

## Qualifying Paper Defense *Script and Procedure*

### PART I: INTRODUCTION

CHAIR READS: I would like to begin the Dissertation Qualifying Paper defense of:

\_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_, serving as Dissertation Qualifying Paper Committee chairperson.

I am joined today by committee members:

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_

The defense of today's Qualifying Paper is a formal meeting during which the student is questioned about the Qualifying Paper; and an agreement is reached that the student has successfully completed the manuscript in accordance with the academic standards of the PhD department and the university. The examination is chaired by the student's committee chairperson, conducted by the Qualifying Paper committee, and held at the discretion of the Associate Dean of Graduate & PhD Programs. The defense is an examination of the student's competence, with respect to independent scholarship and investigation of a research inquiry. The Qualifying Paper is the underlying framework for the student's dissertation. Successful completion of the defense will result in the student earning the status of "Candidate" in the PhD program. The student must be able to explain the rationale for choices that were made in the selection of the topic, the conceptual framework, designing of research, the collection of data, and the writing of the Qualifying Paper manuscript. In addition, the student should be able to discuss the research limitations and examine the academic relevance by placing them in the context of existing theory and research. The

Qualifying Paper under consideration today is titled: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

It has been accepted for official defense.

I would like to introduce the author of the Qualifying Paper – \_\_\_\_\_. He/She is the Respondent for today's defense.

At this time, I would like to ask the Respondent if He/She would like to offer any short comment regarding any corrections of the text, variations, or special circumstances since our last committee communication, in regards to your Qualifying Paper.

The defense will begin with the Respondent offering a formal oral presentation of His/Her manuscript for approximately 30 minutes.

CANDIDATE GIVES PRESENTATION

PART II: COMMITTEE QUESTIONING OF CANDIDATE

CHAIR READS: At this time, the respondent will be asked to reply to committee questioning. The committee offers the sole examination for the Qualifying Paper defense. The discussion should preferably not be concerned with minor errors in the presentation or text, but instead with issues such as the Respondent's concept of the topic being studied, the relevance of the study, the conceptual or theoretical framework, the literature found to support the QP, the methodology being considered, etc.

QUESTIONING

PART III: EVALUATION BY THE CHAIR AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CHAIR READS: The committee will now evaluate the student's defense. The evaluation for the defense of a Qualifying Paper may be pass, conditional pass (with or without an additional defense), or fail. Decisions on acceptance are based on majority vote of the Dissertation Proposal Committee. Voting is conducted in a closed meeting of the committee.

COMMITTEE EXITS THE VIRTUAL MEETING

COMMITTEE JOINS THE DELIBERATION VIRTUAL MEETING

COMMITTEE REJOINS THE MAIN MEETING WITH CANDIDATE

Once a decision has been rendered, the chair informs the candidate immediately after. The Chair should also review the committee's feedback with the Candidate, with written materials sent as a follow-up.

Upon rendering the decision, the Chair then officially notifies (by email) the Associate Dean of Graduate & PhD Programs of the committee's decision. The Associate Dean of Graduate & PhD Programs approves and forwards this information to update all records; and the office prepares candidate for the next steps in the process of the Dissertation Proposal, as well as the transition of the student to a PhD candidate.