

Comprehensive Exam Guidelines

(ARTH 808)

Following the completion of the research tutorial/*atelier de recherche*, each student must successfully pass two examinations – one written and one oral. These examinations are based on the work prepared in the research tutorial, which establishes a bibliography focused on theoretical and methodological issues pertinent to the student's specific area of study and includes an extensive thesis proposal.

ARTH 808 is intended to verify whether the student is sufficiently prepared to undertake the writing of a thesis. Grades are assigned on a PASS/FAIL basis. Students who fail either of these examinations must take both of them a second time during the following semester. Those failing the second attempt will be withdrawn from the programme.

The exams are scheduled by the supervisor in consultation with the student, typically 7 – 10 days apart. The supervisor should arrange a location for the oral exam with the department assistant.

Written Examination:

This consists of a take-home examination written within a seventy-two hour period (3 days). The primary supervisor coordinates with committee members, providing a copy of these guidelines and devising a set of **three questions**, typically one from each member. On the day of the examination the supervisor emails these questions to the student, cc'ing the entire committee, the graduate program director and the department assistant. The student responds to **one of the three questions**, and returns it by email to the committee members, the GPD and the department assistant. The examination should be 15 pages in length, double-spaced and typed.

The grade is assigned, on a pass/fail basis, by the primary supervisor in consultation with committee members. If it is feasible, committee members are asked to provide their response to the supervisor within 72 hours. The committee may, if it wishes, choose to provide comments to the student at this point. Students must pass the written examination before they are permitted to proceed to the oral.

Oral examination:

The examination lasts 2 – 3 hours. Students are asked to respond to the two questions that they did not answer during written exam, as well as any questions the committee may have about the thesis proposal more generally. This examination is also intended to provide an important opportunity for discussion, with students receiving feedback and guidance about their thesis project. After the examination is complete, the committee meets to decide a pass/fail grade for the examinations as a whole. If the exams have been successful, the supervisor signs a form that admits the student to candidacy.