M.A. and Ed.S. Graduate Comprehensive Examinations
Procedures and Policies

Elementary Education Master’s (MA) Degree:
Application Guidelines

Application to take the MA comprehensive Exams:

1. Dates for the MA exams will be posted on the COE website and may also be
   obtained by contacting your advisor or the Elementary Education Program
   Coordinator. (See Elementary Education Master’s and Ed.S Comprehensive
   Examination Schedule).

2. The application form to take the comprehensive examination is located on this
   site. The form is titled Master’s Comprehensive Examination Application.
   Applications may also be obtained from the Departmental Secretary upon
   request. (See Elementary Education Master’s Comprehensive Examination
   Application).

3. When applications are completed, submit them to the Departmental Secretary
   4 weeks prior to the exam date. (See Elementary Education Master’s and Ed.S
   Comprehensive Examination Contact Information)

Receiving and Submitting the Master’s Degree Comprehensive Examination

After your application has been received, the following will occur:

1. The Departmental Secretary will e-mail the examination packet either by or
   before 8:30 am on the designated start date for the exam.

2. Immediately after receiving the exam, the MA candidate will send a reply e-mail
   (before 10:00 am) to the Departmental Secretary indicating that the exam was
   received.

3. The completed exam must be e-mailed back to the Departmental Secretary on or
   before the designated due date and time. This must be no later than 1:00 pm, 10
   days from receiving the exam packet. Submission of a completed exam via e-
   mail must be followed by a telephone call from the candidate to the Departmental
   Secretary confirming that the completed exam response(s) were received by the
   Departmental Secretary. Failure to return the completed exam and meet the
   deadline will result in negating the exam.

Examination Guidelines
1. The Program Secretary assigns an identification number to each candidate taking the exam. Place this number on the first page of each question. Again, do not write your name on the pages of the exam. Your identification number must be the only identification on the completed examination.

2. The exam itself is limited to 10 pages (not including the references). Responses must be double spaced in MS-Word format using Arial 12 font size. The candidate must use the most current APA 6th edition writing style for the examination and reference page. The candidate is required to give numerous and appropriate citations throughout the exam (including authors and dates).

3. Plagiarism on the exam will be considered academic misconduct, resulting in automatic failure and possible termination from the program. Assistance from another individual constitutes academic misconduct. Do not communicate with anyone else about the exam. You may talk, for clarification purposes only, with the Elementary Education Program Coordinator if necessary.

4. Elementary Education Faculty members will read and grade the exam. The exam must be passed by at least 2 out of 3 readers. Students are scored with a program rubric (See Master’s Comprehensive Examination Rubric). Students who fail the exam must wait until the following semester and be registered for at least 1 hour of graduate credit. There is only one chance to retake the exam.

**Literacy Program:**

**Master’s in Reading with Reading Specialist Certification (Pk-12)**

1. Reading Master’s with Reading Specialist Certification Program requires students to complete a comprehensive exam to meet the University requirement for a culminating project or exam. This exam includes three broad questions that require the synthesis and application of concepts covered across the program. Students are to read all three questions carefully and choose two to answer. If three responses are included, only questions 1 and 2 will be graded. Depth and breadth is expected in students’ analysis of and response to each question in well written prose. Questions are developed by the Literacy Program Faculty members.

2. Students are given three days to complete the exam. During the three day time period, students may use their texts and other available resources to compose their responses. Students’ responses should answer all parts of the question, be free of grammatical and spelling errors, and be well-written. The final product must be the student’s own original work completed with no outside help.

3. The plagiarism and honor code rules are in effect for all students. They are
required to include a signed copy of the honor code form acknowledging that the exam represents their original work.

4. Three Literacy Program faculty members read and score the Master’s with Reading Specialist Certification comprehensive examinations. Readers score the examinations according to the program rubric. Final scores on the rubric will indicate a student has passed or failed each of the two questions.

**Elementary Education Educational Specialist (Ed.S) Degree: Application Guidelines**

Application to take the Ed.S comprehensive Exams:

1. Dates for the Ed.S exams will be posted on the COE website and may also be obtained by contacting your advisor or the Elementary Education Program Coordinator. (See Elementary Education Master’s and Ed.S Comprehensive Examination Schedule).

2. The application form to take the comprehensive examination is located on this site. The form is titled *Educational Specialist Comprehensive Examination Application*. The application may also be obtained from the Departmental Secretary upon request. (See Elementary Education Educational Specialist Comprehensive Examination Application).

3. When the application is completed, submit it to the Departmental Secretary 4 weeks prior to the exam date. (See Elementary Education Master’s and Ed.S Comprehensive Examination Contact Information)

**Receiving and Submitting the Comprehensive Examination**

After your application has been received, the following will occur:

1. The Departmental Secretary will e-mail the Ed.S examination packet either by or before 8:30 am on the designated start date for the exam.

2. Immediately after receiving the exam, the Ed.S candidate must send a reply e-mail (before 10:00 am) to the Departmental Secretary indicating that the exam was received by the candidate.

3. The completed exam must be e-mailed back to the Department Secretary on or before the designated due date and time. This must be no later than 1:00 pm, 10 days from receiving the exam packet. Submission of a completed exam must be followed by a telephone call from the Ed.S candidate to the Departmental Secretary confirming that the Departmental Secretary received the completed
exam. Failure to return the completed exam and meet the deadline will result in negating the exam.

Examination Guidelines

1. The Program Secretary assigns an identification number to each candidate taking the exam. Place this number on the first page of each question. Again, do not write your name on the pages of the exam. Your identification number must be the only identification on the completed examination.

2. The exam is limited to 10 pages per question (not including the references). A separate file is used for each question. Responses must be double spaced in MS-Word format using Arial 12 font size. The candidate should use the most current APA 6th edition writing style for the examination and reference page. The candidate is required to give numerous and appropriate citations throughout the exam (including authors and dates).

3. The Education Specialist examination is usually comprised of two questions. The first question asks the candidate to select a teaching field (choose one): language arts, mathematics, reading, science, or social studies, and write a response that addresses a list of questions. The second question asks the candidate to develop a new action research project and provide information to answer a list of questions. Both questions on the exam carry equal weight.

4. Plagiarism on the exam will be considered academic misconduct, resulting in automatic failure and possible termination from the program. Assistance from another individual constitutes academic misconduct. Do not communicate with anyone else about the exam. You can talk, for clarification purposes only, with the Program Coordinator if necessary.

5. Elementary Education Faculty members will read and grade the exam. The exam must be passed by at least 2 out of 3 readers. Students are scored with a program rubric (See Educational Specialist Comprehensive Exam Rubric). If the candidate fails one question, but passes the other, he/she will need to retake only the failed question. Candidates who fail the exam must wait until the following semester and be registered for at least 1 hour of graduate credit. There is only one chance to retake the exam.

Policy and procedures for failure to pass MA and Ed.S Comprehensive exams

1. MA and Ed.S candidates (students) are allowed 2 attempts to pass comprehensive exams, as stated in the University of Alabama Graduate Catalog.
a. If a student fails the first attempt at comprehensive exams, a remediation plan will be established with the student and their Program Advisor. Additional faculty members may be included in the remediation plan as deemed appropriate by the Program Advisor. The remediation plan will be submitted in writing to the Curriculum & Instruction Department Chair for approval.

b. Students are not allowed to attempt the comprehensive exams twice within the same semester.

c. Upon successful completion of remediation, as determined by the Program Advisor, the student will be allowed a second attempt to pass the comprehensive exam.

2. A student who fails the second attempt on the comprehensive exam will be dismissed from the degree program and from the Graduate School (See University of Alabama Graduate Catalog).