



Procedures for the Theory Examination

As revised by the Program Committee December 12, 2016

1. Students will normally take the exam in the second year of their EPAF doctoral program. They may take it either in September or in January; in addition, students who take it in September may repeat it in January (see 4(g), below) or in the following September.
2. Aim. The theory examination is intended to ensure that students have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of (a) normative theories and concepts from ethics and political philosophy applicable to issues in public affairs, and (b) different theories and conceptions of public reason as a framework for normative discussion of public issues.
3. Content. The examination will consist of three papers, answering (a) a question concerning rival conceptions of public reason; (b) a question concerning debate between or among rival normative theories or perspectives; (c) a question concerning debate that may arise when different normative theories or perspectives are applied to one of the theme issues of EPAF 6100 or EPAF 6200 as taught in the preceding academic year.
4. Procedures.
 - (a) The grade for EPAF 6600 is reported as “INP” until the examination is taken.
 - (b) The EPAF Management Committee appoints a committee of Theory Examiners in time for a reading list and questions to be adopted.
 - (c) The Theory Examiners develop a reading list to be approved by the Management Committee and distributed to students.
 - (d) The Theory Examiners set questions for the exam. They may, at their discretion, give students a choice of questions for each of the three papers. They may, at their discretion, distribute a larger range of questions, including these, which students can prepare in advance of the examination. Once the questions are made known, the students may ask questions of clarification, which will be answered by the examining committee without undue delay.

(e) The examination has two components. The first is a take-home exam over seven days, on dates set by the Theory Examiners, who will also specify how the students' papers are to be submitted. The word limit for each question in the written component is 3000 words. The second component is an oral exam based on the student's written answers to the take-home. The oral component will be scheduled by the Theory Examiners in consultation with the students, without undue delay.

(f) The Theory Examiners will give each student's examination a grade of satisfactory, unsatisfactory, or distinction. Alternatively they may, at their discretion, require the student to re-write one or two parts of the examination if they judge the student's answers to the other parts of the exam acceptable; in that case an INP will be entered until the next examination.

(g) A student whose exam is (entirely or in part) unsatisfactory may either be re-examined (including both written and oral components) in the following January (with the same reading list and range of possible questions) or take a new exam the following September. Any student who fails a second theory examination will be withdrawn from the program.

(h) Any appeals will 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 a theory examination may only be appealed on procedural grounds.