

## **Qualifying Procedure for the PhD Degree in School Psychology** **Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology**

The purpose of the qualifying procedure for the doctoral degree in School Psychology is to determine your competence and knowledge in both the science and practice of school psychology, as well as to determine the ability to conduct original research. The Indiana University Graduate School and the School of Education require that students demonstrate competence in research skills, as well as in the major field of study. Therefore, programs must develop evaluation procedures that permit students to demonstrate these skills and knowledge. Because the PhD program is accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) and is approved by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), there are specific areas that are assessed to assure that you have the necessary knowledge and skills.

For the School Psychology Program, the qualifying procedure consists of seven components:

- (1) development and presentation of the *Professional Development Portfolio*, using the online *ePortfolio* program
- (2) a comprehensive paper emphasizing core areas and concepts pertinent to the field and to research (see guidelines below)
- (3) if required, a written examination over the minor area or other minor requirements
- (4) an oral examination with your advisory committee, where all areas of the *Professional Development Portfolio*, the comprehensive paper, and minor examinations are reviewed. Status of the dissertation will also be discussed.
- (5) documentation that your early inquiry project has been approved
- (6) documentation from a journal editor that a submitted article has undergone editorial review. *Note: This requirement is that the manuscript must be forwarded for blind review by the editorial review board. If the journal editor replies that the article is not acceptable and it will not be reviewed by the editorial board, then this requirement is not met. If the paper is not reviewed by the editorial board, it must be submitted to a journal that does give it full review. An alternative is to submit another article. It is not required that the article be accepted for publication, but it must undergo formal editorial review and feedback provided. Nomination to candidacy will not be approved until documentation of full review or acceptance is provided.*
- (7) successful passing of the Praxis II examination in School Psychology, using the current passing score established by NASP

### *Professional Development Portfolio*

The Professional Development Portfolio is a compilation of your work and the requirements are comprised of the tasks you are to complete on your *ePortfolio* portal. The final portfolio is to be completed **at least two weeks prior to the oral examination** or earlier at the direction of the advisory committee or chairperson. The portfolio is created on *ePortfolio*, where documents such as annual reflections, annual evaluations, dissemination materials (publications, presentations, etc.), and curriculum vitae are uploaded.

## *Comprehensive Paper*

The purpose of this paper is to give you the opportunity to demonstrate competence in foundational areas of psychology and education, as well as in research. Rather than requiring written examinations over specific areas such as development, learning, and inquiry methods, this component is designed to be integrative and relevant to your research interests. This paper also contributes to complying with requirements of APA and NASP with regard to demonstrating competence in research methods and knowledge of developmental/individual differences, biological, learning/cognitive, affective, and social bases of behavior.

### Content

You will prepare a comprehensive paper about a research topic approved by the chair of the program advisory committee. Although not required, it is suggested that this paper have direct relevance to the proposed dissertation topic. In this paper, you will summarize the nature of the research topic, the research questions frequently addressed, and the overall status of the current research base. Included will be a discussion of the research methods most commonly used and a critique of the appropriateness and integrity of these methods. The paper will also include consideration of the topic with regard to the developmental/individual differences, biological, learning/cognitive, affective, and social bases of behavior. It is recognized that not all topics lend themselves equally well to these bases and they should be discussed with the faculty member who is working with you on the paper. We recommend that you meet with this faculty member to develop an outline for the paper and who will guide you through its completion. Most often, the paper is used as a precursor to the Literature Review section of the dissertation.

### Format

The format of this paper should follow the format of review articles that appear in journals such as *Psychological Bulletin* and *Review of Educational Research*:

#### **Title Page**

#### **Abstract**

#### **Introduction**

#### **Summary of Major Findings and Analysis and Critique of Inquiry Methods**

(Included in this section are identified subsections and discussion of consideration of developmental/ individual differences, biological, learning/cognitive, affective, and social bases of behavior, as appropriate. Remember that the goal is to critique the research by noting strengths and limitations, not just report research results like a variation of an annotated bibliography.)

#### **Limitations of Past Research**

#### **Implications for Future Research**

#### **Conclusions**

#### **References**

#### **Tables and Figures**

The paper is to be organized in this format with the sections labeled as listed above. There is no established length for this paper, although it is expected that it will be 30-50 pages. It is to be written in current APA style, with tables and figures included as appropriate. It is suggested that you collaborate with a faculty member or the director of the dissertation in the development of the paper. There is no specific date established when the paper is due, other than it must be given to all members of the advisory committee **at least two weeks** before the oral examination or earlier at the direction of the advisory committee or chairperson. Failure to meet this timeline may result in rescheduling of the oral examination. The minor member of the committee will read or evaluate the paper at his/her discretion. Therefore, it will be read by both school psychology faculty members of the advisory committee, at a minimum. If the paper does not follow the format described above, it may be returned to you for re-writing, which may cause rescheduling of the oral examination or delay in Nomination to Candidacy. Careful planning and working with the faculty member likely will avoid this situation. At least the two school psychology faculty members will read and score the paper on a nine-point scale, with an average or composite score of “4” being considered minimally passing. If the average or composite score of the raters is less than “4” or one rating is less than “3”, the committee may ask that the paper be revised and resubmitted and the oral examination be rescheduled. If there is a major discrepancy between raters and one of the ratings is not passing, the paper may be given to another faculty member to evaluate. The composite or average of the two highest scores will serve as the final score. Your advisory committee chairperson is responsible for determining that the final paper is ready for presentation to the entire committee.

If the paper is used as the basis for the dissertation literature review, it likely will need editing with regard to the bases of behavior sections and relevance to the purpose of the study and the research questions. It is particularly important that the paper include *critiques* of the current literature with regard to methodology, limitations, flaws, or other characteristics. Merely reporting or summarizing current research does not demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate and examine current research, which is expected at the doctoral level. These critiques are especially important in the dissertation Discussion chapter where you will link your findings to the literature review. Failure to provide critiques of the literature will result in the paper being returned for revision either before or after the oral examination. In either case, Nomination to Candidacy will not be granted until the paper is acceptable to the advisory committee. During the oral examination, the paper will be the focus of questions regarding its content, format, importance, and relevance to the field.

#### *Evaluation Criteria*

- comprehensiveness of treatment of the topic
- critique of research methodologies
- critique of developmental/individual differences bases of behavior and relevance to findings
- critique of biological bases of behavior and relevance to findings
- critique of learning/cognitive bases of behavior and relevance to findings
- critique of the affective bases of behavior and relevance to findings
- critique of social bases of behavior and relevance to findings

### *Minor Area Examination*

If the minor area requires a written examination, the requirements are arranged with the faculty member representing the area. The results of this examination must be approved by the program advisory committee before Nomination to Candidacy will be recommended. It is possible that this examination will be completed at a time other than when the portfolio and comprehensive paper are completed, but Nomination to Candidacy cannot be recommended until all written and oral examination requirements are fulfilled, including passing of the Praxis II and documentation that the submitted research article has undergone full editorial review (not just review by the journal editor who may reject it without forwarding it for review. (See Page 1 of this guide and your Student Handbook). We recommend that you take the Praxis at the end of the second year of study. When completed, provide a “hard copy” of the results to the Program Director and upload a copy to your *ePortfolio*.

### *Oral Examination*

When all written examinations are completed satisfactorily and the *Professional Development Portfolio* is prepared, the oral examination is conducted with the advisory committee members, who may ask questions of you about all areas of the written examinations and portfolio, as well as other aspects of the your program. This examination typically takes about an hour and a half to two hours. Upon completion of the oral examination, the advisory committee will determine whether you have passed. If you pass the examination, Nomination to Candidacy will be recommended if all other requirements are met, such as no incomplete grades in required courses except dissertation credits and internship. ***Nomination to Candidacy must be attained before verification of readiness to complete the internship will be given, whether it is in an APA/APPIC site or a public school site. Students who have not been nominated to candidacy will not be permitted to enroll for the internship credits until this process is completed. If a student begins an internship before Nomination to Candidacy is given, the hours accrued until nomination is completed will not count toward the required minimum of 1500 clock hours. (See Student Handbook section on “Policy on Certifying Readiness for Internship.”) The dissertation proposal must be approved by the research committee before verification of readiness for internship will be provided for APA/APPIC sites. Failure to meet this requirement may result in delay of a year to apply for internships. Also, this requirement is becoming more common by internship sites that may not accept interns whose proposals have not been approved at application, so it is to your advantage to be sure your proposal is approved before applying. Most APA and APPIC internship applications are not due before November 1, although some may be a few days earlier. Be sure to check the requirements of the internship sites that you are considering.***