



جامعة الإمام عبد الرحمن بن فيصل
IMAM ABDULRAHMAN BIN FAISAL UNIVERSITY

عمادة الدراسات العليا
Deanship of Graduate Studies

Operational Rules Of Comprehensive Exams In Post-Graduate Programs

Principles and Operational Procedures of Comprehensive Exams in Post-Graduate Programs

Article (8) section (twenty-six) of the Unified Regulations for Graduate Studies in Universities states:

The student registration will be canceled by the Council of the Deanship of Graduate Studies under the following circumstances:

8- If the student fails to pass the comprehensive exam - if applicable - after the second attempt

Article (3) section (forty) of the Unified Regulations for Graduate Studies in Universities states:

3- The Masters student and PhD student - if required by their study program must pass a written and oral comprehensive exam, held by a committee specialized according to the requirements sanctioned by the University Council which are based on the Department Council's recommendation and the approval of the Faculty Council and the Council of the Deanship of Graduate Studies, following the completion of all their required courses. The contents of said exam correspond with the student's major and minor if applicable. The student is eligible the degree if he or she passes the exam on the first attempt. If the student fails, he or she is given one more attempt within the span of two semesters; if he or she fails, the registration is cancelled.

First Principle:

The comprehensive exam is mandatory for all students at the PhD level and must be included within the syllabus of the program. As for students at the Masters level, it is considered optional according to the decision of the approved program.

Second Principle: The Objective of the Exam

The comprehensive exam aims to measure the students' capabilities in two main aspects:

- a) The Summative Aspect, which aims to measure the students' ability to comprehend the subjects of the major and the minor ---if applicable--- deeply and thoroughly.
- b) The Analytic Aspect, which aims to measure the students' methodological ability to reflect, analyze, deduce, and provide solutions to the problems he or she comes across.

Third Principle: Contents of the Comprehensive Exam

- a) The Comprehensive consists of two parts: written and oral.
- b) Both the written and oral exams are divided into two parts: the first being the student's major and the second being the student's minor(s) --if applicable.
- c) The contents of the exam must achieve its desired purpose.
- d) The questions of the exam must offer a comprehensive coverage of the major and minor (if applicable).

Fourth Principle: The Exam Committee

- a) The department council specialized committee consists of three of the department's faculty members. If required, it is permissible to have up to faculty members who are professors or associate professors of the major of the student and the minor ---if applicable--- as well as one reporter.
- b) The committee bears full responsibility for the comprehensive exam, which includes selecting the fields of testing, formulating questions, determining the scores, and evaluating the students.
- c) Committee members must have no direct relations with the student.
- d) When the requirements of the program contain specialization or sub-specialties from outside the section, the department may involve a specialist from the relevant section or departments in the testing committee according to the criteria set out in paragraph (a).
- e) The committee of the written and oral exam must be the same.

Fifth Principle: The Exam Procedure and Segments

- 1) The comprehensive exam takes place during the semester which directly follows the completion of the courses. It is permissible to postpone the exam by one semester, at most, with the permission of the specialized department council.
- 2) The department council allocates the date and time of the comprehensive exam at least one month before it takes place.
- 3) The head of the specialized department notifies the student, in writing, of the date and time of the exam twenty days prior at the least. The notice must include:
Date:..... Time:..... Place:..... Duration:.....
- 4) The duration of the exam must be at least three hours long and cannot exceed five hours.
- 6) The duration of the oral exam must be at least an hour and cannot exceed two hours.

Sixth Principle: General Guidelines

- 1) Students who pass the comprehensive exam are eligible for the degree.
- 2) The passing grade for both the written and oral exam is 70%.
- 3) Students who do not receive a passing grade in either the written or oral exam, or both are offered the opportunity to retake the exam in the following semester; if they fail their registration is canceled.
- 4) The principle of the general average rating of the committee members' final assessments is applied when possible.
- 5) It is permissible for the department council to form a new testing committee if a student fails his or her first attempt.
- 6) The Head of the Department Deanship of Graduate Studies announces the results of both the written and oral parts of the comprehensive exam within two weeks, maximum, of the testing committee's evaluation.
- 7) The committee issues the conclusion within two weeks, maximum, of the date of the oral exam. The decision is final with no room for appeal.

