Department of Kinesiology
Comprehensive Examination Policies

Master’s Degree Examination

(a) Students not Completing a Thesis

Dates for and Registering to Take Comprehensive Exams

- Master’s degree comprehensive examinations for students opting not to write a thesis will be offered twice a year. During the fall semester, they will be offered in the second full week of October. During the spring semester, they will be offered in the second full week of March.
- Only eligible students may sit their comprehensive examination, eligibility being dictated by college of education policies provided in the university’s graduate catalog.
- Students wishing to sit their comprehensive examinations must inform the faculty member responsible for scheduling and organizing the comprehensive examination (Dr. Sinelnikov) at least four weeks prior to their desired examination date.
- During the fall semester, any retakes of the master’s comprehensive examination necessary will take place in the first week of December. During the spring semester, they will take place in the first week of May. Students can also delay retaking the comprehensive examination to the first opportunity during the following fall or spring semester.

Master’s Degree Comprehensive Examination Format and Content

- The master’s degree comprehensive examination for students opting not to write a thesis will consist of a morning and afternoon session during one day. Each session is 3 hours in duration.
- During each session, **students answer questions on relatively narrow topics drawn from specific courses taught within the Department of Kinesiology**.
- The faculty member responsible for scheduling and organizing the master’s degree comprehensive examinations will solicit questions from those kinesiology faculty who have taught graduate courses to each student.
- Students will be asked questions based on coursework from a minimum of four courses.
- The faculty member responsible for scheduling and organizing the master’s degree comprehensive examination will provide examples of past questions for students studying for the examination.
- Students will have the option of completing the examination by writing or by typing within a word processing program on a computer.
- Personal technology including phones, tablets, personal laptop computers, and portable drives will not be permitted in the examination room.
- Each examination session will be monitored by a rotation of faculty members organized by the faculty member overseeing the examination process.
- On completion of the examination, the faculty member responsible for its scheduling and organization will distribute students’ answers to the faculty who composed individual questions for evaluation, collect all evaluated answers, and inform each student of his or her result (pass or fail) and average score (1 to 3) (see scoring rubric notes below).
- Students failing the comprehensive examination will be required to rewrite individual questions on which they received a score of 1. They will be permitted only one further attempt to pass and may be required to take additional coursework.
- The faculty member responsible for coordinating the master’s degree comprehensive examinations will keep a record of and report results to the graduate school.
Department of Kinesiology
Rubric for Scoring Master’s Written Comprehensive Examinations

Each answer is scored from 1 to 3 by the faculty member responsible for composing the question. Students must score at least a 2 on each answer in order to pass the comprehensive examination.

**Level 1**

The level 1 answer is poor and below the standard expected of a master’s degree student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a disorganized and/or illogical answer
- Exhibits a poor or rudimentary understanding of the topic about which he/she is writing
- Makes simple or weak arguments in his/her answer
- Cites little or no relevant literature
- Exhibits a weak standard of scholarly writing
- Provides a superficial answer with little or no detail

**Level 2**

The level 2 answer is satisfactory and is of a standard that is acceptable for a master’s degree student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a logical and organized answer
- Exhibits a satisfactory understanding of the topic about which he/she is writing
- Makes satisfactory arguments in his/her answer
- Cites a satisfactory amount of relevant literature
- Exhibits a satisfactory standard of scholarly writing
- Provides an answer with a satisfactory level of depth and detail

**Level 3**

The level 3 answer is of a good or excellent standard and is more than acceptable for a master’s degree student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a logical and well or excellently organized answer
- Exhibits a good or excellent understanding of the topic about which he/she is writing
- Makes good or excellent arguments in his/her answer
- Cites a good to excellent amount of relevant literature
- Exhibits a good or excellent standard of scholarly writing
- Provides an answer with a good or excellent level of depth and detail
(b) Students Completing a Thesis

Master’s Degree Comprehensive Examination Format and Content

- Master’s degree students who opt to write a thesis will not sit the written comprehensive examination over coursework.
- The comprehensive examination for these students will be the final defense of the thesis.
- The thesis proposal meeting will be scheduled by the student at any time of the academic year in conjunction with his/her thesis chair and committee and following the College of Education policies provided in the university’s graduate catalog.
- Students can opt to write a “traditional” five-chapter thesis consisting of an introductory chapter, a literature review chapter, a methods chapter, a results chapter, and a conclusions chapter. In this case, the formal proposal will consist of the first three chapters with the methods section being written in the future tense.
- Alternatively, students can opt to write an “article-style” thesis which describes one study to be conducted by the student and written in a format acceptable to a reputable journal in the student’s subdiscipline of kinesiology. In this case, the proposal will consist of all sections of the study article prior to the reporting of results and any discussion of or conclusions about the results (e.g., introduction, literature review, theoretical framework, purpose statement, and methods) with the methods written in the future tense.

Thesis Proposal Defense

- The student will provide a copy of his/her final thesis proposal to his/her thesis chair and committee prior to the proposal defense in conjunction with the College of Education policies provided in the university’s graduate catalog.
- The student will then make a formal presentation of the proposed thesis research.
- Faculty will then question the student and provide feedback about the presentation and/or written document and content related to the proposed research.
- Once the dissertation chair and committee have completed their questioning of the student, the student and all other parties, with the exception of the chair and the committee, will retire from the room in which the proposal defense is being held. Faculty will then deliberate as to the standard of the proposal defense and score it using the rubric below.
Department of Kinesiology  
Rubric for Scoring the Thesis Proposal Defense

The student’s proposal defense is scored 1 or 2 by the chair and members of the committee. Students must score a 2 in order to pass the proposal defense. Preferably, this score is arrived at through discussion and consensus. If this is not possible, each faculty member will score the proposal defense independently and the mean score will determine the outcome.

**Level 1**

The level 1 proposal defense is poor and below the standard expected of a master’s student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a poorly written document
- Provides a disorganized and/or illogical presentation
- Exhibits a poor or rudimentary understanding of the topic to be researched
- Exhibits a poor or rudimentary understanding of the literature related to the topic to be researched
- Has a poor or rudimentary understanding of the research methods to be employed
- Provides overly simple, weak, or inaccurate answers to questions posed by faculty during the defense

**Level 2**

The level 2 proposal defense is satisfactory to excellent and is of a standard that is acceptable or more than acceptable for a master’s student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a logical, well organized, and thought provoking document
- Provides an organized, logical, and dynamic presentation
- Exhibits a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the topic to be researched
- Exhibits a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the literature related to the topic to be researched
- Has a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the research methods to be employed
- Provides satisfactory to excellent answers to questions posed by faculty during the defense
Thesis Defense

- The thesis defense will be scheduled by the student at any time of the academic year in conjunction with his/her thesis chair and committee and following the College of Education policies provided in the university’s graduate catalog.
- The student will provide a copy of his/her final thesis to his/her thesis chair and committee prior to the defense in conjunction with the College of Education policies provided in the university’s graduate catalog.
- The chair of the student’s thesis committee will announce the date, time, and place of the thesis defense to members of the department and College of Education at least one week in advance of the defense.
- The defense will begin with a formal presentation of the thesis research made by the student.
- Faculty will then question the student about the presentation and/or written document and content related to the thesis research.
- Other interested parties attending the thesis defense will also be given an opportunity to question the student about the thesis research.
- Once the thesis chair and committee have completed their questioning of the student, the student and all other parties, with the exception of the chair and the committee, will retire from the room in which the defense is being held. Faculty will then deliberate as to the standard of the thesis defense and score it using the rubric below.
- Students failing the thesis defense will be required to defend their thesis a second time. They will be permitted only one further attempt to defend their thesis and may be required to take additional coursework.
Department of Kinesiology
Rubric for Scoring the Master’s Thesis Defense

The student’s defense is scored 1 or 2 by the chair and members of the committee. Students must score a 2 in order to pass the proposal defense. Preferably, this score is arrived at through discussion and consensus. If this is not possible, each faculty member will score the proposal defense independently and the mean score will determine the outcome.

**Level 1**

The level 1 thesis defense is poor and below the standard expected of a master’s student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a poorly written document
- Provides a disorganized and/or illogical presentation
- Exhibits a poor or rudimentary understanding of the topic researched
- Exhibits a poor or rudimentary understanding of the literature related to the topic researched
- Has a poor or rudimentary understanding of the research methods employed
- Provides overly simple, weak, or inaccurate answers to questions posed by faculty during the defense

**Level 2**

The level 2 thesis defense is satisfactory to excellent and is of a standard that is acceptable or more than acceptable for a master’s student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a logical, well organized, and thought provoking document
- Provides an organized, logical, and dynamic presentation
- Exhibits a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the topic researched
- Exhibits a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the literature related to the topic researched
- Has a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the research methods employed
- Provides satisfactory to excellent answers to questions posed by faculty during the defense
Capstone Project for Students in the Sport Management Master’s Degree Track

Options for Sport Management Students

- Sport management students who are in the school certification track may opt to take the written comprehensive examination or write a thesis.
- Sport management students in the non-certification track can opt to write a thesis or conduct a capstone project.

Capstone Project Format and Content

- Sport management students in the non-certification track opting to conduct a capstone project can begin work on the project following their completion of at least 21 hours of coursework.
- Each student’s capstone project will be supervised by a member of the sport management faculty.
- The goal of the capstone project is to produce a document illustrating the extent of the student’s academic and professional growth.
- The capstone project must include the student’s curriculum vitae, a summary of his/her qualifications, a list of referees, an overview of internship experiences, and documentation of scholarly endeavors in and outside class settings.
- Students failing the capstone project will be given one further opportunity to submit a project of a satisfactory standard and may be required to take additional coursework.
- The faculty member responsible for supervising the capstone project will keep a record of and report results to the graduate school.

Deadline for Submission of the Capstone Project

- Students wishing to graduate in December must submit their capstone project to their supervisor by November 15th.
- Students wishing to graduate in May or August must submit their capstone project to their supervisor by March 15th.
Department of Kinesiology  
Rubric for Scoring a Capstone Project

The student’s capstone project is scored from 1 to 3 by the student’s supervisor. Students must score at least a 2 in order to pass.

**Level 1**

The level 1 capstone project is poor and below the standard expected of a master’s degree student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a poorly written document  
- Provides a document in which the various sections required are poorly delineated  
- Provides a document which omits one or more of the required sections  
- Provides personal information which is limited, inaccurate, or obsolete  
- Provides inadequate evidence of academic growth  
- Provides inadequate evidence of professional growth

**Level 2**

The level 2 capstone project is satisfactory and is of a standard that is acceptable for a master’s degree student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a logical and organized document  
- Provides a document in which the various sections required are delineated in a satisfactory manner  
- Provides a document which includes all of the required sections in adequate detail  
- Provides an adequate amount of personal information which is accurate and current  
- Provides adequate evidence of academic growth  
- Provides adequate evidence of professional growth

**Level 3**

The level 3 capstone project is good or excellent and is of a standard that is more than acceptable for a master’s degree student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a logical, well organized, and thought provoking document  
- Provides a document in which the various sections required are delineated in a superior manner  
- Provides a document which includes all of the required sections in great detail  
- Provides personal information which is accurate, current, and detailed  
- Provides superior evidence of academic growth  
- Provides superior evidence of professional growth
Doctoral Degree Examination

Dates for and Registering to Take Comprehensive Exams

- Doctoral degree comprehensive examinations for students will be offered at any time of the academic year in conjunction with the student’s dissertation chair (or academic advisor in the event a dissertation chair has not yet been designated, hereafter referred to as “major professor”) and following the College of Education policies provided in the university’s graduate catalog.
- Only eligible students may sit their comprehensive examination, eligibility being dictated by College of Education policies provided in the university’s graduate catalog.
- Students wishing to sit their comprehensive examinations must inform their major professor—who will be responsible for scheduling, organizing, and proctoring the comprehensive examination—at least four weeks prior to their desired examination date.
- Any necessary retakes of the doctoral comprehensive examination will take place when the major professor deems the student ready. The time frame in which retakes must be completed is decided by the major professor in conjunction with the faculty member whose question is being retaken.

Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Examination Format and Content

- The faculty member organizing the comprehensive examination will solicit at least 8 questions from program faculty.
- The doctoral degree comprehensive examination will consist of morning and/or afternoon sessions to be completed over the course of 1 work week (Monday – Friday).
- During each session, students answer relatively broad questions and are expected to draw on coursework, coursework reading, and work and reading done outside of coursework.
- The faculty member responsible for scheduling and organizing the doctoral degree comprehensive examinations will solicit questions from those kinesiology faculty with expertise in the PhD track being followed by the student (i.e., exercise science or sport pedagogy).
- Questions asked may not be tied to specific courses. To the contrary, they may well cross the boundaries of a number of different courses.
- The faculty member responsible for scheduling and organizing the doctoral degree comprehensive examination will provide examples of past questions for students studying for the examination.
- Students will have the option of completing the examination by writing or by typing within a word processing program on a computer.
- Personal technology including phones, tablets, personal laptop computers, and portable drives, will not be permitted in the examination room.
- Each examination session will be monitored as needed by the faculty member overseeing the examination process.
- On completion of the examination, the faculty member responsible for its scheduling and organization will distribute students’ answers to the faculty who composed individual questions for evaluation, collect all evaluated answers, and inform each student of his or her result (pass or fail) and average score (1 to 3) (see scoring rubric notes below).
- Students failing the comprehensive examination will be required to rewrite individual questions on which they received a score of 1. They will be permitted only one further attempt to pass and may be required to take additional coursework.
The major professor will keep a record of and report results to the program administrative assistant, who will then report results to the graduate school.

Department of Kinesiology
Rubric for Scoring Doctoral Written Comprehensive Examinations

Each answer is scored from 1 to 3 by the faculty member responsible for composing the question. Students must score at least a 2 on each answer in order to pass the comprehensive examination.

Level 1

The level 1 answer is poor and below the standard expected of doctoral student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a disorganized and/or illogical answer
- Exhibits a poor or rudimentary understanding of the topic about which he/she is writing
- Makes simple or weak arguments in his/her answer
- Cites little or no relevant literature
- Exhibits a weak standard of scholarly writing
- Provides a superficial answer with little or no detail

Level 2

The level 2 answer is satisfactory and is of a standard that is acceptable for a doctoral student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a logical and organized answer
- Exhibits a satisfactory understanding of the topic about which he/she is writing
- Makes satisfactory arguments in his/her answer
- Cites a satisfactory amount of relevant literature
- Exhibits a satisfactory standard of scholarly writing
- Provides an answer with a satisfactory level of depth and detail

Level 3

The level 3 answer is of a good or excellent standard and is more than acceptable for a doctoral student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

- Provides a logical and well or excellently organized answer
- Exhibits a good or excellent understanding of the topic about which he/she is writing
- Makes good or excellent arguments in his/her answer
- Cites a good to excellent amount of relevant literature
- Exhibits a good or excellent standard of scholarly writing
- Provides an answer with a good or excellent level of depth and detail