

NOTE ON SPROTT PhD/MSc PROCESS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

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Caution: The official Sprott and Carleton documents and web pages should be consulted to have the most up-to-date information. This guide is only a summary of some information for potential accounting students and is not an official guide.

A series of notes regarding the Sprott PhD/MSc process is available to help PhD/MSc students in their progress toward completion.

1. Note on Sprott PhD/MSc process Overview for Accounting students
2. Note on Sprott PhD/MSc process Coursework period
3. **Note on Sprott PhD/MSc process Comprehensive examination** (this note)
4. Note on Sprott PhD/MSc process Proposal
5. Note on Sprott PhD/MSc process Thesis preparation and defence

This note explains the objectives, structure, timing, structure, expectations, steps and procedures of the Sprott PhD comprehensive examination.

Resources Available for the Sprott PhD/MSc in Management

(See a number of links at Francois Brouard Supervision page)

<http://sprott.carleton.ca/profbrouard/supervision>

- Carleton U., Sprott. PhD Comprehensive Examination Procedures and Approval Form (Seminal Works version), 6p.
<http://sprott.carleton.ca/wp-content/uploads/PhD-Comprehensive-Examination-Procedures-and-Approval-Form-Seminal-Works.pdf>

Sprott PhD in Management

PhD		
Components	Cr	Courses
Comp examination	-	BUSI6908 - PhD Comprehensive examination (written + oral portions)

Sprott MSc in Management

MSc		
Components	Cr	Courses
		n/a

Objectives of Comprehensive Examination

(Source: Sprott Procedures)

“The comprehensive examination provides the opportunity for PhD candidates to demonstrate key capabilities needed to successfully undertake a dissertation in line with the goals of the program. The candidate demonstrates the ability to critically master the material in research methodology and in an area of specialization.”

“The comprehensive requires students to answer examination questions in a complete and comprehensive way. Answers should demonstrate high-level analytical ability and knowledge.”

Timing of Comprehensive Examination

(Source: Sprott Procedures)

“The comprehensive examination must be completed successfully before the PhD proposal defense is scheduled.”

“Students registering for the comprehensive examination will have completed all courses necessary to fulfill the program requirements. This normally occurs within 6 terms (24 months) of initial registration for full-time students and 12 terms (48 months) for part-time students.

Full-time students must complete the exam within 8 terms (32 months) since registration while part-time students must do so within 16 terms (64 months). In exceptional circumstances, the Dean of Graduate Studies may permit an extension to the time allowed. Students who do not complete the comprehensive in the allotted time may be asked to withdraw from the program.”

Structure of the Comprehensive Examination

(Source: Sprott Procedures)

“The oral and written examinations will emphasize both depth and breadth of understanding at a level appropriate for a PhD candidate.”

Written component

The written examination will cover material relating to the student’s area of specialization, research methodology associated with that area and seminal/foundational works. The reading list will be assigned by the Comprehensive examination committee. The examination is a take home exam.

“A maximum of seven (7) calendar days will be allowed to complete the written part of the examination. The written examination will be administered by the Director of the PhD Program of Designate.”

Expectations:

- “The student will complete the examination by answering the questions posed by the comprehensive examination committee.”
- “The student will be expected to answer the questions posed in an organized and coherent fashion. The answers to the questions must demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the area being examined and draw on classic pieces of work as well as work on the forefront of knowledge in the area. The student must demonstrate advanced analytical ability in addressing the questions in a complete and comprehensive manner.”
- “Answers to questions may range in length but students should expect to write between 10-20 pages for each question.”
- “Student will submit the written exam to the PhD Administrator at the time specified.”

Oral component

“The submission of the written examination will be followed by the oral examination. The student will be examined orally on the material covered in the written comprehensive examination. The oral examination will only take place if the written examination is passed satisfactorily. An independent Chair for the oral examination will be assigned by the PhD office.”

Expectations:

- “The oral examination associated with the comprehensive requirement will take approximately 2-3 hours (a break during the exam will likely be appropriate).”
- “The student may make a brief presentation of the essay (15 minutes max.). Examiners will ask questions based on their review of the written work. Normally, examiners will ask questions in two rounds.”

Steps and Procedures for PhD Comprehensive Examination

	Procedures	Stu	Sup	Com	Sprott
1	Finding all Comprehensive Examination Committee members by Supervisor or Mentor (minimum 3 faculty members from Sprott) - Supervisor - Co-supervisor, if applicable - Faculty member from Sprott (in main area) - Faculty member from Sprott (from other area) <i>(Full time: start of 6th term from initial registration)</i> <i>(Part-time: start of 12th term from initial registration)</i>		X	x	
2	Fill out official form and Submission to PhD administrator Proposal Comprehensive Examination Committee Form (student name, student number, area of specialization, proposed title, proposed examination date, supervisor /mentor name, committee members' names) <i>(6 weeks prior to Examination date)</i>		X		
3	Approval of PCECF by PhD Director				X
4	PhD Director will allow student to register in BUSI6908 PhD Comprehensive	x			X
5	Student registers in BUSI6908 PhD Comprehensive (Continuous registration in 6908 until it is satisfactorily completed.)	X			
6	Fill out official form and Submission to PhD administrator Comprehensive Examination Scheduling Form (student name, student number, area of specialization, supervisor /mentor name, proposed title, proposed written exam dates (a range of up to 7 calendar days), proposed oral examination date and time, list of readings) <i>(4 weeks prior to Examination date)</i>		X		
7	Approval of CESF by PhD Director				X
8	Distribution by PhD Administrator/Supervisor to student of list of readings <i>(4 weeks prior to Examination date)</i>		X		X
9	Discussion with Committee members of examination questions (4) : 2 area of specialization, 1 research methodology, 1 seminal/foundational works		X	X	

	Procedures	Stu	Sup	Com	Sprott
10	Setting date, time and room (oral exam)	x	x	x	X
11	Securing all Examination Board members availability (date & time)	x	X	x	
12	PhD administrator will secure a Chairperson (Sprott)				X
13	PhD administrator will book a room for the defence				X
14	Fill out official form and Submission to PhD administrator Comprehensive Examination Question Submission Form (student name, student number, area of specialization, supervisor /mentor name, examination questions (3) : 2 area of specialization, 1 research methodology) (1 week prior to Examination date)		X		
15	Approval of CEQSF by PhD Director				X
16	Submission of grade (Sat/Unsat) to the PhD Director (1 week after Written Examination date)		X		
	Written component				
17	Distribution by PhD Administrator to student of questions (start date and time of Written Examination)	X			x
18	Submission by student of written examination documents to the PhD Director /PhD Administrator (end date and time of Written Examination)	X			
20	Distribution by PhD Administrator of written examination documents to the Committee members		x	x	X
21	Evaluation of written examination documents		x	X	
22	Decision on Written Component			X	
	Written Grade			X	
	- Satisfactory - Unsatisfactory (Note A1)				
23	PhD administrator will circulate official notice When and where: date, time, room Who: chairperson, supervisor, co-supervisor, other 2 Faculty members + ex officio members: Dean Sprott, Dean FGPA)	x	x	X x	 x

	Procedures	Stu	Sup	Com	Sprott
	Oral component				
24	Oral Examination Date (<i>Defence date</i>)	X	X	X	
25	Ready to start the defence (<i>Defence date</i>) (should not normally exceed : PhD = 3 hours)	X			
26	Candidate withdraws	X			
27	Meeting of the Examination Board in-camera - Review procedures - Presentation by candidate - Round 1: one-on-one questioning - Round 2: general questioning and general discussion - Opportunity for the candidate to make a closing statement - Board deliberates on examination - written : satisfactory or unsatisfactory - oral defence : satisfactory or unsatisfactory - Review order of questioning (Member committee (not area), Member committee (area), Co-supervisor, Supervisor)			X	chair
28	Candidate admitted to examination room	X			
29	Beginning of defence with candidate and welcome (~5 minutes) - Introduce members of the Examination board - Review examination procedures	x	x	x	chair
30	Presentation by candidate (~20 minutes) (distribution of PowerPoint slides)	X			
31	Round 1: one-on-one questioning - Member committee (not area) (15-20 minutes) - Member committee (area) (15-20 minutes) - Co-supervisor; Supervisor (15-20 minutes)			X	
32	Round 2: general questioning and general discussion		x	X	
33	Opportunity for the candidate to make a closing statement	X			
34	Candidate's closing statement, if needed	X			
35	Candidate withdraws	X			

	Procedures	Stu	Sup	Com	Sprott
36	Deliberation by Examination Board		x	X	
	Chair polls the members of the Examination Board to determine if the candidate passes or fails and the extent of required revisions. (Note A2)			X	chair
	Decision on Oral Defence Grade			X	
	- Satisfactory - Unsatisfactory				
	The Chair of the Examination Committee records in writing all required revisions, major or minor, agreed				chair
Signature by all members of Comprehensive Examination Report Form			X	chair	
37	Candidate returns to examination room	X			
38	Announcement of results				chair
39	Congratulate candidate (depending on outcome)				chair
40	Fill out form and Submission to PhD administrator Comprehensive Examination Report Form				chair X
41	Fill out form and Submission to PhD administrator AACSB Assurance of Learning (AOL) Rubrics		X	X	

Note: Stu = Student; Sup = Supervisor (and Co-supervisor); Com = Comprehensive Committee; Chair = Chairperson of Examination committee; Sprott = Sprott PhD/MSc Program office (PhD Director, PhD Administrator); FGPA = Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs (Dean office)

- A1: (* if unsatisfactory opportunity for re-examination, no more than 6 months after the first examination)
In case the committee finds that the written examination does not meet expectations, the student may be asked to redo the exam.
- A2: Decision may be arrived at by consensus or by formal vote; if formal vote, a simple majority is required.
- Satisfactorily
Used where, in the judgment of the examiners, the examination is satisfactorily.
 - Unsatisfactorily
Used where, in the judgment of the examiners, the examination is unsatisfactorily.