

PhD Exam Reading List Approval Form

All students beginning their final semester of coursework must complete the following form, have it signed by members of the advisory committee, and submit it, along with the two examination lists and accompanying rationales, to the Graduate Office no later than April 15th.

Name of Student: _____

The PhD Qualifying Examinations are based on two reading lists, which provide the materials for three discrete exams: one addressing the first reading list, one addressing the second reading list, and a third which combines materials from both lists. For the purposes of the exams, each list designates a clearly defined and professionally recognizable field or subfield of scholarship (e.g., a literary-historical period such as the Renaissance, a transtemporal genre such as drama, a critical tradition such as feminism, an established body of literature such as children's literature). Each of the two lists consists of approximately 60–75 works, including both primary and secondary works (approximately 75% primary works and approximately 25% secondary works). The relationship between the two reading lists is to be determined by the advisory committee, with the understanding that the fields identified by each list are to complement one another in terms of (literary) history, discipline, method, genre, or otherwise. For more information, see [the section of the department's website dedicate to PhD study](#).

Field One: _____

Field Two: _____

I agree that the examination lists are ready to be reviewed by the Graduate Executive Committee. I have also read the attached guidelines for advising PhD exams.

Major Advisor

Associate Advisor

Associate Advisor

Associate Advisor

The submitted lists were approved by the Graduate Executive Committee on _____.

Guidelines for Advising: PhD Exams

Before compiling exam lists, or at the start of that process:

- Decide, and communicate to advisees, the roles of major and associate advisors in all major benchmarks in the program, including assembling reading lists, administering the PhD exam and exam conference, and advising students as they draft and revise chapters.
- Discuss with advisees the purpose of PhD exams and their relationship to the project of field coverage, pedagogy, and dissertation preparation — and be sure committee members agree about that purpose.

During the reading period:

- Communicate regularly with advisees, creating together clear expectations about the nature of exam questions and the type of writing a student will produce (including both content and mechanics).

In the weeks preceding the exam:

- All members of the advising committee should meet with advisees before drafting questions to discuss the themes, topics, and questions of particular interest that have arisen for advisees during the reading process.
- Be sure committee members agree regarding standards for evaluating an exam and assigning a question pass or fail. Explain those standards of evaluation clearly to advisees.
- Before the exam, explain to advisees the format and purpose of the exam conference. (See the online graduate handbook for more details.)