

# Microbiology General Exam Checklist

## Required Attendance

The student's advisor, the GSR, and at least two additional members of the Thesis Committee must be present. The student must enter the date, time, and location of the exam in MyGrad. The Exam is expected to be conducted in person. If a member of the committee has a last-minute conflict and cannot attend in person, they can attend virtually.

## Before the Exam

- The written proposal must be sent to the committee at least one week prior to the oral exam.
- This checklist and the Microbiology Topic and General Exam Rubric must be sent to the committee at least one week prior to the oral exam. A printed copy of both should be brought to the exam.
- Prior to the exam, the advisor should complete the Advisor Evaluation (Appendix 2) and discuss it with the student.
- The student should ask the GPA to print the Graduate School Committee Signature form, available through MyGrad, and bring it to their exam.

## General Exam Format

1. In the absence of the student, the advisor will review the student's academic record and give the committee members a written evaluation of the student's research performance and potential (Appendix 4).
2. The oral exam is chaired by a member of the Thesis Committee other than the advisor or the GSR. The advisor will not examine the student but will be present and available for clarification when needed.
3. The exam begins with a 30-minute oral presentation of the research proposal by the student summarizing his/her/their research progress and indicating future directions of the research in relation to the proposed Specific Aims. Although the length of the presentation is limited to a maximum of 30 minutes, an allowance will be made for interruptions by committee members who ask clarifying questions. Following the oral presentation, members of the Thesis Committee other than the advisor will examine the student. The meeting may last up to three hours total.
4. At the end of the oral exam, both the student and the student's advisor will leave the room. The outcome of the general exam will be determined solely by the committee members in the absence of the advisor. The Microbiology Topic and General Exam Rubric should serve as a guide for these deliberations. At the end of the deliberations, the student's advisor is apprised of the outcome in the absence of the student. Finally, the student will be called back into the room and members of the committee will provide feedback to the student on his/her/their performance.

## Exam Outcome

The decision made at the end of the oral exam is a cumulative one, taking into account the student's performance in all areas since entering graduate school. These include, in the order of relative importance:

1. the performance on the oral exam
2. the quality of the written research proposal
3. the advisor's written evaluation of research progress and potential
4. the performance on the Topic Exam and improvement in areas of deficiency from the Topic Exam
5. the performance in course work

The final decision must be one of the following: **Pass, Fail, or Re-examine.**

**Re-examine:** If the committee feels deficiencies exist that need to be corrected, the “Re-examine” option must be chosen rather than awarding a “Pass” with stipulations concerning the deficiencies. Timing of the re-examination is at the discretion of the committee.

**Fail:** A "Fail" means the student must leave the Ph.D. program, generally with the option to obtain a non-thesis master's degree (see Appendix 3).

## Post-Exam Report

- The Graduate School Committee Signature form should be signed by all committee members. The student must submit the signed form to the GPA.
- The completed Advisor Evaluation (Appendix 2) should be submitted to the GPA to be added to the student's file.
- After the exam, the chair of the General Exam should summarize the discussion and the committee's recommendation, circulate for approval by the rest of the committee, and submit to the GPA (microgpa@uw.edu) within 2 weeks of the exam.