



# Ethics and Public Affairs

## Procedures for the Area Examination

Revisions Approved by the Program Committee on April 5, 2019

1. Students will normally take this exam in the second year of their EPAF doctoral program. Timing of the exam will be set by agreement between each student and examining committee.
2. Aim. The area examination is intended to ensure that students have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of specific social science and policy literature essential for developing a thesis proposal on their intended research topics. This may include discussions of applied ethics and political philosophy applied specifically to the policy topic, in cases where these have already entered into the literature.
3. Procedures.

### General procedures

(a) Normally this exam will be completed in a single term. Once a student registers for the EPAF 6700 Area Examination, a grade of “INP” will be entered at the end of each term until the examination is completed and a different grade is submitted.

(b) Each student’s Area Examination will be conducted by the student’s advisory committee, including supervisor, co-supervisor, and third member.

(c) The Exam may be completed either in Format 1 or Format II, as outlined below.

(d) Any appeals must be made in writing to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs within two weeks of the announcement of results. The results of an area examination may be appealed only on procedural grounds.

### Format 1

(e) Each student will develop a bibliography, normally including normally 25 items from the social science and policy literature pertaining to the student’s proposed research topic; theoretical materials in applied ethics and political philosophy specific to the topic and not covered by the theory exam may also be included. The list of resources will be developed in

collaboration with (and with the approval of) the student's committee. The bibliography will be annotated, meaning that students will write 2 detailed paragraphs on each inclusion, identifying its central argument and its relevance to the student's project. The bibliography will be organized by key areas or themes identified by the student as the central building blocks of the thesis project.

(f) The annotated bibliography will be accompanied by a paper from the student identifying key issues in the literature selected for the bibliography, and their relevance to addressing their research question. Compared with the bibliography, this paper is meant to be more analytical than expository; the student will explain how the relevant themes highlighted in the bibliography are central to the research project, how the project will both draw from them and how it will build on them. The paper need not identify the student's own final intended argument but should indicate the contributions to the literature it intends to make. (Degree of overlap between the two documents is at the discretion of the committee.)

(g) The annotated bibliography and the statement paper should be no more than 35 pages (9000 words) in length *each*. (Minimum length is at the discretion of the committee.) Upon completion of the two items, the student will submit to the committee for approval, and a date should be set for the group to meet to ask questions and provide feedback. The committee might accept the two items as is, or recommendations for edits or further reading may be issued, in which case the student will be given time to revise and resubmit both items. When the committee is satisfied, a grade of satisfactory will be entered for EPAF 6700. When revisions have not been submitted within the stipulated time, or the committee finds those revisions unsatisfactory, the committee may enter a grade of unsatisfactory for EPAF 6700.

### Format 2

(h) Each student will develop a bibliography, normally including normally 25 items from the social science and policy literature pertaining to the student's proposed research topic; works in applied ethics and political philosophy focussed specifically on this topic may also be included. The bibliography will be accompanied by a statement of approximately 2000 words from the student identifying key issues in the literature selected for the bibliography. (This statement may be based on the student's earlier work in EPAF 6000.) Both the bibliography and the student's statement must be approved by the committee before examination questions are set, and approved copies must be submitted to the Graduate Administrator and the Program Director before the student takes the examination.

(i) The student's committee will develop questions pertaining to literature included in the bibliography, giving due consideration to the key issues outlined by the student. The committee will determine how many questions the student must answer, and whether the student may choose these from a larger set (e.g. three questions from five questions listed). The examining committee will set a word limit for each question, and the aggregate word limit for all questions required will be less than 9000 words.

(j) The examination is a take-home exam over seven days, on dates set by the examining committee in consultation with the student; the examining committee will also specify how the students' answers are to be submitted. Once the questions are made known, the student may ask questions of clarification, which will be answered by the examining committee without undue delay.

(k) The examining committee will give the student's examination a grade of satisfactory or unsatisfactory. They may, at their discretion, require a further oral examination before deciding on a grade; they may, also at their discretion, require revisions before deciding on a grade.

(l) A statement must be submitted to the Program Director and the student within four weeks of completing the exam, either (a) giving a grade or (b) explaining why an oral examination or revisions are required.