**EECE PhD Qualifier**

* PhD students are required to complete the PhD qualifier exam at the earliest by the end of the second semester and no later than the end of the third semester of their PhD degree program.
* The purpose of the qualifier exam is to assess if a student has necessary foundation to i) identify an important, unsolved, and feasible research problem in the field of study; ii) develop a feasible research methodology / investigation; and iii) communicate the research work to the scientific community.
* The qualifier exam is comprised of a written section followed by an oral examination / defense.
* For written examination, each student will develop a research document proposing original research work in the student's field of study. The document should be comprised of the following sections: i) a title page, ii) a brief research abstract; iii) introduction; iv) background information along with all relevant literature (goal of this section is to position the proposed research work within the context of the current scientific knowledge and provide sufficient justification for avenues of innovation and contribution); v) proposed methodology; vi) feasibility of the proposed methodology; and vii) bibliography.
* The written document should be around 2-3 pages long (the title page and bibliography sections do not count)
* The written document should be submitted to the advisory or dissertation committee at least 5 working days in advance of the oral examination.
* For oral examination, the student will orally present the proposed original work to the student’s advisory or dissertation committee members. After the oral presentation, the committee may pose questions to the student on the proposed research work as well as in the student’s foundational knowledge in the field of study.
* Though it is beneficial, the research proposal need not be aligned with the eventual dissertation proposal presented by the student during the PhD comprehensive examination.

**EECE PhD Comprehensive Exam**

* PhD students are required to complete the comprehensive examination after completing the required coursework (typically in the third semester for PhD students with a MS degree and in the sixth semester for PhD students with a BS degree).
* As part of the comprehensive exam, each student is required to prepare a proposal for conducting doctoral dissertation research work and submit to the dissertation committee of the student for evaluation.
* The structure of the written proposal and the oral defense to the dissertation committee is similar to that of the qualifier exam as described above.
* In contrast to the qualifier exam, more emphasis is placed on the availability of research resources and feasibility of the proposed methodology to ensure timely completion of the dissertation work. For example, a student may demonstrate feasibility with preliminary results.
* The written document should be submitted to the dissertation committee at least 5 working days in advance of the oral examination.