

## **Guiding Document—Comprehensive Exam Rubric**

**Introduction:** At the conclusion of the Graduate Studies Assessment retreat in October 2016, subcommittees were formed to provide recommendations on assessment items. One subcommittee was tasked with providing recommendations for the comprehensive exam, which were approved as policy in November 2018. Part of the approved policy indicates programs are to utilize a rubric to assess Graduate Studies Learning Objectives at the time of the comprehensive exam. This rubric will provide written feedback about learning outcomes and competencies.

In response, a subcommittee of the Graduate Council developed a rubric to be used by all programs for assessment of the Graduate Studies Learning Objectives. This will allow a standardized method of assessing these learning objectives. If an individual program wishes to add program-specific outcomes or competencies, the rubric should be provided to Graduate Studies and made available to their students.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Comprehensive Exam Rubric is to provide a standardized method and time point for assessment of the Graduate Studies Learning Objectives for all graduate students. The rubric is **NOT** intended to be used to determine pass/fail of the comprehensive exam, unless the program wishes to incorporate it into exam grading.

### **General information:**

- Programs may add elements to the rubric that are discipline-specific
- Committees may add elements to the rubric that are project or exam-specific
- An NA column is provided in the event certain elements do not apply to a specific program or exam (for example, if a student gives an oral presentation, but does not have a separate written document then elements under written communication may be NA)
- Programs or committees should not delete elements, but rather use the NA column as needed
- Programs may pre-determine which levels students should achieve at the time of the comprehensive exam, but this is not required
- Written feedback should be given as appropriate, especially in areas needing further development

### **Instructions for use:**

- Students should be given the rubric well in advance of their comprehensive exam and informed whether the rubric will be used as a portion of their grading, or for feedback purposes only
- One rubric per student should be completed by the committee chair, in collaboration with the committee
- Using the rubric as a guide, the committee, or committee chair, should provide feedback to the student either as part of the meeting following the exam, or in a separate meeting. Feedback to the student should include a discussion of areas of strength, areas needing further development, and suggestions for development as applicable.
- The completed rubric should be submitted with the student's comprehensive exam grade

**Use of data:**

- Rubric data will be descriptively summarized combining all graduate programs and reviewed at least every two years by the graduate council
- Programs may review program-specific data at their own specified intervals
- Data may be used to inform future programming, such as professional development workshops, timing of programming, targeted invitations, etc.