EEP PH.D. REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES (October 2012)

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Each student will identify a research advisory committee chair (her or his advisor) by the end of the second semester in residence. Together with the committee chair, the student will construct an advisory committee composed of at least 3 faculty members of the Department of Social Sciences, and at least one external member. The internal advisory committee members will be identified by the end of the third academic semester in residence. The internal members (and in some cases the external member as well) will administer the qualifying examination. Internal and external members will review the dissertation research proposal and final oral examination (dissertation defense).

QUALIFYING (COMPREHENSIVE) EXAMINATION

Qualifying examinations typically will be given after the completion of coursework and typically before the dissertation proposal. The committee chair and student will determine the exact timing of the exam. Either at the start of the semester in which the qualifying exam is to be taken or (preferably) during the previous semester, the student will meet with each advisory committee member individually to discuss the topics and materials with which the student should be familiar. These topics and materials may include the need for the student to develop a specific reading list that relate to the student’s dissertation research, the student’s major discipline(s), and/or the student’s completed coursework. The student will provide a compiled list of these topics, reading lists, and/or materials to the advisory committee for approval. The student and committee members will all sign the list, making it complete and public. Both the student and the committee chair will keep a copy of the signed list.

There will be both a written and an oral component to the qualifying exam. The written component of the exam will be taken first. In the week prior to the written exam, the committee chair (the student’s advisor) will request examination questions from the other advisory committee members and establish the time and place for the exam for the next week. Each committee member will submit a question or set of questions, for a total of three (if only internal members are involved) to four (if the external member is included) sets. The amount of time allowed for each member’s questions, whether the member’s questions can be answered with access to material (open book) or not (closed book), is at the discretion of each committee member. However, only one week total will be allowed for the written completion of all questions (Monday 8:00am through Friday 5:00pm). During the exam week, the advisory committee chair will administer the exam as per the instructions of the members.

The chair will collate and distribute the questions and the student’s answers to the entire committee. The committee will have one to two weeks to review the answers and determine whether to advance the student to the oral component of the exam. If the written exam is not of sufficient quality, a student may not advance to the oral exam and this would constitute a failure of the qualifying exam. The written exam would then need to be retaken at a later date, to be determined by the advisory committee. After committee review, the student will be provided with feedback on areas to improve.

The oral exam component should take place at least one week after the completion of the written exam, and will be scheduled to last no more than 3 hours. The advisory committee has the discretion to structure the oral questions according to its determination of what is necessary for the student to pass
the qualifying examination. Students should expect that if there are portions of the written exam that were insufficient or underdeveloped, these are topic areas that will likely be stressed in the oral exam.

A pass or fail grade will be given to the student for the exam as a whole, not separately for the written and oral components. The student’s exam results must be reported to the Graduate School on the Report on Qualifying Examination form. If a student fails the qualifying exam twice it cannot be retaken. In this case, a student may be transferred into the M.S. degree program, if this is acceptable to the advisory committee.

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL (CANDIDACY) EXAMINATION**

The student will work with the advisor and members of the advisory committee to develop a proposal for dissertation research. The advisory committee (including the outside member) will review the proposal. A public presentation of the proposal to both faculty and students is required. At the conclusion of the presentation, the student will meet with the advisory committee, which will provide feedback and determine whether or not to approve the proposal or suggests revisions. The research proposal must be approved by the advisory committee before the student is advanced to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. The student’s exam results must be reported to the Graduate School on the Report on the Research Proposal Examination form.

Progression to Ph.D. Candidacy will occur when both the qualifying exam and research proposal exam (presentation) have been completed and approved, and all coursework has been completed. At this point the student should complete a Petition to Enter Full-Time Research-Only Mode and submit it to the Graduate School. Candidacy indicates that the student can enter Research-Only mode.

**DISSERTATION**

The research undertaken as part of the doctoral degree program will be presented in the form of a dissertation that will be a permanent acquisition of the MTU Library. Any classified or proprietary material that cannot be made available to the public is not acceptable as a dissertation. Completing the dissertation requires preparation of the document according to Graduate School guidelines, and submitting the completed (and successfully defended) dissertation to the Graduate School. A completed draft of the dissertation must be approved by the advisory committee chair two weeks prior to the final examination.

The dissertation may take the form of either one long monograph (book-like) document with chapters signifying different sections or it may be comprised of three or four distinct manuscripts, which are expected to be submitted for publication as journal articles. The student and advisor will determine the style of dissertation, with input from the advisory committee. The manuscript option may be more appropriate for dissertations that are intended to be published as a series of peer-reviewed journal articles, whereas the longer chapter-focused dissertation would be more appropriate for a book.

The manuscript option should include at least one synthesizing chapter (an introduction and/or conclusion, or synthesis) in addition to the distinct manuscripts. This chapter(s) should explain how the manuscripts fit into a broader literature and provide summary remarks, policy recommendations, or other advice. It is expected that some or all of the manuscripts will be submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals before the dissertation defense.
**FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION (DISSERTATION DEFENSE)**

At a final oral exam primarily focused on the research and doctoral dissertation (which will be open to the public), the candidate should justify the validity of the methods and conclusions contained in the dissertation and should demonstrate familiarity with the significance of the study in relation to the existing body of knowledge. The student’s advisory committee will typically serve as the examining committee. The examining committee will consist of at least four members of the Graduate Faculty in all cases. At least one of these will be from outside the Department of Social Sciences. The primary advisor, or a co-advisor who serves as chair of the committee, must be from Social Sciences. While one co-advisor may be from outside of Social Sciences, it is recommended, but not required, that this co-advisor not fill the role of sole external member on the student's committee. A person external to Michigan Tech may be appointed as an ad hoc member of the Graduate Faculty to serve as the outside examining committee member. Persons who are not members of the Graduate Faculty may not serve as voting members of doctoral examination committees.

The examination will be scheduled by filing a Pre-defense form with the Graduate School. The Graduate School must approve of the examining committee, in consultation with the Chair of the Department of Social Sciences if necessary. The date of the examination must be at least two weeks following the approval of the completed draft of the dissertation by the advisor and distribution of the completed draft of the dissertation to the examining committee and the Graduate School. The student must complete any additional revisions to the dissertation based on a review by the advisory committee and the Graduate School staff. The examination may be given two terms following successful completion of the qualifying exam and one term following successful completion of the research proposal exam. The student’s final oral exam results must be reported to the Graduate School on the Verification of Final Degree Requirements form.