules for reserve titles that may be necessary for comprehensive exam preparation. Students, however, must be prepared for the fact that there may be increased challenges when the same foundational texts are required by multiple students at the same time. The library will not purchase more than two copies of titles nor allow students to keep all their readings out on extended loans at the same time.

The faculty studies advisor will submit the set of questions to the Research Studies Committee Coordinator no later than one week prior to the examination. The Research Studies Committee Coordinator vets the set of questions for clarity and format, consistency with standards in the MATS program, and appropriateness to the student's area of exam. The Research Studies Committee Coordinator works with the registrar to set up the exam room, requisition the VST computer, and schedule an exam room monitor.

The examination will be read by the studies advisor as well as by a second reader appointed by the Research Studies Committee. After reading the examination, the examiners will confer one of the following evaluations: Approved, Not Approved.

1. When both examiners agree upon an approved evaluation, the second reader will submit narrative comments to the studies advisor (first reader), who will submit the grade and the final narrative evaluation to the student, and the Registrar's office; and notify the Research Studies Coordinator.
2. When the written exam receives a Not Approved, the student will have one opportunity to re-sit the examination or the portion that was not approved.

While the student must receive an approved in her/his comprehensive exams in order to complete the degree, no credit is given for the completion of exams.