

Comprehensive Exams

(3rd Year)

The Comprehensive Exam must be taken upon completion of the student's coursework and Preliminary Exams and completed within three years of admission to the PhD program (at most 10 credits of dissertation hours may be completed thus far).

Most often, this is a published paper related to the student's dissertation; however, a student can opt to have an examination instead. Please work with your advisor to decide what your Comprehensive Exam should look like.

Please reference the [PhD Comprehensive Exam Guide](#) for further instruction.

The steps to begin your Comprehensive Exams are as follows:

1. A minimum committee of three CSE full-time graduate faculty is required. The chair of the committee cannot be the student's advisor.
2. Complete the *Request for Examination, PhD Application for Candidacy Form, CSIS/ENAS Progress Form* and *Transfer Credit Request Form* two weeks prior to the date of your Comprehensive Exam.
3. Complete your Comprehensive Examination either by publishing a paper or taking a written exam, per agreement with your advisor and committee.
4. Once your exam is complete, the department will submit your documentation to the Office of Graduate Education for review and approval.

Once you have successfully completed your comprehensive exam, you may begin working on your dissertation!