



## Faculty of Kinesiology Graduate Program Doctoral Candidacy Requirements

The University of Calgary Doctoral Candidacy [Regulations](#) (“the Regulations”) govern the conduct of admission to candidacy at the University of Calgary. This document establishes program specific requirements associated with the conduct of admission to graduate candidacy under the *Regulations*.

### **A. Statement of Purpose**

Admission into candidacy in the Kinesiology (KNES) Graduate Program signifies that the student is able to critically think about his/her research project and evaluate its merits in the context of the broader field of Kinesiology and society as a whole. It requires that students independently synthesize and communicate a logical, well-planned research proposal with the potential to lead to a doctoral degree; and demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of the specialized subject matter involved and the competency to apply this knowledge. Students who fulfill the candidacy requirements in Kinesiology have a deep, advanced understanding of the discipline, and the necessary knowledge, attitudes and technical skills to continue research at the doctorate level.

### **B. All doctoral students in the Faculty of Kinesiology Graduate Program must successfully complete the following components within the specified timelines:**

1. All course requirements required by the Faculty of Kinesiology and the Supervisory Committee
2. Written research proposal approved by the Supervisory Committee
3. Written Field of Study exam
4. Oral Field of Study exam

### **Scheduling of Research Proposal**

For a student who enters directly into the PhD program, a research proposal must be prepared by the graduate student and presented to the Supervisory Committee within 24 months of initial registration. The signed original Research Proposal Approval form and a hardcopy (or electronic copy) of the research proposal must be submitted to the Office of the Associate Dean (Graduate) within 2 working days of acceptance of the proposal.

For a student transferring to the PhD program from a Master’s program, the research proposal must be prepared by the graduate student and presented to the Supervisory Committee within 32 months of initial registration. The signed original Research Proposal Approval form and a hardcopy (or electronic copy) of the research proposal must be submitted to the Office of the Associate Dean (Graduate) within 2 working days of acceptance of the proposal.

### **Research Proposal Format**

Research proposals should not exceed the equivalent of 20 typed, double-spaced pages excluding references, figures and tables. A 12 pt font should be used. The proposal should consist of the following elements:

- (a) Background information from the scientific literature, including critical evaluation of previous work.
- (b) A clear statement of the objectives of the proposed research program including hypotheses to be tested where appropriate.

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- (c) A detailed description of the proposed methodology.
- (d) A brief indication of the contributions to scientific knowledge that should result from the proposed research.

**Research Proposal Approval**

The following protocol must be followed in order for a graduate student to obtain the required approval for his/her graduate Research Proposal:

- (a) A meeting of the supervisory committee and the student will be scheduled by the Supervisor. The purpose of the meeting is for the student to present his/her Research Proposal to the supervisory committee.
- (b) The Research Proposal must be distributed by the student to members of the Supervisory Committee for their review at least two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. The student must ask the committee members whether they wish to receive the Proposal in hardcopy or electronic format.
- (c) The Supervisor, through the Kinesiology Graduate Program office will bring the Research Proposal Approval form to the research proposal approval meeting.
- (d) The student will give a 15-20 minute presentation of their research to the supervisory committee. Immediately following the presentation, the supervisory committee will question the student on his/her knowledge of the research area and the research proposal. Based on the written proposal and answers to the questioning, supervisory committee members will provide specific feedback and recommendations to the student for incorporation into his/her graduate research project. The presentation and questioning/feedback process will take no more than 2 hours.
- (e) If the supervisory committee members approve the Proposal in the current format, they may sign the approval form at the meeting. However, supervisory committee members may withhold their approval until the student makes required revisions to the Proposal. The supervisory committee must approve any revisions within one month of the research proposal approval meeting. This may go beyond the 24 month requirement for direct entry PhD students or 32 months for Master transfer students as noted above. Approval must be a unanimous decision by the supervisory committee. If there is a lack of unanimity, a meeting should be arranged with the Associate Dean Graduate with both the student and the supervisor within 2 weeks to determine the plan going forward. Major revisions must be submitted back to the supervisory committee for approval within 6 months. If there is still lack of unanimity after the second presentation to the Supervisory committee, the student will be required to withdraw from the PhD Program.
- (f) Once each supervisory committee member has signed the approval form, the student must submit the original approval form with a hardcopy (or electronic copy) of the Research Proposal to the Office of the Associate Dean (Graduate). If, during the course of the training program, there are major changes in the direction of the student's research, a short addendum should be added to the original research proposal, approved by the members of the Supervisory Committee, and a copy of the addendum provided to the Office of the Associate Dean (Graduate).
- (g) Minutes of this supervisory committee meeting concerning the research proposal addendum in point (f) above should also be recorded by the graduate supervisor and submitted to the Office of the Associate Dean (Graduate).



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### **Scheduling of Field of Study (FoS) Examination**

Doctoral students who enter the program already holding the degree of M.Sc. must attempt this examination no later than 28 months after initial registration. Students who transfer from a M.Sc. to a Ph.D. program must attempt this examination no later than 36 months after initial registration. Students who were admitted to a M.Sc. program but who already hold a recognised graduate degree from another country and who have transferred to a Ph.D. program must attempt the exam no later than 28 months after initial registration.

The details for the form entitled Notice of FoS Examination must be submitted by the supervisor to the Office of the Associate Dean (Graduate) at least six weeks before the scheduled date of the Oral FoS Examination. This includes date, time and location of the oral examination, the examining committee composition, the student's research specialization, and the student's decision with regards to the optional presentation prior to the oral examination.

Approval of the Notice indicates that the student has satisfactorily completed all course work requirements, received approval of his/her thesis proposal, and, upon the successful completion of the FoS Examination is sufficiently qualified to proceed with the conduct of the doctoral research.

### **Composition of FoS Examination Committee**

The FoS Examination Committee consists of the Supervisory Committee plus two additional members recommended by the Associate Dean (Graduate) who shall ensure that no conflict of interest exists between the student or the Supervisor and the additional members of the examination committee. The two additional members must include at least one member who is external to the Faculty of Kinesiology.

The examination committee must have at least five voting examiners, however, depending on the supervisory committee membership the committee may exceed five. In cases where there is a supervisor and co-supervisor, their votes count as one vote. Where there is a difference of opinion between the two, the Supervisor's vote will stand. There must also be a Neutral Chair selected by the Associate Dean (Graduate) according to the regulations provided by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

### **Format of Written FoS Examination**

The student can choose one of two options. To aid in the student's decision, a discussion with the supervisor is highly recommended.

#### ***Option 1***

The written examination will be a closed book, six-hour exam (2 three-hour blocks) administered by the Graduate Supervisor, held one week prior to the date of the FoS Oral Examination. Questions for the Written Examination will be supplied by members from the FoS Examination Committee (each of the committee members submits a single question) to the Supervisor. Questions are to be based on the course work taken by the student and knowledge needed to complete the thesis. Five questions will be chosen by the supervisor from the supplied questions and must include in those five the questions from



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the non-supervisory committee members. The student will choose and answer four of the five questions during this time period – 2 for each 3 hour block. Expectations for the written answers to the four questions are such that answers should be comprehensive enough to show the student knows the questioned area supplemented by an appropriate but not exhaustive reference list to support the answers/ideas put forward. In advance of circulation of the Written Examination, the Supervisor should contact the FoS Examining Committee regarding their preference on how they wish to receive the Written Examination (i.e., hard copy, or electronic version, or both).

### ***Option 2***

As with Option 1, questions for the Written Examination will be supplied by members from the FoS Examination Committee (each of the committee members submits a single question) to the Supervisor. Questions are to be based on the course work taken by the student and knowledge needed to complete the thesis. The scope of the questions should be fairly specific so that the student has the opportunity to answer, in depth, in a specific area. Five questions will be chosen by the supervisor from all the supplied questions and must include in those five the questions from the non-supervisory committee members. The student will choose and answer four of the five questions

Exactly four weeks before the scheduled Oral FoS Examination, the written questions should be provided to the student by the Supervisor. The student must prepare a written paper for four of the examination questions and circulate these to all members of the FoS Examination Committee no later than one week before the scheduled Oral Candidacy Examination. This allows the student three weeks to prepare the four written responses. The answers to the questions are expected to be of high quality and appropriately referenced as one might expect for having approximately 5 days to write each question. Answers to each question should be typed double-spaced, in no less than 12 pt. font, and should not exceed 20 pages excluding references, figures, and tables.

The Examining Committee must have a minimum of one week to review the Written Examination prior to the date of the Oral FoS Exam.

### **Process/Evaluation of Written FoS examination**

Each Examination Committee member will evaluate the responses to all questions of the Written FoS Examination. Each committee member will bring to the FoS examination their evaluation of Pass or Fail.

The committee will convene thirty minutes prior to the scheduled FoS Oral examination to meet with the Neutral Chair to assess whether the Written FoS is a Pass or a Fail. This pass or fail mark by each examiner will be given confidentially to the Neutral Chair at the beginning of the Examination as a straw vote. The Pass/Fail gradings of the written component are to be discussed at that point.

If after deliberation the committee evaluation results in 2 or more “Fail” votes, the committee’s recommendation is “Fail”. This result will be immediately conveyed to the student by the Neutral Chair (or the Supervisor if decided in consultation with the Neutral Chair) and the Oral FoS will not take place. Within five working days of this result being determined, each individual FoS Examination Committee member must provide a written report explaining the reasons for his/her vote, to the Associate Dean



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(Graduate) Kinesiology. The final decision will be at the discretion of the Associate Dean (Graduate). Then, after consultation with the Supervisor, the Associate Dean (Graduate) summarizes the essential points and delivers the final decision to the student.

For Options 1 and 2 in the case of a failed Written examination, the student may retake the written examination no sooner than 2 months and no later than 6 months after the failed written FoS examination. For further details see below.

A second recommendation of "Fail" requires that, within five working days, each examiner must submit a confidential written report to the Associate Dean (Graduate), detailing the reasons for their vote. If the Associate Dean (Graduate) upholds the recommendation to fail, the student will be required to withdraw from the Faculty of Graduate Studies and this decision will be communicated to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

### **Format of Oral FoS Examination**

A non-voting neutral chair appointed by the Associate Dean (Graduate) will chair the examination. **The Neutral Chair reviews the format of the examination and then ensures approximate equal time for questioning from each member of the committee.**

After the vote on the written component of the FoS examination and before the start of the oral FoS examination, the student may elect to give a 15 minute (maximum) presentation on such topics as their background, why they are in their selected area, future plans, areas of expertise, etc. They are not to discuss any aspect of their examination questions, written responses, or their thesis or thesis proposal. This presentation is not part of the two hour FoS Oral examination. Students should discuss this option with their supervisor before making a decision. If a presentation is elected, it **MUST** be identified to the Office of the Associate Dean (Graduate) when scheduling the oral examination (6 weeks prior to the examination date, see 'Scheduling of Field of Study (FoS) Examination' above). If this notice is not given, it will not be on the Notice of Candidacy Document and the student will **NOT** be permitted to present prior to the oral FoS. The Neutral Chair is responsible for enforcing the above at the time of the FoS examination.

The student will be examined by members of the FoS Examination Committee. The four written answers provided by the student should serve as the basis of questioning during the Oral FoS. However, questions related to the non answered questions are permissible. In addition, general knowledge in related areas to the thesis may also be included. Rounds of questioning will be employed in order to give each examiner an early opportunity to question the student. The committee will evaluate the background knowledge of the student as it relates to specific topics in which he/she has answered questions.

### **Process/Evaluation of Oral Examination**

The examination must not exceed two hours. This does not include the deliberation time of the Committee.



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No one other than a member of the examination committee is allowed to question the student. The supervisor and co-supervisor may participate in questioning, deliberating and voting during the Candidacy examination. All examiners must be given an opportunity to question the student during the early part of the examination, e.g., by rounds of questioning.

Questions to the student must be clear and succinct. The student must be given reasonable time to answer. If the student has understood the question and cannot answer, the examiner should pass to another question and not attempt to extract an answer by prolonged interrogation, or by leading the student. The chair should guard against any tendency of examiners to interact with each other instead of concentrating on the examination of the student.

The Neutral Chair must stop the exam if one of the examiners needs to leave the room and will reconvene the exam when all examiners are present.

At the end of the examination, the student is asked to withdraw from the room. Before any discussion of the student's performance, each examiner must identify which recommendation (pass/fail) he/she favours for the oral examination on secret ballot. This provides the committee with a frame of opinion on which to base a discussion of the student's oral performance.

Every effort should be made to reach a unanimous recommendation. Should the outcome of the final vote include one negative vote or less, the student will pass that component. Should the outcome include two or more negative votes for the oral component, the committee's recommendation to the Associate Dean Graduate will be "fail". Each examiner then records a recommendation of pass or fail on the official Report of Candidacy Oral Examination form for the oral component.

See the Summary Pass/Fail Table below for results of pass or fail combinations. In the case of a fail, the Neutral Chair (or the Supervisor if decided in consultation with the Neutral Chair) must inform the student of the committee's recommendation immediately following the vote of the examination committee. The Neutral Chair will record the final recommendation of pass or fail on the Report of Candidacy Oral Examination form, which must be submitted to the Associate Dean (Graduate) within one working day of the completion of the examination. Each examiner writes a brief memo to the Associate Dean (Graduate) explaining the reasons for his/her vote and submit within five working days from the date of the examination. The Associate Dean (Graduate) may uphold the 'fail' in the case of a clear fail or refer to FGS for decision in the case of an unclear fail. If the Associate Dean (Graduate) upholds the "fail", after consultation with the Supervisor, the Associate Dean (Graduate) then summarizes the essential points from the memos from each committee member and then sends a formal letter to the student notifying them of the decision (copied to the Supervisor). The Graduate Program must send the *notice of a failed candidacy component* to the student within ten working days from the date of the examination.

**Note:** *In instance of a potential of a conflict of interest such as when the Associate Dean (Graduate) is a member of the examining committee, the Faculty Dean or a designate will substitute for the ADG.*



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Summary Pass/Fail Table

Written Exam	Oral Exam	Result
Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Fail	Redo Oral Examination
Fail	Not Performed	Redo Written with Oral Exam

### Appeals

If the outcome of any component of the Candidacy Requirements is a fail, the student has the right to appeal the decision. Students must appeal directly to the Faculty of Graduate Studies following the procedures described in the *Graduate Calendar* under [Academic Regulations](#)).

### Re-Take of the FoS Written or Oral Examination

Only one re-take of each of the written or oral FoS examination will be permitted. The re-take must take place no sooner than two months and no later than six months from the date of the first examination. Normally the composition of the examination committee will remain the same. In the case of a re-take Written Examination, a new set of questions will be submitted to the student under the same conditions as the original. In reporting the results of the re-taken FoS written and/or Oral Examination, the committee will again be limited to recommending either a Pass (i.e. no more than one negative vote) or Fail. A recommendation of "Fail" requires that, within five working days, each examiner must submit a confidential written report to the Associate Dean (Graduate), detailing the reasons for their vote. The Neutral Chair must also submit a written report of the examination procedures to the Associate Dean (Graduate) in that time. If the Associate Dean (Graduate) upholds the recommendation to fail, the student will be required to withdraw from the Faculty of Graduate Studies and this decision will be communicated to the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Associate Dean (Graduate) will communicate with the Faculty of Graduate Studies within 5 working days.



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**CANDIDACY TIMELINES**

	<b>DIRECT PHD ENTRY</b>	<b>MSC TO PHD TRANSFER</b>
Set up Supervisory Committee	3 months*	3 months*
Supervisory Committee Meeting and Research Proposal Approval	24 months after initial registration*	32 months after initial registration*
FOS to be completed	28 months after initial registration*	36 months after initial registration*
Notice of FOS Oral Examination to be delivered to Associate Dean Graduate Kinesiology	At least 6 weeks before FOS date*	At least 6 weeks before FOS date*
*all dates represent the maximum time allowed, items can be completed earlier		

**FOS Examination Timeline**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Pass written and oral FOS examination	Neutral Chair submits signed approval to ADG Office within 1 working day
Fail Oral Examination (Neutral Chair to submit signed Fail document to ADG Office within 1 working day)	Retake of the oral exam possible between 2 and 6 months after the failure
Fail Written Examination (Neutral Chair to submit signed Fail document to ADG Office within 1 working day)	May retake written examinations 2-6 months after the failed examination
Fail FOS Appeal by Student	Written appeal must be within 15 days of examination