

## Qualifying Examination Guidelines

The Qualifying Examination is the last step towards your Advancement to Candidacy in the doctoral program. The Qualifying Examination, and subsequent Advancement to Candidacy, are expected to occur in the third year (second year for students who entered with a master's degree) of your graduate enrollment. Before planning the Qualifying Examination, you need to ensure that the following conditions have been met:

- (a) You have completed your M.S. degree.
- (b) You have completed the Ph.D. course requirement.
- (c) You have successfully completed the Preliminary Examination.

Do not schedule the Qualifying Examination unless you have met the above requirements.

The Qualifying Examination is an oral examination in front of the Qualifying Examination Committee that consists of at least five members. The exam tests primarily your research proposal and your research competence. You should begin the examination with an oral dissertation proposal (no longer than 30 minutes of prepared material). This proposal will give rise to questions from the committee. While the examination centers around your dissertation topic, it also assesses the depth and breadth of your knowledge, and your aptitude in approaching and solving fundamental research problems. The examination is scheduled for approximately 2 hours.

The Qualifying Examination Committee must have five (5) members who are tenure-track UC faculty. Three members of this committee, including the Committee Chair, must be UCI faculty from MAE or having a joint appointment with MAE. One member must be a UC tenure-track faculty member from outside the MAE Department. Your Faculty Advisor serves as the Committee Chair. By exception, one committee member other than the Chair or the outside member can be a non-voting member of the UC Academic Senate. Only one exception will be considered.

The procedures and deadlines for planning the Qualifying Examination are available in separate documents on the MAE web site. **They must be strictly adhered to.** If you have any questions on the exam, contact the Graduate Coordinator or the Graduate Advisor.