

Oral Qualifying Examination Process Ph.D. Program in Geological Sciences

Before advancement to candidacy, the student must pass an oral exam conducted by a Qualifying Committee. This Committee is nominated by the graduate department or program, and officially appointed by the Graduate Dean. The Committee is comprised of five members, a majority of whom are affiliated with the program. The Chair of the Qualifying Committee is normally from the academic unit supervising the student's Ph.D. program and a voting member of the Academic Senate. All Committee members should normally be regular faculty of the University of California. Any exceptions must be supported by a memo of justification from the Graduate Advisor and a vita. A memo need not be written for those holding Adjunct faculty positions.

One member of the Qualifying Committee, designated the "outside member," must be a voting member of the UC Academic Senate who does not hold an appointment in the student's academic unit or graduate group. This person represents the faculty at large and acts as a "third party ensuring fairness."

The oral exam must be held on a single day. A passing performance requires that no more than one Committee member votes to fail. If a student fails the qualifying examination, the Committee should make a recommendation for or against a second examination and specify what part or parts of the original exam are to be repeated. Ordinarily, the second examination is not administered until at least three months have elapsed. A third examination is not permitted.