



Department of Philosophy

Graduate Studies Guidebook

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Guidelines for Masters Students in Philosophy

I. Introduction

The following information is supplemental to that contained in the Graduate Catalog of The University. Students should become familiar with the policies and regulations set forth in the Graduate Catalog. In case of conflict between anything stated here and the Graduate Catalog, the latter takes precedence. The policies and regulations stated here are subject to change by vote of the graduate faculty in philosophy.

II. Retention Requirements

A student will be retained continuously in the program until completion of the degree providing the following conditions are met:

1. Students must maintain a GPA of a least 3.0 (A = 4.0). Should the student's GPA fall below that mark, a period of one semester will be allowed to correct the deficiency.
2. Students must demonstrate satisfactory progress in fulfilling the graduation requirements outlined below.

III. Course Requirements

1. A total of 33 semester hours are required. At least 24 hours of coursework for the degree must be at the 7000 level. Students with approved collateral areas may take up to 9 hours outside of the department.

Specific courses requirements are:

- a. Two courses in the history of philosophy.
- b. Two courses in theoretical philosophy (broadly, metaphysics and epistemology in either the continental or analytic tradition)
- c. Two courses in practical philosophy (ethics, social and political philosophy, philosophy of law, philosophy of art, philosophy of religion or approved related areas).
- d. Students must take at least one course from the analytic tradition and at least one from the continental tradition (a Distribution Requirement).

Students who are in doubt regarding which requirement a course satisfies should consult the Graduate Studies Coordinator for the Department.

Note: each course taught in the philosophy department that provides credits toward graduation will count towards at least one core area listed in a-c. Normally only courses with a pre-twentieth century concentration will count in area a; such courses will normally not count in areas b and c.

IV. Examinations

Comprehensive Examinations are offered three times a year, in August just prior to the beginning of the fall semester, in January just prior to the beginning of the spring semester, and in late May. Students must petition the Department to take the exams at other times.

All candidates for the M.A. in philosophy are required to take a Comprehensive Examination (an exam that is identical to the PhD Qualifying Examination). The Comprehensive Examination consists of two parts: one part covering Classical Philosophy and the other Modern Philosophy. Each part is administered during a four-hour period, for a total of eight hours. (Consult Appendix A of this Guidebook for detailed information about the examination.)

If the faculty committees find that the student's written examinations are acceptable, the results will be communicated to the Graduate School via the Comprehensive Examination Results Form. The link for that is:

<http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/form/comps2.php>.

If in the opinion of the faculty a student fails either part (or both parts) of the Comprehensive Examination, he or she may retake *once* that part (or parts) of the examination at the next regularly scheduled examination period. A student may not take any part of the Comprehensive Examination more than twice. Both parts of the examination must be passed to successfully complete the Comprehensive Examination. The results of the Comprehensive Examination process (positive or negative) will be communicated to the Graduate School on the Comprehensive Results Form within the same semester those results are achieved.

Results of the Comprehensive Examination are not graded in the way that courses are and so cannot be appealed; nor can they be changed after the form has been filed with the Graduate School. A second failure of either part of the Comprehensive Exam results in termination from the program. The judgment to terminate a student from the program can be appealed. The retention appeals process is formalized and must be followed in all cases. See the section on "Retention Appeals" in the University of Memphis Graduate School Graduate catalog for information and procedures regarding appeals.

V. Application for Admission to Candidacy

When a student has passed the Comprehensive exam, the Graduate Studies Coordinator will file the **Comprehensive Exam Results Form** with the Graduate School. The **Candidacy for the Master's Degree Form** must be filed by the student with the Graduate School by the last day to add classes in the semester in which the student wishes to graduate. If the forms are not filed by the deadline, the student will not graduate in that semester. Both forms first go to the Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. They are then forwarded to the Graduate School.

See The University of Memphis Academic Calendar for deadline dates. There are no exceptions. The forms may be obtained from the Graduate School website.

VI. Intent to Graduate Card

An **Intent to Graduate Card** must be submitted by the student online to the Graduate School by the last day to add classes in the semester in which the student wishes to graduate. This card also may be obtained from the Graduate School website.

EXAMPLE
Masters Student Record Form

Name _____ Admitted _____

Undergraduate Courses Required _____

Courses 33 credit hours
 At least 24 hours at 7000 level or above
 Non-philosophy: no more than 9 hours

Required

I. History of Philosophy (2)

Comprehensive Exam (2 parts)

1. _____

1. Ancient (date) _____

2. _____

2. Modern (date) _____

II. Theoretical Philosophy (2)

1. _____

2. _____

III. Practical Philosophy (2)

1. _____

2. _____

IV. Distribution (may duplicate I-III)

1. Analytic _____

2. Continental _____

Reading and Research (6 hours max.)

Degree Awarded _____

Guidelines for PhD Students in Philosophy

I. Introduction

This document lists requirements and procedures for doctoral students in philosophy at The University of Memphis. It is a supplement to the University of Memphis Graduate School Graduate Catalog, which takes precedence in any case of conflict. Students should be familiar with the policies and regulations set forth in the Graduate Catalog, and with the various pertinent deadlines published each semester by the Graduate School.

II. Retention Requirements

A student will be retained continuously in the program until completion of the degree providing the following conditions are met:

1. Students must maintain a GPA of a least 3.5 (A=4). Should the student's GPA fall below that mark, a period of one semester will be allowed to correct the deficiency. At the discretion of the Chair and the Graduate Studies Coordinator, this period may be extended one additional semester.
2. The student must demonstrate satisfactory progress in fulfilling the graduation requirements outlined below.

III. Course Requirements

1. A total of 72 credit hours above the Bachelor's degree. At least 60 credit hours must be earned at the 8000 level or higher. At least 24 hours must be earned while the student is in continuous residency in the program.
2. Students must take a core consisting of:
 - a. four courses in the history of philosophy (at least one in ancient and one in modern),
 - b. two courses in theoretical philosophy (metaphysics, epistemology, and related areas¹)
 - c. two courses in practical areas of philosophy (at least one must be in ethics).

Note: each course taught in the philosophy department and counting toward graduation will count toward at least one core requirement. Normally only courses with a pre-twentieth century concentration will count in area a; such courses will normally not count in areas b and c. Consult the Coordinator of Graduate Studies if in doubt about specific cases.

¹ Throughout this document, the designation 'metaphysics and epistemology' is construed broadly to include philosophy of science, philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, etc. in either the analytic or continental traditions.

At least one course must be a systematic study of a major figure. At least two courses must be in the analytic tradition, and two courses in the continental tradition. These will normally be courses in the eight course core described in the preceding paragraph.

3. Students must take the Proseminar (8001), normally during their first year.
4. Students must also take Teaching Skills (8002), normally during their third year.
(Note: Teaching Skills is required, but the course supplies no credits towards total hours needed for graduation.)

Students may be granted up to 18 hours credit for graduate work in philosophy at an institution other than The University of Memphis. These hours may be counted toward satisfaction of the core requirements.

However, at least half of the core must be taken at The University of Memphis, i.e., at least two courses in history, one in theoretical philosophy (metaphysics and epistemology), one in a practical area of philosophy, and of those one in the analytic tradition and one in the continental tradition.

Students entering the program who have not taken one of the courses required for admission (i.e., history of ancient philosophy, history of modern philosophy, ethics, and intermediate logic) must make up that deficiency at the earliest opportunity. Students who fit this description should consult with the Coordinator of Graduate Studies and their Advisory committee in order to develop a course of study that rectifies the deficiency.

For students who have attained an M.A. or a J.D., up to 30 hours of graduate credit may be accepted toward the PhD. A minimum of 42 hours of graduate credit is required beyond those supplied by those degrees. At least 36 hours of graduate credit must be at the 8000 level or higher. More hours may be required at the discretion of the student's advisory or dissertation committee.

A minimum of six dissertation credit hours (PHIL 9000) is required for the PhD. No more than 12 credit hours of dissertation will count toward satisfying the total number of graduate hours required for the PhD.

A note on incompletes: Taking incompletes should be an exceptional move. Taking an incomplete in any given class should not be presumed to be an option. If a student feels the need to take an incomplete in a course, the student should discuss the matter with the instructor and arrive at a clear plan and timetable for completing the work in that course. Of course, what constitutes an appropriate plan and timetable is at the discretion of the instructor.

If a student feels the need to take more than a single Incomplete in a semester, the student must do more than clear this with the relevant instructors; the student must also get permission from the Graduate Studies Coordinator and the Chair of the Department.

In the event that a student does take an incomplete, it is the student's responsibility to complete the course work and meet the deadline for incomplete grades. The student should not rely on the instructor to remember these deadlines. Failure to meet the deadlines will result in the incomplete grade turning into an F. Consult the Graduate School website for relevant deadlines.

IV. Examinations

1. Qualifying Examination

The PhD Qualifying Examination is identical to the M.A. Comprehensive Examination and so one may refer to page 4 (and to Appendix A) of this Guidebook for information about the Qualifying Examination. Note here that to be assured of continued financial support (i.e., to be assured of retaining one's fellowship or funding as a GA), the student must continue to make satisfactory progress in the program. Satisfactory progress includes passing the Qualifying Examination by the time indicated in Appendix A (other things being equal, January of the second year in residence).

2. Comprehensive Examination

The PhD Comprehensive Examination has two parts, a part covering Practical philosophy and the other covering Theoretical philosophy. These are discussed in detail in Appendix B of this Guidebook. The student is expected to pass the Comprehensive Examination no later than the end of the third year or the sixth semester in the program.

V. Language Requirements

PhD students will be expected to acquire proficiency appropriate to their areas of research in at least **two** languages. An exception to this rule may arise when a student's dissertation concerns an area primarily discussed by English-speaking philosophers (e.g., the philosophies of Hume, Russell, Quine, etc.). In such a case, the student may be allowed to substitute one foreign language test for a test in Logic. The student must receive permission from the Graduate Studies Coordinator (in consultation with the Student's Advisory Committee) in order to exercise such an option. The dissertation committee will be responsible for assuring that the student has attained the degree of expertise in foreign languages or logic that is necessary to pursue scholarly research in his or her chosen field.

The **minimal** requirement for all students is that they demonstrate by examination/translation a reading knowledge of two of the following: Classical Greek, Latin, French, or German. Other languages may be substituted if they can be shown to be of greater relevance to the student's research area. Petition must be made to the Graduate Studies Coordinator to substitute another language (or logic) for the language requirement. The petition should clearly explain why the alternative is of greater relevance to the student's research area than Greek, Latin, French, or German. Petitions will be reviewed by the Graduate Studies Coordinator and the Student's Advisory/Dissertation Committee.

The nature of the language examination/translation requirement will be defined by each of the Philosophy Department's language examination supervisors -- the German language supervisor, the French language supervisor, the Greek/Latin supervisor. Students may also petition to do a translation project instead of an examination. Petition should be made to the Graduate Studies Coordinator. (Note: petitions to substitute translation projects for language examinations will not be granted unless, among other things, the Graduate Studies Coordinator determines that there are faculty members with relevant expertise available to undertake such projects.)

VI. Committees

Each student in the PhD program will be assisted and monitored through two committees: the student's advisory committee and the dissertation committee.

Student's Advisory Committee

Upon admission to the PhD program each student is assigned an advisory committee. This assignment is made by the Graduate Studies Coordinator in consultation with the graduate faculty of the Department of Philosophy. The committee consists of three members (designated history, continental, and analytic—when possible). The chair of the advisory committee is appointed by the Graduate Studies Coordinator.

Each student will meet with his or her advisory committee at least twice a year. The advisory committee will provide continuity throughout the student's early years in the program and will be responsible for advising the student on his or her overall progress, keeping an eye on course selection, anticipating the need to develop particular skills or areas of expertise, and encouraging the student at the appropriate time to formulate a dissertation topic and form a dissertation committee.

Meetings with the advisory committee will provide an opportunity to address complaints or suggestions concerning the program, as well as an opportunity to inform the student about whether he or she is meeting department expectations.

Dissertation Committee

At the end of the third year the student, in consultation with her or his advisory committee, will choose a dissertation director, and subsequently a dissertation committee. The dissertation committee will be comprised of at least four members: the student's director, and three or more additional readers. At least one of the additional readers must be working in an area of philosophy that is not related to the dissertation topic. All members of the dissertation committee must have graduate faculty status. The University bestows the designation "Graduate Faculty" upon faculty following review of their credentials and recommendation by their colleagues. The University maintains six levels of graduate faculty: (1) Full, (2) Associate, (3) Adjunct, (4) Adjunct Research Co-Mentor, (5) Affiliate, and (6) Adjunct Teaching.

Only Full graduate faculty members may chair doctoral committees. Full or Associate graduate faculty may serve as a voting member on doctoral committees. Only one adjunct or affiliate graduate faculty member may serve as a voting member on doctoral committees.

This committee should be formed no later than the beginning of the student's fourth year.

The dissertation committee will meet twice a year, even in the absence of the student (for example, if the student is abroad doing research). The student and the director will write a brief report of progress made to be circulated in advance of the meeting. In addition, a sample of written work will be presented in advance to the committee, selected by the student in consultation with her or his director.

As well as monitoring progress on the dissertation and taking over the responsibilities of the student's advisory committee, it will be the task of the dissertation committee to review the overall profile of the student with respect to job placement and to advise the student on ways of improving that profile.

One of the tasks of the dissertation committee is to help the student formulate an appropriate research topic. Approval of the topic depends upon the availability of a supervisor, whether the student has—or has adequate plans to secure—the basic skills necessary for the topic (e.g. languages), whether the necessary materials are readily available, and whether the topic can reasonably be expected to be completed in the time available.

VII. Annual Review of PhD Students

At the end of each spring semester the Philosophy Department faculty meets to discuss the progress of PhD students; their academic progress, as well as their performance as teaching and/or research assistants and instructors. If, in the opinion of the faculty, a student is not making adequate progress in the program, the student will be asked to meet with the Graduate Studies Coordinator to notify him or her of this and to discuss the student's future in our program.

VIII. Dissertation Proposal Defense

Before beginning the dissertation, a student must submit a dissertation proposal (see Appendix C for more information regarding the dissertation proposal) and pass a 1.5 hour oral examination on the proposal. The oral exam will cover the feasibility of the project, the student's preparation for carrying out the project, and the student's knowledge of the area of philosophy in which the proposed dissertation falls.

When student has passed the Qualifying Examination, the Comprehensive Examination, the Dissertation Proposal Defense and has, in addition, satisfied all course and language requirements, a Departmental Recommendation of Admission to Doctoral Candidacy (Late) form will be submitted to the Graduate School. Late Doctoral Candidacy status means the dissertation is the only remaining requirement for the doctoral degree. The student is then classified as ABD (all but dissertation).

IX. Dissertation

An acceptable dissertation is a requirement for all doctoral degrees. The dissertation must represent a significant scholarly effort that culminates in an original contribution to the field of inquiry. It should reflect the candidate's ability to conduct independent research and interpret in a logical manner the facts and phenomena revealed by the research.

Students must follow the University of Memphis Graduate School policies concerning theses and dissertations. These policies can be found on the Graduate School website.

X. Oral Dissertation Defense

After completion of the dissertation and all course and language requirements, candidates will be given a final oral examination dealing primarily with the dissertation and its relation to the candidate's major field of study. The exam will be conducted by the student's dissertation committee, and will be open to the public.

XI. Application for Admission to Candidacy

The **Application for Admission to Candidacy for the Ph.D. Degree** must be filed with the Graduate School by the last day to add classes for the semester in which the student wishes to graduate. See The University of Memphis Academic Calendar for deadline dates. There are no exceptions. The form may be obtained from the Graduate School website.

XII. Intent to Graduate Card

An **Intent to Graduate Card** must be filed with the Graduate School by the last day to add classes of the semester in which the student wishes to graduate. This form is obtainable from the Graduate School website.

EXAMPLE
PhD Student Record Form

Name: _____
_____ "U" ID: _____

SS#:

Date of admission by Department: _____

by Graduate School:

Status: _____

I. Course Requirements

Courses: 72 hours (6 hours of dissertation max.)
60 hours minimum at 7000/8000 level
24 hours earned while in continuous residency

Proseminar: _____

Core Courses

a. History of Philosophy (4 min. with min. of one ancient, one modern)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

b. Theoretical Philosophy (2 min.)

1. _____
2. _____

c. Practical Philosophy (2 min., at least one in ethics)

1. _____
2. _____

Distribution Requirement (may duplicate above core courses)

a. Study of a Major Figure (1 min.)

1. _____

b. Analytic Courses (2 min.)

1. _____
2. _____

c. Continental Courses (2 min.)

1. _____
2. _____

II. Examinations

Qualifying Exam

First Attempt Ancient: _____ date
Outcome: _____

Modern: _____ date
Outcome: _____

Second Attempt Ancient: _____(date)
Outcome: _____

Modern: _____(date)
Outcome: _____

Comprehensive Exam

First Attempt Theoretical: _____(date)
Outcome: _____

Practical: _____(date)
Outcome: _____

Second Attempt Theoretical: _____(date)
Outcome: _____

Practical: _____(date)
Outcome: _____

III. Student's Committee 1. _____(chair)
2. _____
3. _____

IV. Dissertation Proposal Defense _____(date)

V. Language 1. _____ (date)
2. _____ (date)

IV. Dissertation

Committee 1. _____(chair) 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____

Dissertation topic _____

Oral Defense Outcome: _____ (date)

VII. Application to Candidacy _____ (date)

VIII. Degree Awarded _____

Appendix A

PhD Qualifying Examination/MA Comprehensive Examination

1. Guidelines for the Classical Philosophy part of the PhD Qualifying/MA Comprehensive Examination

Nature of the Examination

The PhD Qualifying/MA Comprehensive Examination in Classical Philosophy (henceforth, the Classical Exam), is a four hour examination administered in a classroom (e.g., a computer lab). PhD students must sit for this exam prior to sitting for their Comprehensive Exams. They must pass the exam by January of their second year in residence. (PhD students may petition the faculty to extend the deadline for passing their Classical Exam. Such petitions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, e.g., medical leave, family emergency.) MA students may sit for the exam whenever they feel prepared to do so. The examination topic along with a specific list of primary and secondary source readings, is published every year on the department website in late May. The exam is offered toward the end of May and August, and in early January of every year. The topic stays the same until the May sitting, the day after which a new topic is announced. The exam presents five questions from which the student must choose two in response to which he/she will compose his/her essays. Typically, students will be required to answer questions on both Plato and Aristotle, but normally students have a choice between writing essays on either Presocratic or Hellenistic period philosophers. During the examination, students are strictly prohibited from acquiring help in composing their essays by consulting notes, books, or other persons. They may seek clarification of the examination questions or technical help from the proctor, but beyond these sorts of things, they are not permitted any type of assistance.

Purpose of the Examination

In a diverse department, history is our shared, common language. It is what can be presupposed in discussion and for pedagogical purposes in courses. Thus, it is desirable that students become articulate in this common language as early as possible. It is expected that in preparation for exams students will be reading, more or less on their own, at least some new, difficult material. Having in mind specific issues or topics helps one focus one's reading. The purpose of an exam in Classical Philosophy in particular is to encourage students to develop a command of basic information about the history of ancient philosophy. Acquiring command of this material is important for both PhD students and MA students. It is so for several reasons, but two of the most important are as follows. First, a solid understanding of the history of ancient philosophy provides a graduate student with knowledge useful for more advanced study and research. Nearly all the problems of philosophy, including those that involve investigations in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics,

political philosophy, philosophy of science, etc. were first raised and discussed during the ancient period. Understanding these discussions helps a student acquire a more complete grasp of the nature of these philosophical problems and the ways in which they have been addressed. It also helps the student better to understand and appreciate the current debates about these problems by bringing him/her to grasp the place of those debates in the continuum of philosophical inquiry. Second, acquiring a command of the history of ancient philosophy is useful for preparing students to teach at the undergraduate level. Many introductory courses, including our own 1101, include readings in the history of ancient philosophy. So committing ancient philosophical doctrines and arguments to memory will greatly enhance a graduate student's ability to teach his/her own introductory classes, and perhaps, with some further study, even a course in the history of ancient philosophy.

What the Ancient Examination Committee is Looking For

The committee looks for clearly written and well-organized essays that answer the questions posed in a complete and accurate manner. But merely accurately reporting philosophical doctrines is not sufficient for receiving a passing grade on the exam. The committee expects to see a philosophical essay. By this we mean that the essay presents good philosophical discussions. It can do so in different ways. One way is for the student to offer persuasive critical discussions of the arguments which the ancient philosophers give for the positions they defend. Another way is for the student to provide arguments of his/her own for one or another interpretation of an ancient philosophical doctrine. Of course, these ways of creating a philosophical essay can also be combined, and there are certainly other ways in which a student might exhibit his/her philosophical ability in the essay. The main point is that we expect to see some good philosophical work in the essay. We expect that a PhD student should be able to compose an essay that satisfies these criteria to a greater extent than an MA student.

The Assessment of the Examination

The exam committee reads and discusses each examination. It then strives to reach a decision about whether or not the exam falls into one of the following categories: Pass with Distinction at the PhD level, Pass at the PhD level, Pass at the MA level but not at the PhD level, Fail at both the PhD and MA levels. These evaluations are all based on the extent to which the essay meets or fails to meet the criteria outlined in the previous section. The examination committee does not expect the student to have a command of material that would be appropriate for a student specializing in ancient philosophy. If the student demonstrates a solid understanding of the fundamental doctrines and arguments of the ancient philosophers (i.e., the doctrines and arguments relevant to the topic of the examination), that should be sufficient for a passing grade. Knowledge of idiosyncratic discussions in the secondary literature is neither expected nor desired for this examination.

If the committee cannot reach a unanimous decision about the evaluation of an exam, it brings its report before the rest of the faculty and the faculty as a whole will render a decision about the exam after discussing the committee's report.

2. Guidelines for the Modern Philosophy Part of the PhD Qualifying/MA Comprehensive Examination

Nature of the Examination

The PhD Qualifying/MA Comprehensive Examination in Modern Philosophy (henceforth, the Modern Exam), is a four hour examination administered in a classroom (e.g., a computer lab). PhD students must sit for this exam prior to sitting for their Comprehensive Exams. They must pass the exam by January of their second year in residence. (PhD students may petition the faculty to extend the deadline for passing their Modern Qualifying Exam. Such petitions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, e.g., medical leave, family emergency.) MA students may sit for the exam whenever they feel prepared to do so. Unlike other Qualifying Exams or Comprehensive Exams, the examination topic and reading list does not change. The topic is always *Knowledge and Reality* and the reading list is attached below. The exam presents one question, usually allowing some choice of figures from the reading list. Typically, students are required to show familiarity with major figures in the Rationalist tradition, major figures in the Empiricist tradition, and Kant. They will be expected to compare the positions of these figures with each other, and understand the extent to which these positions have been developed as a response to other positions on the same or related topics. The exam is offered toward the end of May and August, and in early January of every year. The January sitting in a PhD student's second year of residence is normally reserved only for re-takes of a previously failed Modern Exam. During the examination, students are strictly prohibited from acquiring help in composing their essays by consulting notes, books, or other persons. They may seek clarification of the examination questions or technical help from the proctor, but beyond these sorts of things, they are not permitted any type of assistance.

Purpose of the Examination

In a diverse department, history is our shared, common language. It is what can be presupposed in discussion and for pedagogical purposes in courses. Thus, it is desirable that students become articulate in this common language as early as possible. It is expected that in preparation for exams students will be reading, more or less on their own, at least some new, difficult material. The purpose of an exam in Modern Philosophy in particular is to encourage students to develop an understanding of the development of and relationships among the most important positions in the history of modern philosophy. Acquiring command of this material is important for both PhD students and MA students. It is so for several reasons, but two of the most important are as follows. First, a solid understanding of the history of modern philosophy provides a graduate student with knowledge useful for more advanced study and research in modern philosophy and in subsequent periods, including contemporary philosophy. This background helps the students better to

understand and appreciate the current debates on related positions by bringing them to grasp the place of those debates in the continuum of philosophical inquiry. Second, acquiring a command of the history of modern philosophy is important for preparing students to teach at the undergraduate level. Many introductory and intermediary courses, include readings in and reference to the history of modern philosophy.

What the Modern Examination Committee is Looking For

The committee looks for clearly written and well-organized essays that answer the question posed in a comprehensive and precise manner. Merely summarising the conclusions of a position in the history of modern philosophy, however, is not sufficient. The committee expects a philosophical essay that engages the issues involved in the position and the rationale given for the position, so that the essay embodies a mature philosophical discussion. It should include critical discussion of the content of and the arguments for a position held by a thinker of the modern period; it should also include an exposition of the relationship of this content and this argumentation with that of other thinkers of the modern period, and with their predecessors and successors as well. The main point is that we expect to see some good philosophical work in the essay. We expect that a PhD student should be able to compose an essay that satisfies these criteria to a greater extent than an MA student.

The Assessment of the Examination

The exam committee reads and discusses each examination. It then strives to reach a decision about whether or not the exam falls into one of the following categories: Pass with Distinction at the PhD level, Pass at the PhD level, Pass at the MA level but not at the PhD level, Fail at both the PhD and MA levels. These evaluations are all based on the extent to which the essay meets or fails to meet the criteria outlined in the previous section. The examination committee does not expect the student to have a command of material that would be appropriate for a student specializing in modern philosophy. If the student demonstrates a solid understanding of the fundamental doctrines and arguments of the modern philosophers, and the relationships among them, that should be sufficient for a passing grade. Knowledge of idiosyncratic discussions in the secondary literature is neither expected nor desired for this examination.

If the committee cannot reach a unanimous decision about the evaluation of an exam, it brings its report before the rest of the faculty and the faculty as a whole will render a decision about the exam after discussing the committee's report.

Appendix B

1. Guidelines for the Practical Part of the PhD Comprehensive Examination

The purpose of the Ph.D. comprehensive examination in philosophy is to evaluate the student's overall understanding of, and ability to contribute to, the discipline of philosophy. The Ph.D. comprehensive examination in philosophy involves two areas,

theoretical philosophy and practical philosophy. The specific schedule for these examinations will be announced each year by the Graduate Coordinator. The student is expected to take the examination in one of these areas in May at the end of their second year in the program, and an examination in the other area in August before beginning their third year. If a student fails the examination on the area taken in May, it must be re-taken along with the examination on the second area in August before the beginning of their third year. If the student fails the examination on the area first taken in August, it must be re-taken in January of their third year. The comprehensive examination in both the theoretical and practical areas must have been passed by the student's sixth semester in the program. (Students may petition the faculty to extend the deadline for passing their comprehensive examination. Such petitions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, e.g., medical leave, family emergency.)

The Practical portion of the Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination requires two essays written in response to questions announced two weeks before the essays are due, and a half hour oral defense of the essays. Questions are announced in three areas: core ethical theory, contemporary ethical theory, and social and political philosophy. Reading lists and topics with which the questions deal are posted in May of each year and are effective through May of the following year. The student must write an essay on the core ethical theory question, and a second essay on either the social-political question or contemporary ethical theory question.

The essays should be approximately 15 double spaced pages in length and are evaluated first of all with regard to clarity of expression and accuracy of exposition. However, the papers are expected to be primarily critical rather than expository, showing an awareness of relationships among the ideas discussed, and exhibiting evidence of philosophical understanding of the issues raised by the questions. Finally, it is expected that the papers will incorporate the student's own arguments, appraisals and conclusions about issues raised by the questions. During the period of time in which the student is composing her essays, she may consult primary and secondary literature and notes she has taken. However, the student is strictly prohibited from acquiring any assistance from other persons in order to formulate her thesis and arguments or to write her essays.

The oral defense of the essays will be scheduled approximately one week after the essays are submitted. Student will be expected to further clarify, explain, and defend the arguments and conclusions developed in their essays. At the conclusion of the oral defense, depending on the judgment of the committee regarding the success of the student in writing and defending the essay according to the foregoing criteria, one of the following grades will be assigned to the examination: Pass with Distinction, Pass, Revise and Resubmit, Fail. If a grade of Revise and Resubmit is assigned, the student will be given an additional week to revise and resubmit the essay. Although the Committee will inform the student of the central deficiencies of the exam following the oral, the Committee members cannot jointly or individually commit to consultation on essay

revisions; neither are they barred from doing so. The committee may or may not require an additional oral defense of the resubmitted essay. The resubmitted essay will be given a pass or fail grade.

2. Guidelines for the Theoretical Part of the PhD Comprehensive Examination in Philosophy

I. Role and Purpose of the Theoretical Examination

The hallmark of the Ph.D. program at the University of Memphis since its inception in 1990 has been what the Department calls “pluralism.” By “pluralism” we have meant primarily the fruitful interaction of philosophers and philosophy from the analytic and continental philosophical traditions, based on a sound appreciation of the common background of the two traditions—the pre-twentieth century history of philosophy.

The Ph.D. Theoretical Comprehensive Examination is arguably the capstone to our aim of pluralism in graduate philosophical education. It comes at the end of two years of coursework devoted largely to the pluralistic mission of the department, and near the beginning of the student’s more specialized research leading to a dissertation—which may or may not cross or integrate traditions.

The broad goal of the examination is *to induce students to think philosophically about a traditional issue in theoretical philosophy*, drawing on skills they have acquired from study of philosophers from both the continental and the analytic traditions. Typically, this involves drawing from the methods, arguments, and positions of several philosophers from each tradition; necessarily, it involves drawing from some philosophers from each tradition. Ideally, the outcome is a philosopher who can embark on significant research—i.e., a dissertation project—and who can motivate and explain that project even to mature philosophers who are conversant only with one of the two traditions.

More specifically, the exam has three goals. The first goal is for the student *to gain an ability to study a sub-field of or problem in philosophy independently*. The second goal is for the student *to achieve a basic understanding of the topic or problem to be examined*. The third goal is for the student *to articulate this knowledge in a written examination paper and in face-to-face oral questioning* of his or her own views on the material of the examination.

II. Nature of the Theoretical Examination

The Theoretical Comprehensive Examination will have the same basic timetable, structure, and evaluative categories as the Practical Comprehensive Examination, but it differs from the Practical Comprehensive Examination in some important ways. It consists of one take-home essay and an oral examination. Students will be required to submit one essay of approximately 4500 words, or fifteen double-spaced pages, presenting a philosophical account of a problem in theoretical philosophy that draws on, and discusses, relevant contemporary analytic and continental approaches to that problem. As with the Practical Comprehensive Examination, there will be a required reading list. The Committee will post exam questions on the website two weeks prior to the essay submission deadline. The thirty-minute oral examination will consist of a

discussion between committee members and the student. During the period of time in which the student is composing his take-home essay, he may consult primary and secondary literature and notes he has taken. However, the student is strictly prohibited from acquiring any assistance from other persons in order to formulate his thesis and arguments or to write his essay.

III. General Comprehensive Examination Schedule. The purpose of the Ph.D. comprehensive examination in philosophy is to evaluate the student's overall understanding of, and ability to contribute to, the discipline of philosophy. The Ph.D. comprehensive examination in philosophy involves two areas, theoretical philosophy and practical philosophy. The student is expected to take the examination in one of these areas in May at the end of their second year in the program, and an examination in the other area in August before beginning their third year. If a student fails the examination on the area taken in May, it must be retaken along with the examination on the second area in August before the beginning of their third year. If the student fails the examination on the area first taken in August, it must be retaken in January of their third year. The comprehensive examination in both the theoretical and practical areas must have been passed by the student's sixth semester in the program. Students may petition the faculty to extend the deadline for passing their comprehensive examination. Such petitions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be granted only in exceptional circumstances (e.g., medical leave, family emergency).

Exam Periods and Submission Deadlines. There are three exam periods, scheduled by the Graduate Coordinator: one in January, one in May, and one in August. Exam periods and essay submission deadlines are set and announced by the Graduate Coordinator. The main exam periods are May and August. The January period is reserved for special cases by permission only.

IV. Theoretical Examination Specifications

Examination Format. The theoretical exam consists of two parts: one written essay and (at least) one thirty-minute oral examination. (See below, "Expectations for the Oral Defense" about the possible case of two oral examinations.)

Examination Requirements:

(1) **Essay:** The essay written in response to the examination question posed is to be written over the course of two weeks and should run to approximately 4500 words, or 15 double-spaced pages, including footnotes and excluding the bibliography.

(2) **Oral Defense of the Essay:** The oral defense of the essays will be scheduled for approximately one week after the essays are submitted.

Examination Topics. There is one topic for the theoretical examination per academic year (e.g., "world," "intentionality"), announced each May.

Examination Questions. Twice per year, the committee announces a single specific question on the posted annual topic: once, two weeks prior to the May essay

submission deadline, and again two weeks prior to the August essay submission deadline. Multiple questions on the annual topic are posed over the course of the year, but only one question is posed per examination period.

Examination Reading List. The annual exam topic and its reading list of analytic and continental texts are posted in May of each year and are effective through May of the following year. No reading guide or thematic overview accompanies the reading list.

V. Expectations for the Theoretical Examination

Expectations for the Essay

The essay should present a single line of argument in answer to the particular question. It should not primarily be a work of exegesis. Exegetical work should be limited by the requirement that it contribute directly to the line of argument being advanced. The essay should approximate a seminar paper both in developing and defending a single line of argument and in drawing on original and secondary resources only when in the service of developing the essay's argument. Potted book reports of the work of individual figures and bland compare-and-contrast essays will be grounds for a grade of "fail" (not "revise and resubmit"). While the Committee expects that both analytic and continental philosophical traditions be represented in the essay, there is no expectation that the representation of these traditions be perfectly balanced. Further, although the Committee expects some element of comparison and/or contrast concerning the work representative of these traditions, there is no expectation that these comparisons/contrasts be direct point-by-point catalogues. What *is* expected is that the line of argumentation advanced is original to the student and, of course, that *the argument is addressed to the examination question*.

Essays are also evaluated with regard to clarity of expression and accuracy of exposition. However, the papers are expected to be primarily critical rather than expository, showing an awareness of relationships among the ideas discussed, and exhibiting evidence of philosophical understanding of the issues that are raised by the question posed. Essays must incorporate the student's own arguments, appraisals and conclusions about issues raised by the examination question addressed.

Expectations for the Oral Defense

Students will be called to clarify, explain, and defend the argument developed in their essays. Examiners will raise objections, seek deeper explanations, and explore alternative theories in the oral portion of the exam. Students' performance will be evaluated in terms of their ability to think on their feet, willingness to take and explore a point, and their ability to explain their arguments across analytic-continental lines. The oral examination is also the occasion to test the student's broader familiarity and facility with texts on the reading list not highlighted in the submitted essay. While a deep understanding of each and every text on the reading list is not required, a deep understanding of some and a passing fluency with all is expected. In the case of essays

that draw disproportionately from either tradition, the Committee may wish to probe the student's facility with texts from the other tradition.

VI. Assessment of the Theoretical Examination

Examination Grading. Prior to the oral examination, Committee members evaluate and score the written essays. At the conclusion of the oral defense, depending on the judgment of the Committee regarding the success of the student in writing and defending the essay according to the above criteria, one of the following grades will be assigned to the examination as a whole:

Pass with Distinction

Pass

Revise and Resubmit (Essay Resubmission Required)

Fail

Grade of Revise and Resubmit. If a grade of Revise and Resubmit is assigned, the student will be given an additional week to revise and resubmit the essay. Although the Committee will inform the student of the central deficiencies of the exam following the oral, the Committee members cannot jointly or individually commit to consultation on essay revisions; neither are they barred from doing so. The Committee may or may not require an additional oral defense of the resubmitted essay. The resubmitted essay will be given a pass or fail grade.

VII. Additional Information Sources for Examination Preparation

There are two new informal options for further specifications on the Committee's expectations.

- a. The Committee's announcement of the theoretical examination topic each May will be followed by a meeting with the entire Committee and all students planning to take the theoretical exam that year (and other interested students). This meeting provides students with their primary opportunity to ask individualized questions about the exam's format, the Committee's expectations, etc.
- b. The Committee will add a "FAQs" page to the department website, on which to post and answer common questions regarding the theoretical exam.

SOME FAQ'S

1. Why written exams?

Written exams serve a twofold purpose. First, the sorts of organizational and writing skills needed for exams are just the sorts of skills involved in writing lectures for courses as well as articles for publication. Second, the Ph.D. is a research degree. To be an effective researcher

one needs a command of a body of material. Written exams and preparation for written exams foster such command and give one a chance to exhibit it.

2. Why oral exams?

The oral portions of the Comprehensive Exam gives examiners a chance to probe and students a chance to explain and amplify answers.

Public presentation and defense of one's work and views is a feature of philosophical life. Oral exams are a small but useful experience in this form of activity. Job interviews are also a fact of life. Oral exams can be a useful preparation for this necessity.

3. Why a proseminar?

Publication is also a fact of academic life. Students will be encouraged to submit work for publication at the appropriate stage of their graduate careers. In the proseminar students become familiar with factors affecting publishability in philosophy, so that they may begin thinking in terms of these factors from the beginning of their graduate careers.

Appendix C
Dissertation Proposals

A dissertation proposal should contain the following:

1. table of contents for the proposal
2. abstract (150 words)
3. five to ten page summary of the dissertation project
4. five to ten page description of the contents of each chapter
5. schedule for completion
6. bibliography (as complete as possible)
7. curriculum vitae

Appendix D

Ideal Timetables

Ideal Timetable for MA

Date/Window	Task
January of 1st year	Meet with Coordinator of Admissions to discuss future in Philosophy
May of 1st year	First Part of the Comprehensive Exam
August prior to 2nd year	Second Part of the Comprehensive Exam
Fall of 2nd year	Begin application process for PhD programs if desired, prepare writing sample for applications
Jan-Feb of 2nd year	Typical application deadlines for PhD programs and Law Schools/Re-take exam not passed on first attempt
First week of spring semester 2nd year	File Application for Admission to Candidacy for the Master's Degree form with Graduate School and Intent to Graduate Card
May of 2nd year	Graduate with MA

Ideal Timetable for PhD

Date/Window	Task
May of 1st year	First Part of the Qualifying Examination
August prior to 2nd year	Second Part of the Qualifying Examination
May of 2nd year	First Part of the Comprehensive Examination
August prior to 3rd year	Second Part of the Comprehensive Examination
Spring semester of 2nd year	In consultation with Advisory Committee, choice of a teaching mentor
Summer of 2nd year	Develop syllabus for course and choose texts
Summer of 2nd year	First Language Exam
Fall of 3rd year	Begin teaching your own courses. Choose dissertation director, dissertation committee, and formulate ideas regarding dissertation topic.
Spring semester of 3rd year	Write dissertation proposal
End of Spring semester of 3rd year	Defend dissertation proposal
Summer of 3 rd year	Second Language Exam Begin writing dissertation
Fall and Spring semesters of 4th year	Continue writing dissertation
Summer of 4 th year	Complete First Draft of the Dissertation. Prepare writing

	sample and CV for job market
Early Fall semester of 5th year	Submit dissertation draft to committee so that they can write review letters.
Fall semester of 5th year	Mock interview Mock Job Talk Send out job applications
December of 5th year	American Philosophical Association Meeting for interviews
January-April of 5th year	Potential call back times
End of Spring semester of 5th year	Revise dissertation, defend dissertation
May of 5th year	Graduation