Oral Comprehensive Examination Guidelines
For Master’s in Health Informatics Degree

Purpose
The purpose of the oral comprehensive examination is for the faculty to:

- Assess the student’s synthesis of knowledge in the areas of the informatics, leadership, and discipline specific cores.
- Evaluate the student’s ability to demonstrate synthesis and application of their knowledge in the context of the Master’s Program Objectives.

Verification of Eligibility for the Oral Comprehensive Exam
- Students should check with Center for Health Informatics one semester prior to the anticipated semester for oral comprehensive examination to make certain his/her academic record indicates all courses required for graduation. The student is responsible, after clearance with the chair of the committee, for arranging for the oral examination with the committee.
- Prior to final approval for the oral comprehensive exam, provide the following to the Center for Health Informatics:
  - A paper copy your completed research project with the appropriate signatures on the title page (see next item below)
  - A copy of the Research Project Title Page (Appendix A of the Guidelines for Research Project)
  - A 1-page summary of your research project content and research activities

Selection of the Oral Examination Committee and Chair
- The oral examination committee is composed of three faculty members who participate in the graduate health informatics program and who hold current graduate faculty status at the University of Kansas.
  - The oral examination committee chair must be a doctorally-prepared faculty member from the Center for Health Informatics.
  - The research project advisor serves as a member of the committee
  - One of the faculty members must be from the student’s discipline-specific area (Clinical, HP&M, or Public Health).
- The Director of the Health Informatics Graduate Programs reviews your choice of committee membership for appropriateness. Once approved, the student may contact the committee members to request their participation.
- If students change oral examination committee membership, time, or place of exam, they must complete a new Progress to Degree Form (Appendix A of this document) for the Center for Health Informatics.
- Prior to the examination, the role of oral examination committee chair and members is to act as resource persons to assist the student with preparation in the area of expertise that the student identified in selecting the faculty member as a committee member.
Scheduling the Examination

It is important to schedule the examination 2-3 months in advance so as to coordinate the busy schedules of all involved. Note: If you have not completed your Progress to Degree form and your IPHI 860 research project, you must note in the meeting invitation that the exam is tentative based on the completion of your research paper and Progress to Degree Form.

1. Identify a time when all oral examination committee members can attend. Allow 2 hours for the exam. Note: In order to manage scheduling conflicts, use the KUMC Outlook Calendar to verify the times that your committee members are available.
2. Reserve a conference room for the meeting through the Center for Health Informatics by sending an email request to HealthInformatics@kumc.edu.
3. Send a meeting invite in your KUMC Outlook account for yourself and the committee members to attend your oral comprehensive exam. Be sure to include the room location.
4. Complete the Progress to Degree form (Appendix A of this document) and submit to HealthInformatics@kumc.edu at least three weeks prior to the desired date for the examination.

The oral examination must be conducted during the student’s last semester. The student must be currently enrolled.

Preparation for Examination

In preparation for the oral comprehensive examination, the student should:

- Meet with your committee chair 1-2 months in advance of the examination to discuss how to prepare for the oral examination. Each committee chair will have a preferred examination format and structure, so this step is very important to complete.
- Create a presentation for the committee members. Identify the approach that will be used in the formal presentation. The purpose of the presentation is for you to demonstrate that you’ve met the objectives of the HI Program through your coursework and assignments.
- Review coursework, knowledge gained, and how these have helped in meeting the Master’s Program Objectives (Appendix B of this document). Review course assignments (products) and practice experiences against the Program Objectives to help organize examination preparation.
- Conduct a personal reflection and identify insights about the educational process and outcomes.
- Review information about theories, techniques, application and experiences garnered that have raised you to a ‘master’ level of practice.
Examination Process

The oral comprehensive examination is approximately 2 hours in length. The student must be currently enrolled in the last semester of program study. The suggested procedure for the oral examination is as follows:

1. The committee chair introduces the student.
2. The student summarizes his/her experiences as a master’s student.
3. Presentation of the research project is optional. During examination questioning, the research project carries comparable weight as other courses.
4. An approximate time frame for oral examination follows. Please note that committee chairperson and circumstances may vary one or more elements within the time frame.
   Chair introduction - 5 minutes
   Student presentation – 10 to 30 minutes
   Questions - 45 to 60 minutes
   Evaluation – 5 to 10 minutes
5. The committee will direct questions to the student in order to assess the student's competency in the selected field of study and the student's ability to synthesize knowledge gained while in the program.
6. Throughout the exam, the committee will assess student performance.
7. After the examination has been completed, the student will be asked to leave the room. At this time the committee members evaluate the student's understanding of the selected field of study using the Master’s Program Objectives as an evaluation guide.
8. The student is brought back into the room to receive the committee’s pass/not pass decision.

Outcomes

The criteria for determining a satisfactory and unsatisfactory oral examination are reflected on the evaluation form (Appendix C of this document):

Satisfactory

- For each program objective, the student must obtain a rating of “advanced”, “good”, or “threshold” to receive a determination of Pass for the examination.
- The ways in which the student synthesizes knowledge from the core courses, the specialty courses, and the research courses are clearly articulated.
- The student identifies a variety of strategies whereby this knowledge can be applied for the future.

Unsatisfactory

- If the student receives a “lacks understanding” in one or more of the program objectives, the student receives a determination of Not Pass for the examination.
- The ways in which the student synthesizes knowledge from the core courses, the specialty courses, and the research courses are not clearly articulated.
- The student cannot identify a variety of strategies whereby this knowledge can be applied in the future.
Concluding Process:

- An outcome is determined by the committee at the time of the examination. When the committee has reached a consensus of Pass/Not Pass for the examination, the chair will verbally convey the committee’s decision to the student.
- After the oral examination, the Evaluation Grid form (Appendix C) is completed and is signed by all committee members. If a committee member is present virtually and therefore cannot sign the form, the committee chair will get a verbal permission from that faculty member to sign on his/her behalf.
  - If the results of the oral comprehensive examination are satisfactory, the chair of the committee returns the completed Evaluation Grid to the Center for Health Informatics where the information on the form will be submitted electronically to the Office of Graduate Studies.
  - If the results of the oral examination are unsatisfactory, the chair of the committee returns the completed Evaluation Grid form to the Center for Health Informatics marked unsatisfactory. The student is responsible for scheduling a subsequent oral comprehensive examination meeting, allowing adequate time to generate a new Progress to Degree form. Students are allowed a total of 3 attempts to successfully pass the oral comprehensive examination. The examination committee Chair is responsible for providing written feedback to students not passing the oral comprehensive examination and for sending a copy of the feedback to other committee members. The written feedback will give students information about areas of weakness and strength.
APPENDIX A
Progress to Degree Form

Form Instructions:
- Deadline for submitting this form is a minimum of 3 weeks prior to oral comprehensive evaluation.
- Send the completed form to HealthInformatics@kumc.edu.
- If you make any changes to your committee members or date/time/location of your exam, a new form is required.
- Prior to approval for the oral comprehensive exam, provide the following to the Center for Health Informatics:
  - A paper copy of your completed research project with a signed title page (Research Project Title Page, Appendix A of the Guidelines for Research Project)
  - A 1-page summary of your research project content and research activities
- The director of the Center for Health Informatics will notify you when your committee has been approved.

TO: Director of the Health Informatics Program

FROM: (Student’s name)

RE: PROGRESS TO DEGREE FORM

Research Project Title:

Committee Members: The following have agreed to serve on my oral examination committee. (Please include the email address where these persons may be reached if participants are not KUMC faculty.)
- Chairman
- Member
- Member
- Reader (Optional)

Scheduled Date/Time for Exam:

Building & Room Reserved for Exam:
APPENDIX B
Health Informatics Program Objectives

Instructions: Speak with your committee chair about using the objectives below for preparing for the oral comprehensive exam and for creating your presentation.

Program objectives: Upon completion of this program, graduates will be able to:

1. Synthesize advanced knowledge of concepts, theories, principles, and research from health and health-related disciplines, the liberal arts, and the natural and behavioral sciences as it relates to a specialized area of health informatics.

2. Apply standards of informatics practice to meet the health needs of individuals and systems in relation to improving the quality, safety, efficiency and effectiveness of health care delivery.

3. Integrate ethical, legal, economic and cultural considerations as well as personal, professional, and client values in the application and promotion of health informatics.

4. Collaborate with professional colleagues to demonstrate professional identity, values, and beliefs that guide effective leadership, communication, innovation and change management to effectively facilitate the achievement of health system, population, organization, and professional goals.

5. Generate research questions from theory and practice and evaluate research findings that promote best practices in health informatics.

6. Develop health policy and procedures that are responsive to societal trends and are influential in implementing, evaluating, and revising information technology.
### Final Oral Comprehensive Examination - Evaluation Grid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Objectives</th>
<th>Advanced Understanding</th>
<th>Good Understanding</th>
<th>Threshold Understanding</th>
<th>Lacks Understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Synthesize advanced knowledge of concepts, theories, principles, and research from health and health-related disciplines, the liberal arts, and the natural and behavioral sciences as it relates to a specialized area of health informatics.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Grade                      Criteria
Advanced                      Comments insightful; program objectives addressed in a way that indicates comprehension of objective and underlying issues; communicate message clearly, concisely, directly, and with confidence

Good                           Comments meet, or at times, exceed, basic requirements of specific objective; presentation indicates beginning insight into major ideas related to objective; communicates message with clarity, directness, and conciseness, although some unevenness may be apparent

Threshold                     Comments offer little insight into greater issues related to objective, but meet basic requirements; message reasonably clear, concise, and direct, but may be uneven in presentation

Lacks Understanding           Lacks understanding or insight related to objectives and unable to demonstrate how knowledge can be applied.

Comments:

Student Name: ________________________________

Date of Examination: _____________

Pass ___________ Not Pass ______________

Oral Examination Committee:
Chairperson
Signature: ________________________________
Print Name: ________________________________

Member
Signature: ________________________________
Print Name: ________________________________

Member
Signature: ________________________________
Print Name: ________________________________