This document is meant to guide students through the administrative process of scheduling their Qualifying Exam and Advancing to Candidacy. Prior to moving to this phase students must have successfully completed all coursework and be in Good Academic Standing. Qualifying Exams will not be scheduled unless these two requirements have been met.

1. Prior to Scheduling the Qualifying Exam

Following the completion of coursework, students will work with a Dissertation Chair to begin work on their dissertation proposal and finalize their Synthesis of Learning document. The Dissertation Chair and Dissertation Committee will determine when the student is ready to schedule the Qualifying Exam. When the Chair believes that both documents and the student’s preparation for the examination are sufficient, the student may proceed with the following additional steps to Schedule the Qualifying Exam.

2. Process for Scheduling the Qualifying Exam

**Student Administrative Responsibility**

Six weeks prior to the desired date of the exam, the student will submit a request via e-mail to schedule this exam to Dr. Rosaisal Rodriguez, CANDEL Associate Director. The following information must be included in the request:

a. Name of Student’s Dissertation Chair and Committee Members
b. Title for Dissertation Study with a brief description (1-2 sentences)
c. Desired date(s) and time(s). Please try to select dates designated as CANDEL weekends. These dates are preferred, but additional dates may be possible. Please schedule a three-hour time-frame. Confirm Dissertation Committee participation prior to making this request. All members of the committee are to be in attendance for the entire examination.
d. AV Equipment needed

**CANDEL Administrative Responsibility**

Upon receiving the request the CANDEL Co-Directors will identify two additional faculty members to serve on the Qualifying Exam Committee. The Qualifying Exam Committee consists of five faculty members: three members who are on the Dissertation Committee and two additional faculty members. The Chair of the Qualifying Exam will also be identified by the Co-Directors. The Dissertation Chair may not serve as the Chair of the QE. (See Graduate Studies Advisor’s Handbook: [http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/facstaff/gs202-advisers-handbook.pdf](http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/facstaff/gs202-advisers-handbook.pdf))

Once the committee has been identified, the CANDEL Associate Director will submit the formal request to schedule the Qualifying Exam to UCD Graduate Studies. This request will not be sent forth unless the student has completed all coursework. The Associate Director will also reserve a room for the exam and notify all participants (student and faculty members) via e-mail of the tentative date, time, and place. Please note this is a request and is not final until approval is received from UCD Graduate Studies. The QE may not be held until it has been approved by UCD Graduate Studies.

Upon approval, the student and QE Chair will be notified by UCD Graduate Studies. The
CANDEL Associate Director will also notify the all committee members of the approved date, time and place.

3. Preparation for Qualifying Exam

The student will work with their Dissertation Chair to finalize preparation for the Qualifying Exam. The examination will be composed of two distinct and required elements:

• assessment of the student’s knowledge about the specific problems, issues and research literature that comprise the focus of the CANDEL coursework; and

• presentation and review of the Dissertation Proposal, including the research questions to be addressed, the related research literature, the proposed research methods, and the significance of the study for practice

Student Administrative Responsibility

At least three weeks prior to the Qualifying Exam, the student will send final versions of the following two documents to all five members of the QE Committee:

• Synthesis of Learning
• Dissertation Proposal

These two documents must be received within this time frame to allow faculty members ample opportunity to review these documents prior to the exam. If these are not sent in a timely manner, this could warrant the delay of the student’s exam.

4. Format of Qualifying Exam

This 2–3 hour oral examination is conducted by the five-member Qualifying Examination Committee. The Qualifying Examination Committee will vote on the outcome immediately following the exam. Non-voting faculty observers may be invited with the unanimous consent of the QE committee and student.

Scope of the Qualifying Examination: During the examination, the committee will question the student about the specific problems, issues, and research literature that comprise the focus of the CANDEL coursework. The student will be expected to discuss in detail significant research literature and studies that inform his/her understanding of the issues explored during the course of study.

In addition to answering questions from the committee, the student will also present his/her dissertation proposal during the Qualifying Exam. The student will explore with the committee the nature of the problem addressed in the proposal, as well as the research questions guiding the proposed study, the related research literature, the proposed research methods for collecting and analyzing data, and the student’s explanation for the significance of the study for practice, policy, and research.

Outcome of Qualifying Exam: The QE committee, having reached a unanimous decision, shall inform the student of its decision as “Pass” (no conditions may be appended to this decision), “Not Pass” (the Chair’s report should specify whether the student is required to retake all or part of the examination, list any additional requirements, and state the exact timeline for completion of requirements to achieve a “Pass”) or “Fail.” If a unanimous decision takes the form of “Not Pass” or “Fail”, the Chair of the Qualifying Examination committee must include in its report a specific statement, agreed to by all members of the committee, explaining its decision, and must inform the student of its decision. Having received a “Not Pass”, the student may attempt the Qualifying Examination one additional time. After a second examination, a vote of “Not Pass” is unacceptable; only “Pass” or “Fail” is recognized. Only one retake of the qualifying examination is allowed. Students receiving a “Fail” on the second attempt will be recommended to the Dean of Graduate Studies for disqualification from the graduate program.

Graduate Studies Resources: http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/students/qualifying-exam.html

Qualifying Exam Chair Responsibilities
The QE Chair will facilitate the exam process and ensure all policies from UCD Graduate Studies are followed. Following the exam the QE Chair will submit the results of the exam to the Associate Director, who will submit the form to Graduate Studies. See QE Chair Responsibilities in Graduate Advisor’s Handbook: http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/facstaff/gs202-advisers-handbook.pdf

CANDEL Administrative Responsibilities
The Associate Director will ensure that the QE Report has the requisite information and signature, and it is sent to Graduate Studies in a timely manner.

5. Advancement to Candidacy
Once the student has "passed" the Qualifying Examination, the student, with the assistance of the Associate Director, will submit the Advancement to Candidacy form to Graduate Studies. For each quarter following this advancement the student will be registered for 12 units per quarter in EDU 287D, with their Dissertation Chair, who will report the student’s progress.

Student Administrative Responsibility
Please see the CANDEL Associate Director regarding the process for filing this form.

6. Finalizing Dissertation Proposal and Study
During the student’s Qualifying Exam, suggestions may have been made regarding revisions to the student’s dissertation proposal. The student will work with their Dissertation Chair and Committee to respond to any proposal suggestions or comments from the QE Committee. Once the Dissertation Chair and Committee members agree that the proposal is
finalized, and then the Candidate is ready to begin their dissertation study.

While this is an individual process, a guide for procedural requirements and resources can be found on the Graduate Studies web site: [http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/students/filing.html](http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/students/filing.html)