KU THE UNIVERSITY of KANSAS
Department of Spanish & Portuguese — Graduate Studies

ORAL PHD COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION EXPIRATION AND RECERTIFICATION POLICY

> "Under normal circumstances, the doctoral candidacy period between passage of the oral comprehensive examination and the final dissertation defense must last no longer than five (5) years. If a student took the oral comprehensive examination more than five (5) years prior to the scheduled date of the dissertation defense, a re-evaluation of the student's candidacy status is necessary. Re-evaluation will be managed by the graduate division of the school/College in which the student's program resides and may result in the requirement to retake the comprehensive oral examination." (Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs)

To recertify the Oral Comprehensive Examination, the department should submit the following to COGA/GPA:

- Letter of support with documentation from the candidate's dissertation advisor: In a letter to the Graduate Studies Committee, the dissertation advisor must outline exceptional circumstances that justify the request. Particular attention should be given to demonstrating how the student has remained active in field/research (including details from earlier Mentoring Agreements, drafts of Dissertation Chapters, publications, and/or participation in scholarly conferences adjacent to the area of study), as well as to explaining how the content of the original exam remains valid and representative of the field and of our program. The advisor should not hesitate to consult with the DGS about what to include in the letter or anything else concerning the process.
- Endorsement: Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee must demonstrate the department's support for the request to recertify the Oral Comprehensive Examinations. The endorsement should include an evaluation of the candidate's status, all materials submitted by the Dissertation advisor, and an assessment of the student's engagement and research trajectory. In some cases, it may be more appropriate for the DGS to speak about any changes in the examination procedures or in the program in the past 6 years.

The department should submit the required materials for evaluation to COGA and GPA, who will determine whether the student is recertified or must retake the examination.

In the event that COGA or GPA decides that the student must retake the comprehensive oral examination, the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Program Coordinator will help to schedule the time and date for the Oral Defense of the Proposal, which should be completed by week twelve of the semester in which the student returns to the Lawrence campus. This timeframe provides students with the opportunity to consult with the advisor, update the dissertation committee, and draft a prospectus for the forthcoming dissertation. Furthermore, to aid students in navigating this unfamiliar terrain, the prospectus should include a concise overview of the dissertation topic, highlighting its purpose, scope, methodological framework, anticipated length, format, and an updated bibliography that reflects current developments in the field.

This process will follow already established department procedures concerning the PhD Comprehensive Examination:

1. Oral examination and Defense of Dissertation Proposal will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis. The chair of the Doctoral Committee must communicate in writing the results to the Director of Graduate Studies no later than two weeks following completion of examination and proposal defense.
2. If the student fails to complete the oral examination by week twelve, the Graduate Studies Committee will review the student's record and may recommend academic probation and/or dismissal from the program.

This policy is approved by Faculty and applies to all graduate students effective Fall 2026.

APPROVED BY DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE ON NOVEMBER 5TH, 2026.