

Comprehensive Written Exam Policy

STOR Department

Effective: January, 2010

I. General Description

The STOR Department requires doctoral students to take and successfully complete a Comprehensive Written Exam (CWE) in their program of study. The CWE tests students' knowledge of the material in core first year courses. Doctoral students must take and successfully complete the Comprehensive Written Exam (CWE) as a first step towards obtaining their PhD. In most cases, students take the CWE just prior to their second year of graduate study.

II. Eligibility

The CWE is open only to students who are formally enrolled in one of the STOR Ph.D. programs. Students who are not in a STOR Ph.D. program (e.g. Masters students and students from other departments) should speak with the appropriate Director of Graduate Studies if they wish to take one or more papers of the CWE.

Under normal circumstances, students may take a given paper of the CWE only after they have completed the corresponding courses. In special cases a student may, with the approval of the Graduate Committee, take one or more papers of the CWE before completing the corresponding courses.

III. Scheduling of the CWE

The CWE is offered in mid to late August, usually during the week before the beginning of classes. Different papers are given on different days. A list of examinees for each program will be compiled by the exam committee chair at the end of the spring semester preceding the exam. Formally agreeing to take a paper of the CWE represents a binding commitment on the part of the student. If a student wishes to withdraw their name from the list of individuals taking a particular paper, they must receive the approval of the Graduate Committee. Such approval will be granted only in cases where students offer a compelling case for withdrawal in a timely fashion. Students who fail to attend the exam without good reason may fail the paper(s) they missed.

IV. Exemptions

No student may be exempted from taking any paper of the CWE. However, a student may, with the approval of the Graduate Committee, be excused from taking one or more core courses. To be granted an exemption from a course, a student should give evidence that he/she has covered the material in the course elsewhere, and that he/she has what the faculty judges to be a sufficient level of understanding of the material.

A student who is exempted from a course must still meet the credit requirements of his/her

program. Unless otherwise specified by the faculty, courses from which a student has been exempted should be replaced by courses in their program that are numbered 700 or above.

The decision to exempt a student from one or more graduate courses will be made independently of the decision to allow a student to pre-emptively take a paper of the CWE. Thus a student who is excused from taking a course must still take the corresponding paper of the CWE, and a student who pre-emptively takes and passes a paper of the CWE is not automatically excused from taking the corresponding courses.