

Comprehensive Exam

Comprehensive Exam

The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to test a student's acquisition of knowledge in core areas of study. The cumulative exam will be disseminated and completed as a take home exam. The comprehensive exam will only be offered during the Spring semester effective May 2023. The exam will consist of 6 questions options. Students will be required to choose 4 questions to respond too. The questions will be provided via email the 4th week of Spring term or by the date agreed upon with the Director of the MACD program. A student will have 7 days from Friday at 9am to Friday 9am the following week to respond to all questions. This format will allow the use of notes and other sources (books, articles). Students are not allowed to discuss any part of the exam with others.

As part of the preparation process for the Comprehensive Exam students will be required to take a Comprehensive Exam Preparation Course (currently Directed Readings CD 6124). This course will only be offered in the Fall semesters. It is recommended students take this course the semester prior to the spring semester they plan on taking the comprehensive exams. The goal of this course to help serve as preparation for taking the comprehensive exam. This course will provide an opportunity to gain additional study tools, write on practice questions, and receive feedback on practice responses from the instructor.

Comprehensive Exam Preparation

*Directed Readings CD 6124, Offered Fall Only; Directed readings will change names to the below in Fall 2024 to CD 6124 Advanced Academic Writing

Designed for students who will be completing the comprehensive exam as their chosen culminating experience in the MACD program, this course will help students further develop their writing skills by focusing on summarizing and synthesizing research findings, word choice, organization, editing, and APA style.

The ability to use writing to articulate evidence-based reviews, positions, ideas, and summaries is fundamental to effective leadership across child development and educational fields. Using the metaphors of conversation and story-telling, this course will frame academic writing, not as a product, but rather as a *process* and a *practice* that go beyond successful completion of a comprehensive exam. This process and practice will be discussed as critical to the interpretation and development of research and academic commentary for the purposes of (a) advocacy for children and families and (b) translation of evidence-based information for practitioner use.

Question Design/Expectations

Questions will be integrative across content and topic areas covered in core courses. Responses to each question will be assessed based on the depth and breadth of the response. High quality detailed responses will be expected. Responses to each question typically range from 6 full pages to 8+ pages of text (not including the list of references at the end of each question). Using

appropriate APA formatting including in-text citations and list of references is expected. The questions are to remain private, no sharing of questions, question responses or other information about the comprehensive exam is allowed.

For the master's program in Child Development, students will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and integrative understanding in the following areas:

Development of the whole child from infancy through adolescence, basic research methodology, cognition and cognitive processes, families and parenting, developmental neuroscience, social emotional development, theories of child development, assessment of children, and equitable considerations and effective, inclusive interactions.

To this end, students will complete 4 examination essay question responses that will relate directly to the core courses listed below required in the MACD program. The courses are:

1. CD 5531. Effective, Inclusive, and Equitable Practices with Children (3 units)
2. CD 6614. Advanced Theories of Child Development (3)
3. CD 6624. Advanced Developmental Neuroscience (3 units)
4. CD 6648. Advanced Social-Emotional Development (3)
5. CD 6651. Advanced Cognitive Development (3)
6. CD 6659. Advanced Childhood Assessment (3 units)
7. CD 6690. Advanced Families and Parenting (3)
8. CD 6640. Advanced Research Methods (3)

Grading Process

Students must submit responses for 4 of the 6 questions for the comprehensive exam to be reviewed by faculty. Exams will be graded by at least two faculty reviewers. Each question will be read by each reviewer of the panel and will be given a point score. The scores from each reviewer will be averaged for a final point score.

Below is an explanation for the point system:

Each question is worth 4 points, for a total possible of 16 points

Pass: 12-16 points (with no zeros or ones)

Opportunity to Revise: 9-11 points (with no zeros)

Fail: 8 or below

Automatic Fail: A 0 on one question response and/or no response on 1 or more questions

Opportunity to Revise

Students who earn enough points for an opportunity to revise will receive feedback for each question response that requires revision. Revision may consist of written revisions, oral defense, or both depending on what is deemed appropriate by faculty reviewers in consultation with the graduate director. Students will have the opportunity to complete the revision process only 1 time.

Comprehensive Exam Failure

Students earning a grade of fail on the examination will be asked to retake the examination the following spring and will receive a NC in CD 6980 and CD 6122-6124. During this time, students are advised to work with the director of the MACD program regarding a plan of remediation.

There is no formal reading list for the exam. Students will be held responsible for all readings and lectures given in each course.

Study groups to prepare for the exam are highly advisable. Working with other students often highlights holes in your personal knowledge base and can remind you of important concepts/points not previously considered.

If you have other questions about the exam please contact the current MACD Director

Comprehensive Examination Preparation

CD-6124 (for a total of 4 units) should be taken prior to the spring semester of your second year in the program (or prior to the semester you are planning to take the comp exam). This course is designed to help you prepare for the comprehensive exam and should be supervised by your advisor or program director. At the completion of this course you will receive a grade of Incomplete (I). Once you have successfully completed the comp exam, this grade will be changed to reflect passing or failing status. (Note: you have 1 year to remove your incomplete in CD 6122-6124 before your grade is automatically changed to an F.)

Comprehensive Exam Assessment — CD 6980

During the spring semester in which you are planning to take the comprehensive examination enroll in CD-6980. This is a 0 unit course indicating your intent to take the comp exam. Prerequisites to this course are advancement to candidacy, successfully completing CD 6124, completion of 90% of coursework in the master's program and being in good academic standing.

Note: If all other coursework has been completed and CD-6980 is the only course needed at the time of the exam, enrollment can be processed through the College of Extended and Global Education for a reduced fee for the semester. The form is available via a link on the CD website.

Continuous Enrollment

Warning: If you complete your required coursework prior to taking the exam, you need to enroll in CD 6990 (Continuous Enrollment) all subsequent semesters without other units taken until you have completed the comp exam to maintain your current status within the program. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment will result in dismissal from the university. If you need to take a leave of absence, forms must be approved by the program coordinator and the Dean of Graduate Studie