

Department of History Florida International University

Comprehensive Examinations in the History Department

Prerequisites

- 1) The student will have completed all coursework and language exams by the end of the semester in which comprehensive exams are taken.
- 2) The dissertation committee will be formed and Form D-1 filed at least 60 days in advance of the comprehensive examinations.
- 3) Form H-1, listing 3 faculty, one of whom will be chair, one of whom (except the chair) may be from outside the dept., who will form the student's comprehensive exam committee and examine the student, must be filed at least 60 days before the exam.
- 4) The dissertation and comp committees and chairs are chosen by mutual agreement between student and faculty.
- 5) Exams will be scheduled by the chair of the student's comprehensives committee, who whenever possible will also be the chair of the student's dissertation committee. Written Exams may take place at any time, as long as they take place at least 28 days before the last day of classes in that semester. The chair is responsible for all scheduling issues and bureaucratic formalities.

Structure of Written Portion of Exam

- 1) There will be 3 questions. Responses to the questions will be written over a 72-hour period.
- 2) Each committee member is solely responsible for preparing the student to write the question in their field. Faculty are free to consult each other on reading lists and questions. All questions will be graded by their author and one other faculty member, chosen by the chair of the comprehensive examination committee. In exceptional circumstances, the DGS may permit a single grader. If one grader passes an exam and the other fails it, the DGS will appoint a 3rd grader to decide the issue.
- 3) There will be a total of 3 questions on the comprehensive examination. Student will write 2 questions in their primary cultural area of concentration. 1 of these questions will be in the same chronological period as the student's dissertation topic, and the second will cover another chronological period or theme, different from the dissertation topic. The third question will be on a comparative field. Questions may be chronologically and/or topically organized.

- 4) The written portion of the comprehensive exam must be graded within 2 weeks by the faculty concerned.
- 5) Students must pass all sections in order to pass the exam.
- 6) Students who fail only 1 question may retake the exam within one month. Students who fail 2 or more parts must wait until the next semester to retake.
- 7) 2 failures will result in expulsion.

Oral Portion of Exam

- 1) Orals will be held within 2 weeks of the written exam (including make-up exams).
- 2) Oral examiners will be those listed in H-1. Students may request the presence of the DGS, or of the department chair if the DGS is on the committee.
- 3) Orals will last no more than 3 hours.
- 4) Following the exam, the committee meets to decide the grades of Pass/Fail in each field. If the student passes all fields, the committee will decide on Pass with Distinction grade.
- 5) A student who fails one or more fields on the oral exam must retake the exam within two semesters of the original exam. Failure to do this or to pass on the second try results in expulsion from the program.

Dissertation Proposal Hearing and Comprehensive Examinations

The dissertation proposal hearing will take place within the week of the oral portion of the comprehensive examination.

All particular field rules for the comprehensive exams are hereby abolished.