

Agenda- PhD Committee meeting

April 17, 2018

11:00-12:30

Place: TH 403

1. Updates

- a. Admissions
 - 5 students have accepted their admission offers.
- b. Funding
 - Funding: 1st and 2nd year cohorts have been very successful in finding funding.
- c. Graduation plans
 - Two students will be graduating this June.
- d. Capstone
 - Monday, June 4 9 am to 12:30 pm
 - We'll send a save the date this week.
- e. Employment seminar

2. New business:

- a. Student assessments- please read APRs and QPRs ahead of meeting
 - QPRs and APRs were reviewed and evaluated.
- b. Funding priority list for continuing students
 - List created
- c. Annotation for reading lists – required or up to committee?
 - Committee voted that annotations are not required. The committee recommends annotations. Students should be in consultation with their committee to determine the reading list requirements.
- d. Written exam format- specific format required or up to committee?
 - Committee voted to have the same format for all students. One field exam, one regional exam. 24 hours. No changes to current process.
 - Students have asked for clarity regarding written exam questions. Do students know the questions in advance? The committee decided to add a line in the general exam information email to suggest that students talk to their committee about their questions. The details of the written exam process are determined by the committee.
 - The committee discussed, can students take their oral defense of written exams and oral defense of prospectus remotely? Yes.

JSIS PhD program (and the Graduate School) allow students to take the oral part of their general exams via video conferencing. If this is to happen, students need to follow the grad school guidelines outlined at:

<http://grad.uw.edu/policies-procedures/doctoral-degree-policies/instructions-for-video-conferencing-in-doctoral-examinations/>

While this is allowed by JSIS and the Graduate School, the ultimate requirement is left up to the committee who can decide on a case by case basis. In other words, committees can decide if they will or will not allow a student to take the exam via video conferencing.

2c. Annotation for reading lists

Currently, students are required to create an annotated bibliography that forms the basis of their conceptual and their regional written general exams.

Amongst other places, this is stated in the PhD Handbook on page 32:

- i) The First Written General Examination relates to a student's primary foundational field of interest (i.e. RCC, SMS, PVS, or LRG). The exam is based on a bibliography as agreed upon by the Doctoral Supervisory Committee in consultation with the student. The bibliography, once decided upon, must be annotated by the student, and this document is the foundation of the exam materials.
- ii) The Second Written General Examination relates to a student's principal country or geographical area of interest. The exam is based on a bibliography as agreed upon by the Doctoral Supervisory Committee in consultation with the student. The bibliography, once decided upon, must be annotated by the student, and this document is the foundation of the exam materials.

My understanding is that requirement to annotate the reading list is sometimes and sometimes not implemented by the committees. Every year, committees ask the program (Director and GPA) if the annotation part is really required or not. Many committees don't see it as necessary.

Question for our discussion today: Continue to require the annotation? Or, drop the requirement and mention in the handbook? That means, we'd leave it up to each committee if they want to require their student to do the annotation of their reading list.

2d. Written exam format

The student handbook does not state the format that the written portion of the general exams must take.

Although there is no requirement stated in the handbook, the program advises students and committees that the each of the two portions of the written exam should be comprised of three questions and the student must choose one to answer for each. Some committees have requested a different format. It has also been noted that some students have been allowed by their committees to collaboratively write the questions, while others have not.

As such, we need to decide what the format of the written exams should be. Options that I see are- one format that everyone has to abide by, a few different formats that they can choose from, or a whatever-you-want approach. We also need to decide if students should be allowed to collaborate on writing the questions. Whatever we choose, we need to decide what is best for the quality of the PhD program as a whole.